

Cotillion '98 is Just Around the Corner

By Leslie Bailey

Mark your calendar for January 31, 1998, and meet us at the San Francisco Design Center Galleria for our annual Miss ETVC gala event. This is a fabulous new venue that is sophisticated, elegant and spacious enough to seat everyone in comfort. Sound and lighting are great. The stage is grand. The bar will offer a full selection of beverages and, of course, there will be a light meal. You will never feel more elegant in your best gown or outfit than on this occasion.

Want to be a CONTESTANT? Want to help make this event happen? Want to have the time of your life? Call Leslie Bailey at [REDACTED]

The Design Center is located at # 2 Henry Adams, which is just a few blocks past the Gift Center and the

Fashion Center. There is plenty of parking at the South of Market venue. If you are asking yourself about the Russian Center or the Cal Club where we have held this event for the last ten years, the answer is simple: they didn't want us and the Cal Club was too small anyway. So what's a girl to do? We could either retreat or move forward. It's exciting and scary but we are stepping up to the plate (in the type of metaphor we are inclined to use in the middle of a pennant race) and moving forward.

Look for ticket information in the next Channel 2 (thank you Veronica) and on our web page, and make you plans. For those who are coming from out of town, why not do an extended weekend: end of the month social on Thursday, shopping and dinner on the town Friday, Cotillion on Saturday and brunch on Sunday.

ETVC's

cybernetic social

Veronica Smith

They say that the computer brings distant but like-minded people together. Where else but in a computer chat room could you find transvestites and transsexuals from San Francisco, Chicago, Fresno and Novato gossiping and comparing dressing stories? At CyberWorld Café, that's where! On Saturday, September 27, more than fifty transgendered folks linked up on Folsom Street (between First and Second) for our very own party at CyberWorld.

As Juana and I approached this modern-looking restaurant, we saw quite a few club members on the patio. There, beneath a beautiful starlit night and with breathtaking views of the Bay Bridge and the City as a backdrop, lovely ladies in summer dresses were taking in the night air. The interior of the restaurant is spacious and in the back is a pool table. Up a flight of stairs is a cozy lounge with comfortable couches, chairs and little tables — perfect for intimate conversations. But what gives the restaurant its name and makes it an unusually fun place is that computers are spread throughout. Even as we arrived, some of the girls were already logged on. It's simply



Darcy and friends logging on at the "Saturday Night Special" Social @ CyberWorld Cafe.

amazing how many of our sisters seem so cybernetic seated in front of screens! Some were shopping while others surfed cyberspace. They transmogrified our social in reality (or as real as a room full of TVs and TSS gets) into a virtual social, having conversations with friends in distant places. After a couple glasses of wine, it was easy to imagine myself cruising inside

Continued on pg 11

THE CHANNEL

ETVC Inc., a non-profit corporation, is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about ETVC programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to: ETVC Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Minutes of all ETVC committee meetings are available to members on request.

OFFICERS

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Vice-President	Leslie Bailey
Secretary	Veronica Smith
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Education	Nancy Cupps, Juana Smith
Outreach	Telzey Adams, Sandra Brewer
Social	Darcy Leopard, Evette RoqueLaurie

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership (as of 9/30/97)	273
Total 1996 Membership	391
New Memberships this year	47

TREASURER'S REPORT

Account Balance as of 9/30/97	\$5,458.51
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The "Home for ETVC" fund is now \$2017.50

ETVC is a non-profit corporation.

Donations to ETVC are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns Talk to your tax advisor for details.

Channel, the ETVC Newsletter, is published the last week of February, April, June, August, October and December. Submissions should arrive at ETVC by the 20th day of the previous month. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and the editor, and are not necessarily those of ETVC. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided ETVC is acknowledged. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission of ETVC.

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	Per issue	Per year
Business Card	\$25	\$125
4" X 5"	\$60	\$300

Personal ads from ETVC members: \$3 for up to 40 words. We will *not* accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 20th of May, July, September, November, January and March. Send ad copy and check or money order to: ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

HOTLINE & VOICE MAIL 415-564-3246
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Letter from Elizabeth

By Elizabeth Walters



The media are at it again!

It took you years to recover from the shock of transgendered people being associated with Jamie Gumb, the sadistic and bloodthirsty transvestite villain of "Silence of the Lambs." You managed to ignore "Annie Can't Dance," the cross-dressing minor character from "Con Air" (who gets pimp-slapped into submission by Nicholas Cage after demonstrating that the only thing transvestites care about during a crisis is finding a new frock to wear).

Your nerves were shot, but you thought you just might survive. Then — just when you thought it was safe to start leafing through the newspaper again — here comes the Marv Albert sex scandal to make you hang your head in shame.

Okay — so Marv really isn't much different from what you would have expected from the average sports caster trying to work off a massive testosterone overdose: according to testimony during his assault trial, he has had innumerable extramarital affairs over the last 30 years, including a number in which his behavior has been nothing less than boorish.

Maybe that should have been expected, considering Albert spends all that time hanging around oversexed, drug-addled, wife-beating professional athletes.

But why did Albert have to turn out to be one of those guys who likes to wear ladies' dainties during his peccadilloes?

Did we really need this? Isn't it hard enough to be transgendered without having your image get entangled with that of some creepy NBC play-by-play announcer who likes to put on panties and a garter belt to bite his female acquaintances on the back and engage in sexual "threesomes?"

Perhaps I am being unfair, but I personally find it hard to believe that Marv's propensity for putting on female underclothing during his sexual exploits is evidence that he is actually transgendered.

After all, what self-respecting cross-dresser would ever be caught dead wearing a wig as bad as the toupee Albert always wears when he is on camera!

On a softer note, let Liz add her own stamp of approval to the fine film "Different for Girls," which was so wonderfully reviewed in our last issue by ETVC member Janet Bowman. The film, which has enjoyed a lengthy run at several Bay Area cinemas, is a picture about transgendered people that has the courage to stick to its simple love story and portray its utterly enchanting couple in a totally positive but dramatically satisfying fashion.

This is probably the best serious film about people in our community since "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert." Two thumbs (carefully manicured with Clinique's "Pure Red" nail polish) up. Liz says, check it out.



Da' Prez' Box

ETVC President Erin Souza

The Party's Just Starting

With Halloween behind us and the sun setting earlier, it's the time of year when many of us can take advantage of the dimmer light to get out to have some fun. If you missed visiting our new venues of CyberWorld and Café Mars during September/October, please make a point to do so during these coming months. Both of these South of Market venues offer nearby access to freeway ramps and parking. Both are short cab or Muni rides away from downtown BART stations. CyberWorld features two levels, a front patio, pool table and computer terminals. Food and beverage service is also available you can snack away while browsing TG Forum or waiting for your chance to shoot pool. We have the place all to ourselves so there is plenty of room to spread out and get comfy. But if you like seeing, being seen and rubbing elbows (or other body parts) with the general public, then come join the fun at Café Mars. Chat it up at the front bar or shoot pool with the regulars. Or, if you prefer the exclusive company of ETVC, join us on the retractable canopied back patio that we have all to ourselves.

We return to the same neighborhood in January, to the Design Center Galleria, elegant new site for the 1998 ETVC Cotillion. Plan to make a full weekend out of it. We will have our end of the month social the Thursday before the Cotillion,

followed by a club crawl on Friday night with our "On the Town" femme fatale, Darcy. The high point of the weekend will of course be the Cotillion on Saturday night, followed by a wind down farewell brunch on Sunday afternoon.

As a warm-up to our January party marathon, we offer a two-fer weekend this November 15th and 16th. Saturday the 15th is the Miss Gay Pageant at the Russian Center in San Francisco. Space is limited so call Ginny at [REDACTED]. Sunday afternoon is the third annual ETVC Miniature Golf Tournament in Redwood City. Space is also limited, so call yours truly at [REDACTED].

Get your rest, between ETVC events, during February and March, because April will mark the return of the Cal' Dreamin' convention to San Francisco.

This is the chance to show our sisters from Southern California and the rest of the country that we Bay Area girls can party with the best of them. The Golden Gate Holiday Inn (Van Ness and Pine) will serve as home base for five days of luncheons, seminars, vendors, variety shows and Bay Area tours. Contact any ETVC officer for details or information on how to volunteer.

As you can see, we're offering a veritable smorgasbord of activities over the next few months. Make sure you come back for seconds.

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by Guy E. Campo, R.E.



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• • • • • Special Events • • • • •

“Retro” Fun at Rosalie’s New Looks

November 13th, 7:00 to 10:00

Looking for that “retro” evening gown for the holidays or Cotillion? Please join us at Rosalie’s New Looks for an exclusive ETVC preview. Our long time friend has added a line of vintage clothes to her selection of fine wigs. Browse through evening fashions dating from the 1950’s to the 1970’s. There will be dresses, furs and coats, big shoes and hand bags. This could be the evening to do “one-stop” shopping! Rosalie’s is located at 782 Columbus, San Francisco. FREE

Miss/Mr. SF Gay Pageant

Saturday, November 15th

This Imperial Court annual event is usually one of the best evenings of drag entertainment all year. Ten to fifteen contestants vie for the coveted title of Mr. or Miss SF Gay and go all out with energetic and creative production numbers to please the judges. We usually put together a table to attend this event and tickets at our table this year will cost \$20 each. The show will be held at the Russian Center in San Francisco with doors opening at 7 PM and the show starting at 8 PM. If you would like to get a reservation at our table, please call Ginny at [REDACTED]. General seating tickets will be available before the event at Marlena’s @ \$15, or at the door @ \$20.

The Third Annual ETVC Miniature Golf Tournament

Sunday, November 16th

Prez’ Erin Souza will once again play hostess to the 1997 ETVC Miniature Golf Tournament. Come out for the fun, fresh air and prizes. You may even win the coveted ETVC Mini-Golf trophy. Entry cost is \$8.00 per golfer. Noon-?? at Malibu Castle Golf and Games, Redwood City. Malibu Castle Golf and Games is located off of highway 101 at Blomquist. Take the Seaport Boulevard exit. For more information or to reserve a spot, call Erin at [REDACTED].

Combined Mid-Month and End of the Month November Social

Thursday, November 20th

Our last Mid-Month Social at Café Mars was a roaring success, drawing between 25-30 people. The staff at this venue are wonderful, friendly people, and eager to work with us. Therefore, we are going to reserve the covered, back patio area with its separate bar all to ourselves for a November Social! We are combining Mid-Month with End of the Month due to the normal date for End of the Month falling on Thanksgiving. See you there! Café Mars, 7th and Brannan Streets, SF, 8 PM. Members \$3, Guests \$5.

Annual ETVC Potluck

Saturday, December 13th

Continuing our annual tradition, ETVC will host an afternoon Potluck Social at Kimo’s to bring in the holidays. Bring your favorite dish, and chat with the other girls about how your holiday shopping is going. Tell us all what special presents you have bought for your girlfriend, even if she is you! 1 PM, Upstairs at Kimo’s. Polk and Pine Streets, SF. Free.

New Year’s Social

Saturday, December 27th

Since our inaugural social at CyberWorld Café was such a resounding success, we have reserved this venue for another End of the Month Social. Dress up wild and festive to prepare to bring in the New Year! We will have cake and Champagne to celebrate. Photo opportunities will also be available using our very popular Polaroid camera. Let’s kick up our heels, gals! 8 PM, CyberWorld Café, 528 Folsom Street between 1st and 2nd Avenue, SF. Members \$5, Guests, \$7.



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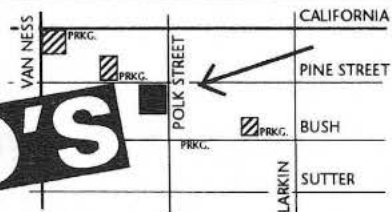
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OTHER GROUPS

November

3	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
6	ETVC	Newsletter Committee	7:30 PM	San Francisco	(415) 337-5409
6	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
7	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
7	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
8	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
8	ETVC	Bowling	Starts at 8:30 PM	Colma	(415) 731-7032
9	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415) 553-5987
9	ETVC	Executive Committee	Meets at 4 PM	East Bay	(510) 527-5398
13	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
14	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
14	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 8-11 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
14	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
15	Imp Ct	Mr./Miss SF Gay Pageant	TBA	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
16	ETVC	Mini Golf Tournament	Starts at Noon	Redwood City	(415) 731-7032
17	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
18	ETVC	Library Committee	Meets at 1 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
20	ETVC	Mid/End of Month Soc'l	Starts at 8 PM	Café Mars, SF	(415) 337-5409
21	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
21	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
28	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
29	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742

December

1	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
4	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
5	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
5	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
11	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	Pleasant Hill	(415) 664-1499
12	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
12	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 8-11 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
12	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
13	ETVC	Potluck	Starts at 1 PM	Kimo's, SF	(415) 641-8169
13	ETVC	Executive Committee	4 PM	San Francisco	(415) 641-8169
13	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
14	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415) 553-5987
16	ETVC	Library Committee	Starts at 1 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
16	ETVC	Mini Golf Tournament	Starts at Noon	Redwood City	(415) 731-7032
18	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
19	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
19	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
26	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
27	ETVC	New Year's Social	Meets 8 PM	CyberWorld SF	(415) 641-8169
27	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742

Pacific Center for Human Growth, a counseling oriented growth center, sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00 PM, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call: (510) 841-6224.

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA) meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00 PM at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Write: RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. Call: (408) 984-4044

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA) Blue Rose Chapter meets 8 PM the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write: PO Box 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456. Call: (916) 482-7SGA for meeting locations.

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG) Meets first and third Monday of every month, 8 PM at Just Rewards Nightclub, 2520 Camino Diablo in Walnut Creek. Write: DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885. Call: (510) 937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC) meets first and third Thursday of every month, 7 PM at Rainbow Community Center, 2637 Pleasant Hill Rd. at Taylor Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. For more info, call (510) 937-8432.

FTM, a support group for Female-to-Male crossdressers & transsexuals, holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write: FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission St., Suite 200, SF 94103 or call Voice Mail (415) 553-5987.

TGIF (TransGenderism Is Fun), a social group for transgenders, meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4 PM until early evening. For dates, location and reservations, call Diane or Anne at [REDACTED]

San Joaquin Gender Association, meets in Tri-Valley area. For dates and times, call Winifred at [REDACTED]

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA), a new transgender support group, meets at the Billy DeFrank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month from 7PM to 9PM. For more info, call (408) 293-2429.

Please Print

ETVC Membership Application

Mailing Name: _____

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Preferred Name: _____ Family Member's Name: _____
(If Applicable)

Birth Date: Month _____ Day _____ New Member: _____ Renewal: _____

How did you learn about ETVC? _____

Full year membership June 1 - May 31 is \$25.00 (Family - \$35.00).

Please remit by check or money order to:

ETVC, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486



Sandra Reaches Out

By Sandra Brewer

With the fall semester getting into full swing, our speakers' bureau is once again being called into action. Some speaker requests have already been filled, but more are coming in on a regular basis. We received about forty requests for speakers during the last school year and we can probably expect at least that many again this year. If you haven't done so yet, please let me know if you'd like to be a part of this very rewarding effort to share the best of ourselves with the public. See this column in the last issue of the newsletter for more about the ETVC speakers' bureau.

The Pacific Center has lost at least one major grant and is cutting back some of its programs. Their speakers' bureau remains intact for now, but if it later becomes a casualty, plans have been discussed for it to continue as a separate entity. We were also disappointed to learn of Amy Wooldridge's departure from the Pacific Center. Because Amy was a prime organizer of last year's speaker training session, the schedule for the next session is not clear at this time. Last year's session was very rewarding, so we will repeat the effort even if we have to organize it ourselves. Everyone on our list of speakers will be notified when this is scheduled.

We participated in the Gay Mardi Gras Festival in Oakland in September. We had our usual information table, as well as a photo concession; both were well received at this popular first-time East Bay event held on the same day as the Grand Ducal Coronation across the bay. Some of our members attended both events. Thankfully, the BART strike ended the week before this important day for us. Realizing that our resources are not unlimited, we decided to pass up participating in the Castro Street Fair this year. We expect to descend on KQED to answer phones in front of the cameras again for their pledge drive, probably the second week in December.

Like the other ETVC committees, the Outreach Committee has discontinued holding its meetings on a regular schedule. Planning of outreach events has usually been best accomplished by a series of telephone calls frequently involving communication between several people over a considerable distance. Getting everybody involved in outreach efforts together at the same time has proven to be both impractical and impossible. Even when our meetings have been scheduled before other popular events, attendance has been too low to make the meetings worthwhile. We will continue to maintain the communication needed for the success of the outreach efforts that are so important to our organization. We also still expect to call meetings from time to time as needed.

Harry Benjamin Association Announces New Board Members

In September of 1997, the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association announced that Alice Webb would be installed as their President-elect (1999-2001).

They also announced that Drs. Sheila Kirk and Jude Patton were elected to a year term on their Board of Directors. This will be the first time a transgendered person has been an official voting board member since the inception of the organization, giving the community something it has badly needed — representation.

Ginny Knuth

Be Careful What You Wish For (You Just May Get It!)

By Andrea Drane

A man walking along the beach found an antique bottle. Looking around, he didn't see anyone who might have dropped the bottle, and so he opened it. A billowing cloud of smoke erupted from the bottle, and a genie appeared. The genie thanked the man for letting him out, and said, "I am so grateful to be out of that bottle! Since I can only grant you one wish, please choose carefully."

The man thought for a while and said, "You know, I've always wanted to go to Hawaii. I've never been able to go because I can't travel either by air or by sea. The thought of flying scares me too much, and the way they pack the people in is too claustrophobic. I also get seasick very easily, and with all that open water I become very agoraphobic. So, I wish for a road from here to Hawaii so I can drive there."

The genie thought for quite a while before finally saying, "No. I don't think I can do that. Do you realize all the work involved? Consider all the piling needed to hold up a highway, and how deep they would have to go to reach the bottom of the ocean. Imagine the amount of concrete and asphalt needed, not to mention all the environmental impact studies! No, I am afraid that you ask much too much of me."

The man thought for a few more minutes, and then told the genie, "Well, there is one other thing I've always wanted. I'd like to be able to understand women - what makes them laugh, what makes them cry, why are they so temperamental and so difficult to get along with? Basically, I'd really like to know what makes them tick."

After considering this second request for only a few seconds, the genie gazed out over the ocean and said, "So, are we talking two lanes or four?"

Patricia Nakamura

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Colage

by **Ronnie Jean**

In 1989, the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI) had a workshop for kids. It was so successful that in 1990, it became COLAGE - Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents Everywhere.

Director Felicia Parks Rogers runs the San Francisco office, which currently has 1200 members.

As she explains, COLAGE is a support/advocacy/education group primarily for children of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered parents. It offers a network of peer support with conferences, local events, newsletters, speakers, theatre, videos, pen pals and much more.

They also mediate in court on behalf of children and parents in custody cases as well as addressing legal issues of inheritance and health benefits (for example, in most states, only one parent of same sex unions may represent a child).

It's hard enough growing up without having to deal with a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered parent in today's phobic society. COLAGE's outreach targets educational curriculum in school to make it a safer, better world for loving families, regardless of orientation.

COLAGE needs you and your support. They can be reached at:

COLAGE

2300 Market Street, #165
San Francisco, CA 94114

Phone: 415/861-5437

Fax: 415/255-8345

E-Mail: colage@colage.org

Website: www.colage.org

TRANSGENDERED FAMILIES sponsored by COLAGE, in conjunction with the Alternative Family Project, meets every other Monday from 6-8 pm @ 425 Divisadero Street, Suite 203. Call Lisi to sign up @ 863-7945.

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Dating and the "New Woman"

By Andrea Drane

Okay. We are finally living as our true selves, and now it's time to find some companionship and perhaps some physical comfort. So how do things really work on this side of the mirror? What is expected of us? What do we need to know to enjoy ourselves, be safe, and have a chance at a true relationship?

On Sunday, August 17th, thirty of us came to Kimo's to hear Luanna Rodgers, M.A., MFCC, discuss dating en femme, and to share some of our own experiences.

Safety is a primary concern in dating, and one that we may not have thought that much about in the past. As women, we are more vulnerable, and how many of us have actually had to defend ourselves against a man? How confident are we of our abilities and how confident should we be? The rules about initially meeting in a public place, letting someone else know who you are going out with and where you are going are so important, especially for those of us with limited experience.

Also, safety today involves practicing safe sex - always!

The other's expectations of our level of experience is an issue that we must be aware of. We all have very different dating histories, but for most of us our gender confusion added its share of distortions. Many of us dated infrequently if at all, so what experience we do have is limited, and may or may not include prior relationships with men. We can't fall back on old behaviors, and need to be aware of the fine balance between being too forward (and possibly perceived as a "working girl") and being too reserved.

We also tend to have difficulty knowing when someone is interested and finds us attractive, especially since we are used to keeping a low profile and blending in. So, we often perceive anyone's interest in us as, "Oh no, they're reading me! What am I doing wrong?"

As if we didn't face enough challenges in dealing with our friends and families, dating adds its own complexities. If we date men, there may be difficulties with it being perceived as a same-sex relationship, particularly if we are not fully accepted as women. If we date women, there is a lesbian or bisexual issue to deal with, as well as a second "coming out."

The question of "Where do I go to meet someone?" is an eternal one. Besides the traditional "dating scene," personal ads can be an effective alternative. They can either follow the standard "Women Seeking Men/Women Seeking Women" ad conventions, or be one of the "Attractive pre-op MTF seeks..." variety. Each has its pros and cons, and each will attract different types and numbers of respondents. While a very open ad ensures that there are no misunderstandings about our status, it does have the tendency to create expectations of promiscuous or kinky behavior (thanks to media stereotypes), which may be neither our nature nor our intent. The fact that we are transgendered does not mean that we should settle for what we think we can get as opposed to what we want.

Disclosure is another important issue, and has different implications for those of us who have decided against SRS, are awaiting SRS, and have completed SRS. For those of us who have not had SRS, sooner is usually better if the relationship is going to become physically intimate, since there is no foolproof way to conceal the anatomical truth. Waiting until you are both quite far along in some passionate, private setting is very dangerous, since

most people do not appreciate that kind of surprise in those circumstances. For those of us who have had SRS, the issue is one of personal ethics and trust in the other, and will often depend on the seriousness or long-term potential of the relationship. A major risk of non-disclosure is having the other learn the truth, either through a slip on our part, or through a third party. The other's feelings of having been deceived or not trusted can not only abruptly end the relationship, but also lead to the more heartbreaking consequence of the other person "outing" us to the world, and this may sabotage our chances for future relationships. On the other hand, disclosure can change the way the other perceives us, and this too can end the relationship. This change in perception is more likely and often more pronounced for those of us who have not had SRS, since there is that constant reminder.

Dating is difficult no matter what our background, gender, or sexual orientation happens to be, and does present special challenges to those of us who are "new women." Still, there is no reason why we can't find love and happiness so long as we open ourselves to the possibilities. After all, dating is one of the most human of behaviors.



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Romantasy's Corsetry for the Transgendered Physique Seminar

By Darcy Leopard

Romantasy's proprietress Ann Grogan gave an informative and fun presentation on corsets at Kimo's on Thursday, September 25th. We had a strong attendance of members at this event, as it is a popular topic. A good percentage of attendees were wearing corsets of their own.

Ann started out by giving us a historical perspective of corseting. She showed us a drawing of a woman wearing a full-length, corset dress documented from about 3000 BC, and then proceeded through more recent examples taken from the 18th and 19th centuries. She explained how men have also corseted historically amongst the upper classes, as a very trim waistline was highly admired no matter what the person's gender was. Some of the drawings she showed us demonstrated how men would even achieve a bit of the hourglass shape in certain cases.

Ann also showed us the basic stylistic variations in corsets. These included the hourglass, the wasp waist, and the stem corset. Within these broad categories, there were also more specific variations. She also pointed out how a person could choose to emphasize a feminine waistline, that being about one inch above the navel, or a masculine waistline, about one-inch below the navel.

Some of our members had a chance to get up on stage so Ann could point out specific aspects of their particular corset.



In one case she showed how a corset could be designed as reversible, thus providing two different patterns within one garment. In another case, she pointed out how garters should always be designed to be detachable, and demonstrated how it makes a subtle yet important difference which direction they should be attached.

Corset training regimens were also discussed. Ann stressed the importance of approaching waist reduction on a slow, yet steady regimen. Wearing the corset for at least three times a week for about three hours at a time is more effective than wearing it one day a week for many hours. Lacing yourself down about an inch or two in the beginning is important before eventually graduating to the four to six inch reductions. This gradual regimen also aids in the steady breaking in of a new corset. Lacing in too much too soon can actually cause the corset to break as it has not had a chance to become supple yet.

Near the end of the presentation, some of us had a chance to model our corsets in an impromptu fashion show. We walked from behind the curtain, spun around on stage to show all angles of our curves, and then walked up and down the aisle between the audience. Ann pointed out how the corsets encouraged us to walk with a more feminine gait, working more from the hips. For the closing of the presentation, we all gathered on the stage together, receiving a nice round of applause from an appreciative audience.

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The Uninvited Dilemma

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August Social:



The Channel's supermodel-superphotographer, Telzey, caught in a pensive mood as she takes a break from working on the other end of the camera during the "Island Paradise" social August 28. (Photographer unknown, but whoever she was, she was using Telzey's camera!)

Visiting dignitaries: At our August end-of-month social, ETVG was fortunate enough to be graced by the presence of visitors from the Far North: two lovely members of the Northwest Gender Alliance, a sister transgender organization in Portland, Oregon. Seen here are (from left) Elaine, the organization's vice president, and Carolyn, a member and contributor to Northwest Passages, NWGA's fine monthly newsletter. Elaine reports that during their visit here, they hit many of the city's high spots, including the Fairmont Hotel and Kimo's. For members interested in finding out more about NWGA and our sisters to the north, write to NWGA, P.O. Box 4928, Portland, Oregon 97208-4928, or e-mail them at nwga@teleport.com. (Photo by Telzey.)

Surfer Girls: Appropriately garbed in the latest in beach wear, two of our favorite party people, Bree and Lulu, strike "Island Girl" poses during our August "Island Paradise" social at Kimo's. (Photo by Telzey.)



Errata

Our October-November issue had so many errors that it is difficult to keep track of them all, however, here are a few that immediately come to mind:

Through gross editorial malfeasance, our Calendar listings for October and November listed incorrect locations and phone numbers for our Significant Others meetings. This edition's listings are (hopefully) correct. The editrix regrets the error.

An e-mail problem resulted in the loss of the last few paragraphs of Darcy Leopard's fine story about the Big Shew. As a consequence, several of the performers at the event were inadvertently left out of the story. Our apologies to all those hard working performers who were not mentioned in the last issue. We'll try harder to make sure you all get in next time.

Because of a last minute cut in her wonderful review of "Different for Girls," Janet Bowman's article gave the misleading impression that "Just Like a Woman" had been shown at the San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in June. In fact, she was referring to "Different for Girls," not "Just Like a Woman."

The Channel regrets the surfeit of errors, but notes that we are only human, after all.

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Pronouns, or a Story about Coming Out

By Juana Smith

As I began my 6th year as an ETVC member and my 2nd year as an officer, I began to experience a growing tension between my enjoyable involvement with the organization and my evasiveness about that involvement. When asked by my boss or co-workers about my free time, I didn't feel free to discuss an event I'd enjoyed or a committee meeting I'd attended. My address book bulged with often-times double-named individuals. Letters, phone calls and e-mail from my ETVC acquaintances composed a major part of my correspondence. I was genuinely devoted to my friends and felt that, though not transgendered, I was part of the transgendered community. And yet I acted as if I were embarrassed about the community I felt part of. And that seemed very strange.

I thought about all of this over a matter of weeks and the more I thought about it, the more I started to understand what coming out was all about. It was about honesty, about not being ashamed or embarrassed about your friends. Shortly after that realization, when casually asked by Angela, a co-worker, what kind of volunteer work I did, I looked her straight in the eye and proudly declared, "I work for ETVC, an organization that helps transgendered people." I felt great, as if a mask of fear and deceit had fallen from my face. I wanted to do more. I wanted to spread the word. I tried to imagine how I could do it: first I would broach the subject of transgenderism, then I'd probe and possibly placate my friend's feelings about it, and finally I'd introduce one of my work friends to one of my transgendered friends. A little later with all this in mind, I asked Angela if she'd like to have lunch next week. She said sure, but that she was headed to the

deli and wanted to know if I'd like to have lunch with her that day. I thought, "Great, I have a week to prepare Angela, but maybe I can broach the subject of transgenderism right away." And besides, coming out was making me hungry.

At the deli I was feeling pretty good, confident and righteous. But as I was perusing the cold cuts in the refrigerated glass cases, I heard behind me Erin Souza's gentle greeting of "Hi, Juana." Suddenly, I felt my plan fly out the window and with went my command of the English language. I turned my head and couldn't speak but only make little fish-gulping movements with my mouth, like a baby who is thirsty. There I stood between Angela and Erin and I couldn't even say what to order. I couldn't even decide on whole wheat or onion roll. I looked at Erin and said, "I was just talking about how I wanted you and Angela to meet. Erin, this is Angela. Angela this is Erin." I could see in Angela's face the question as to how I knew Erin. I started to explain, "He, uh, sh-he, uh, she works at Kaiser Roll, I mean, at Kaiser. We belong to the same organization and he, buh, she is the president." At socials I'm pretty good with pronouns, but for some reason I was throwing them around with reckless abandon. I even kept on referring to Angela as "he" and she's not transgendered.

I still hadn't ordered and the clerk made her presence known, as did the rest of the people in line. Because I'd been prematurely outted, I got more and more flustered. But with great courtesy and understanding from both Erin and Angela, I was able to order (salami and provolone on sourdough, side of pepperoncini), and with food came back my composure. I was able to overcome the problem and we went on to have a pleasant encounter. My co-worker/friend and my boss both know about ETVC, and have read several copies of our newsletter with great enthusiasm and interest. I've gotten over the fluster and confusion of pronouns – or so I think – until next time I make plans to come out.

Cyber-social cont. from pg 1

a computer chat room, like a character in a transgenderistic Tron. Were these ladies real in front of me or were they images projected out on the web by guys in glasses and lab coats? But then you didn't have to get virtual to visit Mesdemoiselles from distant places.

Our Social Chairperson, Darcy, had pushed for a Saturday social because she wanted to give folks from afar a chance to attend. Her plan worked. There were a lot of new faces from far away places. I met a trio from Fresno, Marlene, Melissa and Julie, and got to gab with the glamorous Lori Fox – no virtual vixen she, but Chicago's Foxiest Lady. And a Saturday



A couple of our members who "bit" at the opportunity to go on-line "@ the CyberWorld Cafe. (Photo by Telzey)

social seemed to allow quite a few girls to come who we haven't seen in a while. It was fun to talk to Rae Ann, and see Joan and Vanessa visit with us again.

As for the food, Juana had the house special foccaccia and I had a fish and rice plate. Juana really liked hers (while I honestly thought my fish was a little too computer generated). We both had white wine, as the only alcoholic beverages are wine and beer. In spite of the limited bar, this place has a lot of pluses. Other benefits of the location are that it's easily accessible for our friends from the East Bay and there's plenty of parking. Check it out the next time we meet there, Saturday, December 27. Or if you cannot visit en visage, log on and see us cybernetically. We'll be chatting.



OTHER VOICES

Other Voices is a newsletter within the ETVC newsletter by and for Significant Others. Send letters and articles to: Other Voices, c/o ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

Transgender Parent Support Group

by a TG Father (Mina Schwartz)

I had been out to my significant other for about a year when I decided that I needed to come out to my children as well. They were 7 and 11 at the time. Doing so relieved the feeling of keeping a big secret from them, but also created a need for support for us as a family with a TG member.

Everyday parenting issues related to being TG would arise. For example, should I be out at our school? I wanted to talk to other TG parents in a support group setting. I wanted to prove to myself and others that being TG and a parent were possible, and that we could have happy, healthy kids.

At about this time my significant other saw a flyer for the Alternative Family Project that offered support services for TG families. To make a long story short, after several phone calls to the Project, a TG parent support group was started in September

of 1996 in San Francisco. It consisted of a variety of FTMs, MTFs, significant others and, of course, their kids.

The facilitator was Sage Foster, who continues in this capacity. Sage is a TG parent, and a long time activist and support group facilitator in the GLBT community. The group meets in ten week sessions on Monday nights and has a sliding scale fee. While the parents are talking about parenting issues, the children are in another room with two members of COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) where they work on projects, play and eat pizza.

Participants bring issues to the group that they need to discuss. For example, the group has talked about the decision of coming out to children, issues of being in the closet, passing as a male or female, custody of children and visitation rights, children's reaction to gender transitions, dealing with society's transphobia and prejudice, and many more.

The group has steadily grown in numbers and in fame. In June of 1997, the group sponsored a successful family picnic with COLAGE, and in October they sponsored a Halloween trick or treat event, also with COLAGE. In 1996, ETVC sponsored a spin-off educational seminar with Sage Foster and Susan Stryker on parenting issues.

The group is an important development in the services that are available to families with TG members. It helped me work through many problems and made me feel connected with a community of other people like me. If you are interested in the group or more information call the Alternative Family Project at (415) 436-9000.

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Significant Other Support Group invites all Significant Others to attend our meetings. Group members define Significant Others as wives, lovers, friends, children and others close to TV/TS persons who are themselves not TV/TS. We encourage you to ask the SO in your own life to attend, particularly if she or he needs support from peers in dealing with feelings about the TV/TS in her or his life. All meetings are kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL to help insure that a safe, supportive environment is created in which all attendees feel secure enough to freely share and talk about their feelings. We are frequently assisted by a helping professional with a specialty in our area of concern. Our next meetings will be on Thursday, November 13th in San Francisco and Thursday, December 11th in Pleasant Hill. You are welcome with open arms. Call (415) 664-1499 for more information.

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Ginny's



A Christmas Story

The second Christmas I knew him but the first Christmas after I learned about "her," we had planned a festive day, beginning around 9 AM with coffee, opening presents, and preparing a big Christmas dinner because his son, who was stationed in the Army at a nearby location, was to join us at 2 PM. I looked forward to a great family kind of day that I had missed over the years because my family had remained in Ohio when I came to California to find my fame and *This would be just like back home*, I thought.

Starting out right on schedule, I pushed "her" out of bed at 9 AM, shoved a cup of coffee in "her" hands and gave "her" a couple of packages to open from under the tree. At this point we were dressed exactly as we were when we rolled out of bed — I was in my robe and nightgown, and "she" was in a silk nightgown and negligee. We leisurely opened our presents, one at a time. "She" was having such fun because nobody had ever given "her" Christmas presents before. It was amazing to watch "her" open a present for "him," glance at it, say "How nice," and quickly put it aside to go on to the next one. If the next one was for "her," she squealed with delight and put every single item on, whether it was a half slip, a blouse, scarf, earrings, bracelets, necklaces or samples of makeup. When we were all through opening the presents on the floor, "she" looked like "Cost Plus," if you know what I mean, but she was truly ecstatic and had really enjoyed the morning. It was already noon, but we still had presents to open — a whole stocking full of little items for each of us!

Just as we were beginning to open these presents, the doorbell rang. We looked at each other — who could it be? I yelled through the door, "Who is it?". The answer, joyfully rendered, "Merry Christmas, it's John, Jr.!" sent "her" into high gear. Boxes, presents and the entire Cost Plus Display went flying like a tornado into the bedroom with the door slammed behind "her." It seems that although he had told his son when he was 17 that he "sometimes wore women's clothes," John, Jr.'s response at that time was "no big deal, Dad .. can I go pick up my date now?" and the subject never came up again. So, the great "cover-up" was on.

I meekly opened the door to let John, Jr. into the apartment and apologized for not being dressed yet. I told him we had thought he was coming at 2 PM and his father was still in the shower. He said he decided since it was such a beautiful day he would come early and help me prepare the dinner. I said

that was a marvelous idea, handed him the potato peeler and told him to go at it while I got dressed in the bedroom. I explained we had just finished opening presents except for those in the stockings (why did I say that?) and we'd both be out to keep him company in a few minutes.

After greeting his Dad, John, Jr. said, "Hey, we've got dinner pretty well started .. why don't we open the packages in the stockings while we wait for it to cook?". We both said, "Oh no, we'll open them later. It won't be any fun for you to watch us open presents for ourselves." He persisted, saying he would open one of the cat's presents every third present and that it would really be fun. Thinking quickly, I said, "Well, if you really insist, let me take your father's stocking into the bedroom for a minute because I have a couple of items I forgot to wrap that belong in it." He agreed, saying "It's so full already I don't know how you'll get anything else in there." I assured him they were small packages and went into the bedroom.

In truth, of course, I had to get all of "her" presents out of the stocking and I had to do it quickly. Panic-stricken I felt each package and if I was not sure, opened it up and in some cases rewrapped it and returned it to the stocking. When I was pretty sure I had all "her" packages out of the stocking, I realized I was left with a stocking only half full. Since I said I was adding presents, I had to quickly come up with packages for him. I wrapped up my stuffed rabbit and my stuffed dog.. it still wasn't near the brim. I washed an ashtray I had on the side of the bed and wrapped it up. I took pictures out of a picture frame on my dresser and wrapped up the picture frame. I took my little teddy bear pin and wrapped it up in the middle of almost an entire roll of toilet paper, put a big red bow on it and took the stocking out for the presents to be opened.

As we opened our presents, I'm sure John, Jr. must have thought I was quite a nut to give his father such weird gifts, but he said nothing and we laughed over all the silly things. His father pulled the very last present out of the toe of his stocking to open and I almost was able to breathe again. Now it was his father's turn to think fast. He said, "Darned if I didn't put one of your presents in my stocking by mistake, Ginny. Here, honey, and a very special Merry Christmas to a very special lady in my life," as he placed in my hand the 40 ounce bottle of Chanel No. 5 Perfume which had, of course, been intended for "her". I thanked him, gave him a big kiss and we spent the rest of the day really enjoying John, Jr. and the specialness of Christmas Day together.

At about midnight Christmas night after John, Jr. had gone home, "she" began opening all her gifts that I had hid in the bedroom from the stocking. "She" said it was his and "her" best Christmas ever - though a little scary at times. The moral of this story for me is "Ladies, you, too, can buy yourself a bottle of expensive perfume for Christmas — if you play your cards right!"

*Have a wonderful Holiday Season
and a Happy and Healthy 1998 to all.*

Out on the Town ...with Darcy Leopard



Fetish Clubbing

Throughout my travels on the social scene en femme, something that has been driven home to me is that there are a high percentage of transgendered people who are interested in the fetish club scene. This is a scene that is growing rapidly within certain avant-garde clubs in San Francisco, as well as

certain clubs in many other parts of the world. For those of you who are not familiar with the term "fetish," allow me to explain.

In general, a fetish object is defined as that which is regarded as having a certain magical power. Common examples could include special types of jewelry, a carved figurine, or certain articles of clothing. The reasons why these particular objects have a magical power is mostly shrouded in mystery, and worthy of a separate discussion in itself. What I am going to focus on here is the "fetish clothing" aspect.

Fetish clothing tends to evoke a strikingly sexual and/or sensual reaction to it. In terms of fabrics, anything made out of leather, latex or PVC (poly-vinyl-chloride) is considered classic. In terms of tailoring, the closer it is to fitting like a second skin the better. In terms of style, high-glamour and creativity is greatly admired.

One of the most popular clubs catering to the San Francisco fetish scene right now is called Masquerade. It is held monthly on the Saturday closest to the full moon, in the basement floor of The Mariner's Hall located at 1st and Harrison Streets. Within these walls you will find all kinds of bizarrely clad clubbers. Perhaps a woman in a skin-tight rubber dress with accompanying full-length gloves and stockings propped up on spike-heeled, platform sandals. Perhaps a man in leather trousers, heavy leather boots, and a torso-harness made of leather straps and metal rings. Perhaps a transvestite in a vinyl French Maid's outfit with fishnet stockings and spike-heeled pumps.

Facilitating all of the exotically dressed patrons is an excellent club layout. The main bar area is dark and intimate, with comfortable booth seating along one wall and bench seating in the center. The bar itself is classy and has a nice mural of the San Francisco skyline as a backdrop. Televisions are mounted between the booths playing videos involving a fetish or S/M theme. In the back of the club is a whole separate area with a large dance floor, a stage area, a pool table, and a limited bar.

Excellent DJ's always keep the dance floor hopping, playing a mixture of heavy, pulsating music that typifies all of the cross-breeding happening in the dance music scene of the 1990's. Around midnight, there is always a performance of some sort. These are really wild. The last Masquerade that I attended has three girls clad only in rubber panties, hoods, and goggles spraying each other with liquid latex. It was somewhat reminiscent of mud wrestling, complete with a guy refereeing while wearing an executioner style hood.

I myself have been to Masquerade four times now, and have always had a good time. The bar area has the advantage of not being overly noisy, allowing relatively comfortable conversation. There are always cross-dressers in attendance, although not many. The

club welcomes us wholeheartedly, however, especially if dressed fetish. There is actually a sliding-scale entrance fee, depending on how you are dressed. The completely discounted price for full fetish wear is \$5, the mid-range price of \$8 is for semi-fetish/gothic, and \$15 is for normal street attire.

For those of you who are wired to the Internet, Masquerade has a web page. The address is HYPERLINK <http://www.korova.net/Masquerade>. If you look in the bottom, right corner of the photo section, you will see a picture of Brenda (Didi Mau) and myself.

Another fetish club that is very popular is called Slick. It was originally started at The DNA Lounge, but has since moved to a location known as 1015 Folsom Street. It only happens about every six months, but it is a very grand affair. Several hundred people attend, and the vast majority is wildly and creatively dressed. The club has a large stage, and a very large dance floor.

As at Masquerade, there is always a performance around midnight. At the last Slick there was a performance put on by Dark Garden Corsetry. It revolved around a circus freak show theme. A carnival barker style Master of Ceremonies announced each "freak", which was always someone modeling a Dark Garden fashion creation presented in a novel way. For example, a big, burly guy carried out a woman who was "apparently" without a backbone to the stage. She writhed about and rolled her eyes, while modeling a beautiful and intricately designed full body corset that reached all the way to her ankles.

Other fetish events pop up from time to time, also. Just keep your eyes on the club listing sections in the various Weeklies to discover them. In any event, what I want to communicate to you all is that we are very welcome at these events. They are interesting and fun to attend, and a great opportunity to dress outrageously sexy! See you there, perhaps in my pink French Maid's outfit!



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Confessions of a Straight Girl

Chapter 4: Flying High

By Andrea Drane

The "real life test" is just that — a test of your courage and your convictions to see if living as your true gender is actually what's best for you. It's not for the doubting or the faint of heart - you simply must assume and meet all challenges head on. Dealing with the DMV and riding MUNI does help a girl to develop the skills to face these challenges, but these are weekly quizzes compared to the mid-term — air travel.

Air travel today is a daunting experience for just about everyone, let alone a "new woman". The level of passenger scrutiny is heightened, the lines keep getting longer, and the waiting often seems interminable. You need all the poise and confidence that you can muster, and you find out just how much you actually have as all your presentation skills are put to the test. The fun begins when you arrive at the airport, and getting there by public transportation is just the teaser. From that point on, any attempt to actively hide or to be other than your true self will just makes matters worse.

Boarding MUNI only requires a simple flash of your pass; boarding an airplane is much more complicated:

- * The ticket agent scrutinizes your ticket, checks your ID (finally! Someone actually wants to look at my beautiful picture license!), and asks you the standard security questions.

- * You pass through the security check point. Keys and coins went through with your purse, but now you need to consider jewelry and fancy belts. Packing a hair dryer in your carry-on is likely to prompt a "look see," but poise and confidence will win the day.

- * You sit or stand around in the gate area for an indeterminate length of time. Delays seem to be an integral part of air travel these days, and they can last for hours. This practically guarantees a trip to the public restroom, filled with fellow female travelers who, like you, are probably not in the best of moods.

Once on the plane there is truly nowhere to run to and nowhere

to hide. On MUNI, you rarely have a chatty seat mate, and no one asks you "What would you like to drink?" Besides lasting many times longer than a MUNI ride, you simply don't have the option of "getting off at the next stop" — you are in for the duration. Still, the MUNI survival techniques of reading and looking out the window work just as well, and there is always the option to nap or watch a movie. Taking a pleasant, friendly tone with the cabin attendants works wonders, too.

While the following is good advice for all air travelers, those of us taking hormones (particularly the high pre-operative dosages) need to pay particular attention due to our increased risk of blood clots:

- * Get up and move around for a few minutes every hour or so (can you say aisle seat?)

- * Hydration is important, so drink lots of water. This also ensures that you will get up and walk around every hour or so.

- * Don't wear tight, constricting clothes, and do wear comfortable shoes. The truth is that many women travel in sweatshirts, jeans or loose fitting jumpers, and running shoes.

Those of us who haven't completed electrolysis need to be aware of our appearance, especially on long cross-country flights. A trip to the lavatory an hour or so before landing will usually suffice, so be sure to pack your toiletries in your carry-on. Don't forget that the buzzing of an electric razor may send the wrong signals, so consider bringing a disposable blade razor. Also, don't freak when you see yourself in the lavatory mirror. The combination of fluorescent lights, beige walls, very dry air, and the resultant static in your hair is absolutely guaranteed to make you look your worst.

As I write this, I have made the trip to the East Coast three times en femme, and now have only the "normal" fears and frustrations of the airtraveler. So while we certainly shouldn't have a fear of flying, we do need to be aware of the preparation and the confidence that it requires. Other than that, just be yourself and embrace the adventure. After all, we are reaching for the stars!

California Dreamin' 1998

By Leslie Bailey

I have a long-time fantasy of spending three or four days in a row "en femme." Actually, a week would be delightful if my feet and face could hold up! Since I can't yet afford to go to one of the numerous TG getaways (being both transgendered and a single parent is a subject for another article), I plan to go to the one that's coming to me. April 28 to May 1 next, Cal Dreamin' '98 comes to the Holiday Inn on Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco. A number of our members are volunteering to make this a memorable experience.

As a member of ETVIC for 12 years, I have used the group as my umbilical cord to the outside world. Circumstances, personal readiness and fear kept me from simply being "out

there" in public. Then, a funny thing happened a year and a half ago. My circumstances changed, I got drafted onto the organization's executive committee and I learned that fear only receded as I walked out into the light of day and pushed it away in a process that is still happening.

Steve has plenty of fun places to go. I'm going to give Leslie some extended time, and next year's California Dreamin' is just the place to do it. There will be informative seminars covering cross-dressing, transsexual and social/family issues and "How To's," an entertaining dinner show, excursions for the truly adventurous and new friends to be made. I will probably get an opportunity to go off on my own for part of a day. The more I'm out, the more comfortably Steve and Leslie co-exist. This is another chance to build my confidence and to learn about myself and my transgendered community and friends, many of whom are more 'out' than I and serve as my teachers. See you there!

Cross References: Promote Yourself A Whole New Look

By Elizabeth Walters

You say the lipstick shade you've been wearing is beginning to pall, but you feel you lack the expertise — or confidence — to shop for a new look? Or maybe you'd like a makeover, but can't afford to pay an expert for a consultation? Perhaps you are a "newbie" who is experimenting with creating an overall femme appearance, but you don't like the inexpensive cosmetics you've been looking at in drug and discount stores?

Here's an alternative to consider: the major makeup manufacturers occasionally offer promotional "gift" packages of varied cosmetic items to lure genetic women into buying their products. Those "gift" offerings frequently can form the basis for a "new woman's" complete cosmetic look, at a fraction of the price of buying the items separately.

The major makeup houses — firms such as Estee Lauder, Clinique, Calvin Klein and others — usually offer the gift packages as loss leaders in larger department stores such as Macy's and Nordstroms. These promotions come along at regular intervals, and you can get an idea when the next one will be by calling the department stores themselves.

We are talking about quality cosmetics here, not the cheap stuff that sloughs off five minutes after it is applied. The appearance and finish of these items is far superior to the mass sales cosmetic lines available in Payless or supermarket chains, and the selection of makeup shades and perfume scents they offer is broad enough so that at least one of their items should work with your personal taste and "look."

The gift packs are given to customers who buy a minimum dollar amount of some cosmetics item — usually \$20 or less — or who try a brand new product that the company is trying to promote. That may seem like a high price to pay to get in the door, but you have to remember that even a compact of pressed powder from one of the bottom-of-the-line brands can cost as much as \$6-7 at a drugstore or supermarket. High quality cosmetics are expensive enough that usually even purchasing something as small as a lipstick and lip liner will make you eligible for the gift pack.

In return, you receive up to \$60 worth of makeup and skin care products to sample. The range of cosmetics available through these offers can be tremendous: For example, a recent gift pack from Clinique included two different lipstick shades, a combination eyeliner and lip liner, a small container of "Aromatic Elixir" perfume, a tiny face powder compact, a travel tube of shampoo and a white and yellow plastic makeup bag. An earlier version of the pack contained two different mascaras, a couple of lip colors, a blusher, a lip sealer, eye creme and several other face and body care items.

Estee Lauder has been running a promotion that offers a 9-piece gift pack worth \$50, including two lipsticks, a mascara, a bottle of body lotion, a face conditioner, a men's cologne sample, a large-toothed plastic comb (perfect for styling wigs!) and two sleek red vinyl makeup bags, all for a minimum \$18.50 purchase.

In a promotion at Macy's, Fashion Fair has offered a gift pack to those who buy \$15 worth of items. The pack consists of two different lipstick shades, a mascara, a container of eau de toilette,

a bath gel, cleansing creme and a bath sponge. If purchased separately, these items could cost as much as \$50.

In addition to substantial savings, there is a great advantage to trying different cosmetic items through manufacturer's promotions: They are sold at counters staffed by experts who can give you personalized advice about the products and their use, and can help you select makeup shades that go with your femme hair color and skin shade.

Although some cross dressers may initially be uncomfortable approaching department store makeup saleswomen, most of these clerks are professional, courteous and helpful — and far more interested in making a sale than they are in embarrassing a potential customer. By and large, these women know their makeup, and their knowledge will be a tremendous benefit to you, particularly if you are a novice.

And if you decide you don't care for some of the gift products you receive, no problem: trade them with your TG girlfriends or with genetic women friends who know about your femme side. You may not care for the way a particular lipstick or eye color looks at first, but learn that it grows on you with time; at the very worst, you may end up with a makeup item you do not like — but at least you didn't spend much on it.

Take it from me, the gift offerings are a great way to try out new looks and sample new brands. My SO introduced me to the promotional offers at Clinique, and I have enjoyed the company's products so much they have become my standard makeup. I probably never would have grown to love them so much had I not been able to try a wide variety of them through their frequent promotional gift packs.

("Cross References" is an occasional feature that showcases shopping advice for MTF cross dressers. Have a great shopping tip to share? Send it to "Cross References," c/o Educational TV Channel, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.)

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