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Madeline Davis Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,
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Buffalo Belles

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BUFFALO BELLES



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NU PHI CHI

AUGUST, 1996

SISTERS IN CHARGE:

CINDY [REDACTED]
JEAN [REDACTED]
KATHY [REDACTED]

Dear Sisters,

A lovely summer's night was the setting for the July meeting. We had to start in our alternative meeting room, but were able to go down stairs to our regular place by 7:30. If you had called the hotline befor leaving for the meeting, you would have known where we would be, atleast at the start.

Many of us spent much of the evening taking advantage of the beautiful grounds for our leisure. Quite a few pictures were taken in the flowering grotto.

As dusk fell, fireflies lit the background in great profusion. They signaled time to go in and have a meeting and have our meeting and pizza. Several items were discussed, the whethers forth coming.

We didn't have a 'program' once more. Would one of you ladies volunteer to take on that job??? We have a list of good ideas that wouldn't be to hard to follow up on. PLEASE!

It didn't seem to long after arriving that someone came up to me and asked when we breakup. I replied "oh, about 10:30, 11:00ish..." It was a quarter to twelve then! So off into the night we went.

PICNIC-Our next meeting will be our third annual picnic/meeting. We will the grounds to ourselves after 6:00. A wedding before us, at 5:00. We will go buy the meat/rolls once the attendance is determined. Please bring a dish to pass for about six. Patti is in charge and if you are planning to attend, please let her know if possible and she might have a suggestion on what to bring. But remember, the most important thing to bring is yourself. This has bean one of our most pleasant meetings in years past, Including the great potatoe salad debacle a couple of years ago, which atleast did win us an award from Idaho Chamber of Commerce!! This has also bean an event that has had some of the wives make an appearance. Why not bring her along to enjoy our evening?

COUPLES DINNER-Will be held on September 21 at a popular fare local spot. This is a golden opportunity for you married members to help establish a better relationship with you wife over the issue of our sisterhood. How about giving her the opportunity to form her own sisterhood with the other ladies like herself. Contact Patti to make your reservation. Needless to say, this is a non-dressed affair.

RIVERSIDE WEEKEND-the annual trek down to Cambridge Springs, PA is still four months away, but is time to send in your reservations. This is a wonderful event, about ten of us have attended in the past. The price isn't too bad, the distance only two hours drive, and you have plenty of time to plan for it. See enclosed brochure and come join the fun!

DANALYN-Thankyou for the game you made up. It was quite clever. I missed on #'s 2 & 9. Can you get them all? So how many can you solve??

ATTENDANCE-last month through either a glitch in my brain or Jean's computer we left the list out of the newsletter. So to keep our records in order is a double listing.

JUNE	JULY
Denise [redacted]	Denise [redacted]
Jean [redacted]	Jean [redacted]
Janice [redacted]	Janice [redacted]
Patti [redacted]	Patti [redacted]
Kathy [redacted]	Holly [redacted]
Frances [redacted]	Kathy [redacted]
Collean [redacted]	Tammy [redacted]
Nancy [redacted]	Collean [redacted]
Joy [redacted] (formerly Jerri)	Joy [redacted]
Cindy [redacted]	Angella-Her debut! Welcome sister
Kathryn [redacted]	Cindy [redacted]
Paula [redacted]	Paula [redacted]
Camille [redacted]	Camille [redacted]
	Michelle [redacted] (guest)

CALENDAR UPDATE

August 3 Buffalo Belles picnic meeting
Sept. 7 Buffalo Belles meeting-our forth anniversary
Sept. 21-Couple Dinner Out
Sept. 26-29-Southern Comfort Convention-Atlanta
October 5-Buffalo Belles meeting
November 2-Belles meeting
Nov. 6-10 Holiday en Femme convention-Chicago
Nov. 22-24-Riverside Weekend

RIVERSIDE GALA WEEKEND COMMITTEE

P. O. Box 1571
ERIE PA 16507
JUNE 17, 1996

MURIEL CHANDLER, COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

FILE: A:\ESCDocs\RGWHLNG1.WPD

Dear Club President:

It is with great pleasure, speaking for Erie Sisters, that I enclose brochures for the upcoming Fifth Annual Riverside Gala Weekend. As Chairperson I can report that the Riverside Committee has been very active since March, putting together what we feel is an exciting agenda. The accompanying brochure lists many events, but Riverside offers much more than the brochure can fit.

I sincerely hope if any of your members are "first timers" just contemplating attending, that your member speak to a sister who has already attended Riverside. I am confident her endorsement will allay any trepidation that hesitant member may have. Both the Riverside Hotel and the surrounding community of Cambridge Springs look forward to our weekend in November with genuine cordiality. In fact, many local residents have asked if they can attend the Talent Showcase this year, and we have happily said, "Yes." To illustrate our welcome by the hotel staff, it is the server staff who decides the best dressed ladies for first, second, and third prizes.

A "first" this year will be the "Married Couple of the Year" award. The Committee has sent details to all the C. D. Clubs. Our committee hopes you will urge your members to actively participate in the nominations process. It can only succeed if club members participate.

Each year, Riverside Gala Weekend has grown by nearly 20 percent. Last year, the hotel allocated forty-nine rooms to us. We had to turn people away. Some attendees found housing at area motels. We have negotiated to house as many sisters "on site" as possible. The hotel management has offered to assign seventy rooms (the entire hotel) *if we can book all rooms by August 1*. In addition, if we do book all rooms by that date, hotel management will cancel the Saturday night theater. We can then have the Victorian Room for our banquet and entertainment. Also, the hotel will open two bars instead of the usual single bar and that will give us the Breezeway and the Fireplace Room. In other words, we would have the entire hotel facilities.

I cannot emphasize this enough. Please urge your potential attendees to get their reservation in before August 1, 1996. Reservations started before our brochure went to the printer!

Speaking for Ann [redacted], Diane [redacted], Janice [redacted] and myself (your Riverside Committee), I extend to you a sincere wish that you encourage your members to enjoy the "experience of a lifetime" at Riverside Gala Weekend 1996.

Warmest Regards,

Muriel [redacted]
Muriel L. [redacted]
Chairperson, RGW '96

Voices of Women, Me?

"Voices of Women," a conference for women, a preeminent event in my life took place during the day of our last meeting. I took part, was welcomed, was thanked for being there, and most importantly I, Adrienne, was just one of the 110+ women in attendance. This was a culmination of the past eight months of discovery and awakening, and probably another beginning point. I would like to share some thoughts and sentiments on what I have been experiencing.

Freedom. An oft mouthed word in this country, especially during an election year, but what is it? Most of the immediate thoughts and what is voiced in the political arena are to simplistic and lack any in depth evaluations. Freedom is a frightening concept. When we continue to live under someone else's rule, authority, we have an excuse to remain in our own predicament. The fear of punishment (in whatever form) helps us to remain in a nice little box, where we know what all the rules are to be able to stand up to the judgement of others, and the judgement of ourself. My own self judgements, based on the perceived "authority" of your peers and any culture you may be a part of, is the real restriction on freedom. If you take the course of freedom and liberation for yourself, you no longer have the boundaries of what is or is not acceptable, and you can no longer blame others for the condition of your life, you become responsible for yourself, and also very vulnerable. A rather scary prospect for most of us. The paradox is that this very vulnerability, is a source of tremendous strength. If I tell my family (not confront them) that I am transsexual (TS), I am totally at their mercy for their love - but - if they welcome me as I am, it is total and unconditional, and if even if they reject me, they know who I am and can hurt me no more. Either way, I grow in strength, I am free from their judgments and my fears.

This past Labor day weekend, I decided to take advantage of the time and opportunity that had been presented as available to me at the First Baptist Church (FBC). This has not been just a "spiritual" event, this has also been a step into life. Many people think that you need "luck" to have a great success, I believe that for the most part we create our own luck by grasping opportunities that present themselves, which means taking risks. I was only taking a small chance at being a part of real life (as a woman), even if it were only to last a day, I still harbored a fear and my own judgement that maybe I really wasn't good enough to be in church. FBC, Granville, had taken a stance earlier in the year as being "open and affirming of Gay, Lesbian, Bi and Transgendered

people." Which means, you are welcome in our church, to be apart of our family, no matter your sexual or gender orientation. This was not a dare to see if they (the church) really meant what they professed, I was in need of some form of spiritual home, and here was a place to begin my search.

God was holding the door to the church open for me, but I didn't see her when I stepped in. Before I left, she chose to hug me more then once, to ensure that I knew she was present. I could have made this trip four months earlier, or still be waiting to make it now, the point is that, I chose another unconditional (for myself) step to freedom. I have been rewarded a hundred-fold for that small risk. From my vulnerability of being honest about who I am, I have become more cherished then I ever thought possible.

We all have spent considerable amount of time casting harsh judgments on ourselves (why else do we purge) and at best hoping for acceptance. Does anyone know what it is like to be considered as a "blessing?" I do. Yes, me a gift, a healer, an emissary from the God herself to test their worthiness. have not made this up, these are the words of the minister and members of the congregation. To be loved for the reality that I am a Twin-spirit. Ten years ago I thought I was maybe a step above child-molesters, five years ago I had moved myself up the list to abnormal, then up until this this summer I figured I was OK, just don't let your sister marry one, but now - now I am special. I was told by one of the women, in front of the Sunday school class, how she feels that just for me to be born, what a miracle, since we are so rare; but to appear in their presence with my insights, is a truly blessing for them. Then three weeks ago in a discussion with the minister, George, he asked if I wanted to know what his thoughts were the first Sunday I walked through the door. With some hesitancy, I said go ahead.

He Stated, "I was worried that you wouldn't come back. I knew God had sent you to test us and I was afraid we were not warm enough, welcoming and open enough for you? What a reversal! I am enjoying part of heaven right now!

Wading into mainstream life has brought additional bounty. discovered that my family doctor is a member at the church and in December she was formally introduced to "Adrienne," unknowing that I was her patient until I revealed the rest of my identity. This has enabled me to have several conversations with her, and she is willing to (and has) help me with whatever course I choose to take. I have also become friends with two psychiatrists and two psychologists

who are available to support me. Then there are the rest of the women at church to whom, I am one with them. The feminist class wants me to take part in their discussions. I gained enough courage to enroll in graduate school as Adrienne, giving a complete explanation of who I was, and guess what - all my records will be as Adrienne [redacted]

The culmination of the past eight months - Voices of Women. Over one hundred attended, I was invited, I came, I was one with the others. For the first time in my life, I truly felt my whole soul as being female, from my mother, with my grandmothers, my great aunts and my unknown Lakota grandmother, I was absolutely and unconditionally accepted as being a woman. My spirit is as theirs, and they connect. I have never felt more complete as to who I am than today. We talked of the history of the feminist class and its roots in this church; we helped each other in healing session; we talked of how to become politically active, the grassroots way; and at the closing we completed a circle, birthed another from it and then spiritually made the connections with each other.

I had known about this conference for a couple months and had planned on going, but two weeks before the hesitation and fear of rejection (freedom) set in, then the Monday before, after talking with George, I decided to attend. Gail also assured me on Wednesday evening that she would be there to support me if I needed it. Some trepidation remained until I entered the sanctuary at 8:30: Ginny, Jackie, Lyn and then Joanne all greeted me and sincerely expressed how pleased they were I had come. It was Joanne that began the release of my spirit.

Joanne Woodyard confronted me before the conference began and told me how much her husband, Dave, had been impressed with my thoughts and contributions on Ash Wednesday. She gave me a smile and a hug, then thanked me for coming - this scenario repeated itself, only with other women throughout the day. I shared some of my healing process with the other women, of freeing myself from my own judgements, of immersing myself with "mother earth" by running in the country on cool bright mornings, of touching warm rocks on the mountainside, and by sitting in sand listening to the ocean's waves. I was thanked for sharing afterwards. In my final session of the day, on becoming "politically active" everyone (about 25 present) shared who they are, why they were here, and if they had any political action endeavors. When my turn came, I felt secure enough to be able to say I have been part of the "Transsexual Menace" group - for me a big step, as not everyone was a stranger; two people present knew "him" and were now embracing me.

Part of the closing ceremonies included a ritual of writing the names of women who have been important in your life on a

ribbon, then walking to the front of the church and weaving that into a webbing, symbolic of our tapestry of our lives. had never consciously taken the time to consider all those who have had an impact on me, this was a special private, yet public moment, that I wish they could have joined their hands in a circle with me. Maybe their spirits took part. During the closing circles we searched into each other's eyes with our palms held out, but not touching, then voiced, "I am you" to which was replied, "you are me." The circles moved and you continued the ritual. I lingered for quite some time afterwards, wanting to remain in that warm glow, in the sanctuary of becoming myself.

Although much of this expansion of my universe appear centered around the FBC, they are only the anchor point of the expanding spiral. The opportunities to take part in life are constantly being presented to me, all I need do is grasp them. My newest friends and acquaintances, ask me to join in on activities, without a thought about any attention I may create for them. Into real life, that is what is happening here.

Making the efforts, taking the risks, grasping the opportunity - you need to do this! These comments are are directed more at TS and TG (transgendered) individuals, who have or are contemplating making a change in their gender life, but also hold validity for all of us. You need to take part in life and not be afraid of who you are. I know of too many gals who try to cover up their past, disassociate themselves from former friends, and outside of work and going shopping, limit their activities to gay/lesbian "safe" places or become "home bodies." Many give up much of their past activities (most won't admit to this) with a plethora of excuses as to why, when the underlying problem is freedom. "I might run into someone who knew me before," so we move or hide in our home. Again, the fear of freedom, the humility required to strip away all our pretense, to admit "this is me, just as I am." They are unable to free themselves to say, yes I am a TS (even if we don't like the label). By punishing yourself through buying into what society wants to hear, you are perpetuating the very gender definitions which you purport to oppose. That may be an interesting paradox, but the denial is as restrictive a judgement as the original closet you hid in. I still have not totally freed myself, for the same fears, but I also now know what freedom feels like, what life can be, so I will continue wading deeper into life.

I hope some of my heartfelt inner joy can be perceived in these words and some of you might be stirred to lift your judgements and allow yourself the freedom to become the person you are.

Adrienne [redacted]

SITTING PRETTY

"SITTING PRETTY"

Be graceful...be lovely. Always paint a pretty picture of yourself. You create many impressions by the way you sit. Follow these basic rules for sitting pretty.

1. Never "plop" in a chair.
2. Use your eyes and approach your chair without looking directly at it.
3. Keep your head level and up.
4. Turn into the chair and touch it with the back of one leg.
5. Lower your body gently and straight down into the first quarter of the seat, never to the back all at once.
6. When you are seated on the front part of the chair, push yourself to the back of the seat, smoothly and quietly.
7. Never sit directly forward except at a school desk. Turn body sideways, either to left or right.
8. Press knees together tightly. Never, never, let your knees fall apart. This is not lady-like or pretty.
9. If you sit on the right side, the right foot goes behind the left foot. If you sit on the left side, the left foot goes behind the right foot.
10. Do not cross your feet directly front. This causes the knees to spread apart.
11. Point your toes downwards toward the floor.
12. Hold the rib cage high, always. Do not slump.
13. Place hands gracefully in your lap. One hand cupped with the other hand placed on it.
14. Do not pull at your skirt.
15. When sitting at a desk, sit facing directly forward, knees together, feet flat on the floor. Remember good posture.



Sitting on the left side...left foot goes behind



Sitting on the right side...right foot goes behind

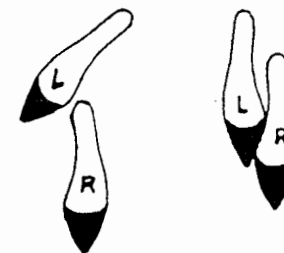


Crossing the legs keep legs together

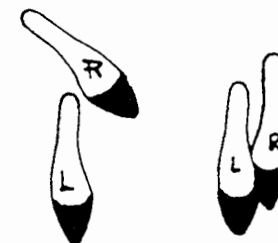


Do not separate the legs

THE ARCH



Right extension... with weight...left foot alongside and balancing



Left extension... with weight...right foot alongside and balancing



B.C. By Johnny Hart



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Blondie



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