

TWENTY

The Official Newsletter of the XX Club, Inc.

The Transsexual Peer Support Group of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc.

XX (Twenty)

January 1992

Dear Readers,

The Twenty Club Holiday Party

The newsletter is not alone. January's issue is joined by the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care, the Benjamin Scale, excerpts from DSMIII-R, and our new Gender Identity Clinic of New England brochure. They are not included as a "way to beat the system" (that was designed to protect you), or as a means of self-diagnosis. They are included for those people who have interest in them, and whose lives might have been touched by them in one way or another.

These four booklets/papers are not complete references. If you have further interest, you might find more material at your local book store or library. They were chosen because we feel they are the most talked about,

From the feedback I have been hearing, Twenty seems to be doing it's job, and I hear very little on the negative side. I still am questioned on this and I would like to underscore the following...

"Twenty Minute was folding. The Twenty Club wanted to fill the void that would be left. Twenty Club members volunteered to do that and Twenty (XX) was formed. Becky of Twenty Minutes kindly released the subscription list of Twenty Minutes to us, and gave approval for Twenty to continue subscriptions of Twenty Minutes.

We are working very hard to bring Twenty to you. We are reaching as many people as we could. Doing so, we have dipped into the Twenty Club's money pool. From this point on there will be a \$2.50 charge for duplicates and reprints of Twenty and the drops will fall back into the Twenty Club's (non profit) treasury.

The P.O. and submission boxes were not as full as they could have been. I did want to remind everyone that the newsletter is YOUR newsletter and one of YOUR resources, and a potential place to voice YOUR opinions. If you did also want to write something informative or relate some personal experience, that would be appreciated also.

Brenda P. - Editor, XX (Twenty)

Vice President, The Twenty Club, Inc.

If I hadn't been there, and seen it for myself, I wouldn't have believed it!

Food, friendship, fun and about 40 members and friends filled the hall at our annual XX Club Holiday Party on December 14th.

Instead of our usual support group format, this was a party!

Special thanks are due to Christ Church Cathedral, and their sexton Frank for allowing us to extend this special meeting to 8:PM.

Extra special thanks are due to S. E. Toon of the Twenty Club and I.F.G.E.. Stacey came all the way down from Massachusetts and provided us with her professional D.J. services at no charge to the XX Club. Not once did I see Stacey take a break. The music played on and on, and shifted format and volume as the requests were relayed to Stacey. It is XX and XX Club policy not to give official endorsements, but speaking personally - the next time I need a D.J. for a function, I know who I will be calling.

Everyone pulled together and the result was a true success. If a single person left hungry, it was by choice and not by design.

The food filled two big banquet tables. I was astonished and truly happy to see my twenty (no pun intended) pound turkey and dressing disappear within a half-hour. It was every bit worth the effort, and I do love to cook.

Susan M. brought enough salad to feed a hundred hutches of hungry rabbits. Vicki F. lugged loads of luncheon meats and loaves of luscious breads down from Buffalo. Nancy M. provided scores of sinful Italian pastries. Judy S. made a bowl of strawberry sorbet big enough to swim in. Brenda P. attempted to fatten us further with gourmet chocolates. Jennifer A. delivered decadent pies. Joanna O. stuffed cabbage and our stomachs. Some mysterious amazon goddess provided us with a cauldron of her special macaroni and cheese. Yet another mystery women whipped up a strawberry and sour cream dessert that was fit for royalty.

I could go on and on, but space and my memory prevent me from giving due credit to all that

Please See Party on Page 4

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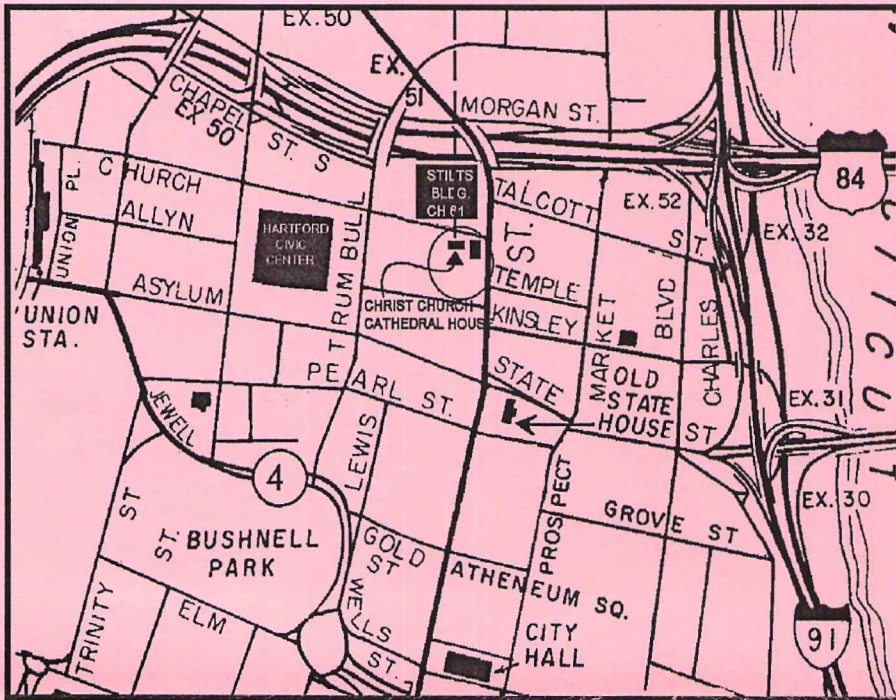
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XX Club Meetings

Regular meetings of the *XX Club* are held the second and fourth Saturdays of every month at 2 PM sharp to 5 PM.

Meeting are held at:

Christ Church Cathedral (Parish House)
45 Church Street
Hartford, CT 06103



Upcoming XX Club Meetings

- Saturday, Jan 11th** - Meeting at Christ Church Cathedral, Dr. Elliot Sternthal, MD., FACP
 "Medical Management of Gender Dysphoria"
- Saturday, Jan 25th** - Meeting at Christ Church Cathedral, Support Group Meeting
- Saturday, Feb 8th** - Meeting at Christ Church Cathedral, Dr. Leah Shaffer, Ph.D., Pres.
 Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc.
- Saturday, Feb 22nd** - Meeting at Christ Church Cathedral, Support Group Meeting
- Saturday, Mar 14th** - Meeting at Christ Church Cathedral, Guest Speakers From Digital
 Equipment Corporation & The Travelers Insurance Companies
 "Employment of Transsexual Persons, An Employer's Perspective"

The XX Club, Inc.

P. O. Box 387
 Hartford, CT 06141-0387

Advisor

The Rev. Canon Clinton R. Jones, D.D.

President

Anne C.

Vice Presidents

Jamie Lee R.
 Brenda P.

Treasurer

Carol K.

Secretary

(Position Unfilled)

Community Liason

Standing Committee

Treasurer's Report

Balance As Of 29 DEC 1991
 \$ 1,286.61

Note: Due to illness, a line item accounting is not available for publication. The above balance includes expenses for the OCT, NOV/DEC, & JAN issues of XX. This balance also reflects meeting expenses and a \$500.00 donation to Christ Church Cathedral. (\$200.00 applied to 1991 & \$300.00 applied towards our 1992 pledge of \$600.00)

The Gender Identity Clinic of NewEngland, Inc.

(203) 646-8651

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 Canon Clinton R. Jones, D.D.

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Vice President

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Newsletter articles referring to specific programs, services and/or products do not necessarily constitute endorsement by the XX Club, Inc., or, the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc. Articles involving medical aspects of gender dysphoria are not intended to be medical advice and readers are cautioned not to make any changes in treatment based upon such information without consulting a physician.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS Newsletter submissions may either be mailed to the XX Club at our address above or submitted at a XX Club meeting. While not necessary, it would be helpful to the editors if your contribution was submitted on an MS DOS computer disk (5-1/4" or 3-1/2") (any word processing format or ASCII). This newsletter represents the XX Club, Inc., and the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc.. For that reason, a submission will not be printed if it does not center on an issue of importance to the transsexual community, or if it in any way slanders any individual or group of individuals. Due to space and time constraints, your submission may not be printed immediately. Unfortunately, we cannot be held responsible for the return of any materials submitted. Please state clearly what name, if any, or any other personal information you want, or don't want included in publication of your submission. Personal information about contributors will not be disclosed. Please give due credit to your sources. All submitted material will be considered, and VERY much appreciated. Material submitted serves as a defacto release to publish. Any photographs submitted must have a signed release from all individuals in the photograph.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please send new address and old address, including zip codes, to "XX" at the above address.

Special thanks and appreciation are extended to Veronica Jean Brown and Becky Ann for their many years of dedicated service through publication of the newsletter, Twenty Minutes, which has ceased publication..

Composition and computer services courtesy of: PC Enhancement, Inc. - Cheshire, CT.

XX Club Information

The XX Club, Inc.

**The Transsexual Peer Support Group, of the:
Gender Identity Clinic Of New England, Inc.**

P. O. Box 387

Hartford, CT 06141-0387

Tel: (203) 646-8651

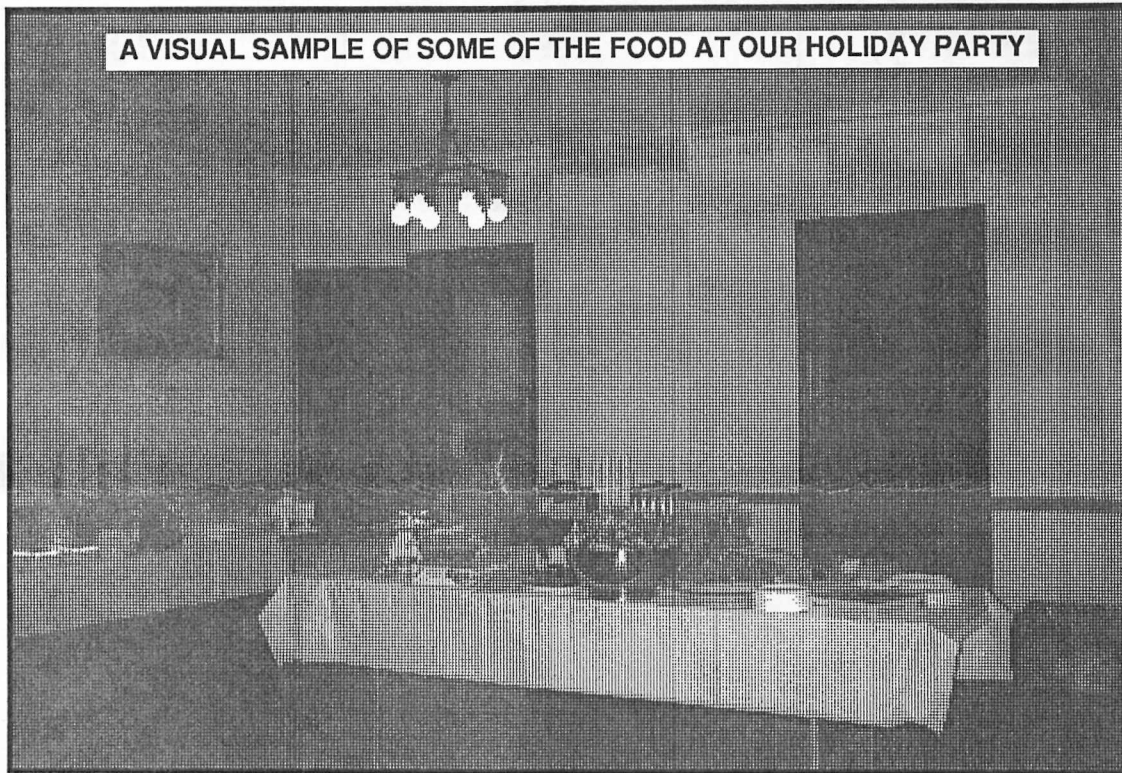
Nature: The XX Club is the peer support group of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc.. Our purpose is to provide knowledgeable information and ongoing peer support to transsexual persons throughout the many stages of their transition, as well as information about the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc.. Friends and relatives are encouraged to attend in the hope of gaining greater understanding and acceptance of their loved one's transsexuality. We are open to both male-to-female, and female-to-male transsexual persons. The XX Club, Inc. is non-profit and non-sexual. While our meetings are held at a church, we are not a religious organization and have no official affiliation with any religious denomination. We hold no prejudice against any other group of people. We are a peer support group, we are not a dating service, or an instant source of new best friends.

Services: The XX Club, Inc. officially publishes a new monthly newsletter (XX), serving the transsexual community. We meet twice a month (2nd & 4th Saturdays, 2-5PM), at the Christ Church Cathedral; 45 Church Street; Hartford, CT. Meetings are structured to provide support, information, and open accepting understanding. On occasion (no more than one meeting per month), we have professional speakers on educational and medical subjects of interest to transsexual persons. We also have social get-togethers, club parties, outreach to New England and New York gender organizations, and a speakers bureau. There is No Smoking allowed during our meetings. Smoking is permitted during our refreshment break, and after the meeting in designated areas only. In the course of our meeting we have a half-hour refreshment break. People are encouraged to get to know another during the break and help themselves to food and beverages. Please feel free to bring food to share with the group.

Security: We hold no security restrictions on people who wish to subscribe to our newsletter. Persons interested in attending a meeting are welcome to come as long as they have a personal interest in transsexuality, understand the supportive nature of our group, and are willing to respect the anonymity of all persons attending. At no time may another persons name, address, telephone number, or any other personal information be given to another person without full permission. Cameras and recording devices are not allowed at our meetings.

Membership & Meeting Fees: Annual membership dues for the XX Club, Inc., are \$20.00 per year. Dues include a one year subscription to our newsletter, XX. Members and visitors are encouraged to contribute a minimum of \$1.00 per person at each meeting to help defray our expenses. Membership dues and meeting fees are used to contribute to Christ Church Cathedral for the use of their facilities and personnel, defray the cost of newsletter production and distribution, and provide refreshments for our meetings. While these contributions allows us to remain self sustaining, no one will be turned away because of lack of ability to contribute.

Our Sincere Thanks To All



A VISUAL SAMPLE OF SOME OF THE FOOD AT OUR HOLIDAY PARTY

PARTY From Page 1

contributed to our feast. Sincere thanks to each and every one of you.

For years I have been active in the leadership of non-profit health and service organizations. I am proud to say that I have never seen another group of individuals work as hard, and so well together. You all deserve praise and appreciation.

From all of us at the Twenty Club and XX, happy holidays and may the new year bring you contentment and good health.

Our Goals For 1992

We have a busy year planned for 1992. Speakers are lined up well into next summer. Speakers will be addressing the club on subjects such as; hormone therapy, the Harry Benjamin Association, employment, electrolois, sexuality, cosmetic surgery, the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, legal aspects of transsexuality, and sexual reassignment surgery.

Amongst our projects for the coming year are:

February 1992 XX - Publication of the results of a small sample XX Club survey on sexuality as it pertains to pre & post-operative transsexual persons. We will also be publishing a new questionnaire on sexuality for dissemination to our members, readers, and gender professionals nationwide. This questionnaire is being developed by the XX Club, with the professional assistance of Dr. Lois Spivack. Dr. Spivack is a psychotherapist and sex therapist, who has graciously donated her time and compassion to the XX Club and the gender community.

March 1992 XX - In this issue of XX, we will be publishing additional questionnaires for national distribution. One questionnaire will request the names of professionals, and organizations providing services to transsexual persons. A second questionnaire will request information and your opinion of the professionals, and organizations that have been of service to you, personally.

Throughout the coming months and well into 1992, the Twenty Club and XX will expand its' efforts to reach out to those in need of our services. We will spread the news about who we are and what we are all about to greater numbers of helping professionals throughout the region. This is at the request of professionals that never knew that the Twenty Club and the Gender Identity Clinic of New England are here to help.

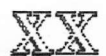
To those of you in a time of need, please realize that we are not just a twice a month support group, or a once a month newsletter. We try to be here for you whenever you need a bit of advice, information, a shoulder to cry on, or even a hug.

To the Reverend Canon Clinton R. Jones and all the fine men and women at the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, thanks for being there.

To all our friends and associates, we wish you peace, happiness, and a Happy New Year

Anne E. Curr

President, The Twenty Club, Inc.



ATLANTA

By Jennifer A.

Atlanta? Ah yes, Atlanta! Shades of Scarlett and Rhett, Melanie and Ashley, Aunt Pittypat and... Well, you get the picture. And poor Peggy Mitchell, Lord rest her soul, must be spinnin' in her grave with the recent publication of that scandalous purported "sequel", Scarlett. But what really happened of note in Atlanta occurred just recently, October 3 - 6, with the first [annual?] Southern Comfort Convention.

Oh, was it marvelous! This girl has never attended one of these gender-oriented "conventions" before, and she found it most unconventional (by conventional standards), to say the least. Sponsored by the Montgomery Medical & Psychological Institute, the conference offered a full program geared specifically to TS's, which spanned just about every conceivable germane subject under the sun. To wit, if you'll bear with me, a title listing, all sessions expertly moderated by Christina Young: Who Am I?; Transition; Building Your Team; Gender Perception; Legal Issues; Employment; Dealing With Others; Socialization; Religion; Electrolysis; Speech Modification; Hospitalization Insurance; Hormones (M to F and F to M); SRS (both ways); Cosmetic Surgery (Phases I and II, both ways); TS/TG/CD Panel; Post-op Panel; and... What Next?

Whew! Are you still there? Yes, a genuine marathon lineup, indeed, guaranteed to please and inform; a chance to learn beaucoup through the experience and example of others. And literature! With tables just outside the meeting room bearing just about every title you'd ever care to read, through IFGE. Yet, despite this rich menu, perhaps the greatest feature of personal benefit, for me at least, was the opportunity to meet and share an intense sense of fellowship engendered by the positive atmosphere and presence of so many others of like mind (and, need I say, disparate bodies).

A personal diary. Arrived Thurs. afternoon and spent two hours ironing blouses, skirts, a dress, etc. [your travel iron: never leave home without it], while trying to figure out what to wear at each point for the duration. Now maybe this was XY's logical voice inside trying to plan and control things (typical male), but then I figured, Hey! Let's play it by ear, go on intuition. Know what? It really works! But you already know that. Super-glued the separated parts of a clip-on earring together. (Must get those ears pierced, regardless of what people at work will say about XY. Heck, they're probably already saying it, anyhow). Went down to the cash bar reception, got a club soda. Saw Holly C. from IFGE, the only familiar face present. My God, look at all the TV's! That is, I hope they're TV's. I had no idea they'd be here! Dinner time... and the eatin' was easy (delicious veal, salad, veggies, etc.). Met some more people.

Thereupon we TS's split off at 8 PM for our opening three presentations, [while the numer-

ous TV's in attendance disappeared, presumably into the hotel bar. Sorry about that. I promised no derogatory remarks, but one must tell the truth—my mother always insisted—and that is God's honest truth! So if anyone considers this information to be derogatory, which I don't, well, then, tough bananas.] Shortly, that intrepid world traveler Trevor (my conference roommate, who seems to be known and loved by all) shows up around 9 PM (glad to see him!) and we get through the evening's scheduled fare, followed by an informal rap session at the TS hospitality suite (where much time would be spent the next two days) until well past midnight. Unfortunately, some fiend had cleverly placed a large bag of Fritos, one of my fatal weaknesses, by the cooler. Naturally, Jennifer stuffs her fat mouth, rationalizing that Diet Coke counteracts those Frito calories (sure, ha, ha). Into bed by two, up at six, to breakfast by seven, shared with Donna from D.C. Sessions roll at eight, straight through past "speech modification," buffet lunch of cold cuts, more sessions till dinner at 6:30, featuring sirloin tips. Mmmmmmm. Delightful transports of gustatorial ecstasy! Worth it for the food alone, resume diet next week!

Dinner! Sitting next to Trevor at tables for eight, coaching him along in the finer points of Emily Post, which we need not delve into at this juncture, when Tammy across the way casually mentions that she (or rather, her male counterpart) works in XY's profession. So JLA, curiosity piqued, pipes up, "Oh! And what is your area of specialization?" Whereupon Tammy just happens to name XY's specialized area. "Oh!" sez JLA, sailing right along at all ahead full. "And what company do you work for?" "Such-and-such," mumbles Tammy, slightly puzzled, her disquiet mounting for fear of confronting a hazardous passage. "Oh!" chirps JLA undaunted, now practically bouncing out of her chair with excitement. "Do you know Mr. A, and Mr. B, Mr. C, and Mr. D? And..." Tammy visibly blanches, thinking, as she later revealed, "Oh, bleep! There goes my cover!" But NO, my dears, of course not! JLA is nothing if not discreet. And well connected, what can I say? This truly is a small world! Another friend is made. Then off to "hospitalization insurance" and more [non-musical] rap to cap the evening. Into bed by 2 AM. Yawn.

Saturday, up at 6 AM, breakfast at 7. Alone, the place is deserted,



(Popeye's "makeover" by Jennifer A.)

"I yam what I yam an' tha's all I yam! What the hell kind of résumé is that?"

just me and the waitpersons till, at last, in comes Donna, hooray! And others... Then back into our sessions again. See some folks from "Chicago": Vickie, Jackie, Sandi, Robin. "Say, do you people know Sue, who's just moved back to Connecticut?" "Why sure!" "Blah, blah, blah..." Small world. Then a sitdown lunch, featuring Dr. Sheila Kirk's keynote address, then back to class till about 5 or 5:30, dinner to be at 7, the banquet. "Dress up," one is assuredly advised by all, so, slopping on a bucket of makeup with gallons of perfume, JLA whips on the pumps (white, with white stockings, white dress, etc., all suggestive of purity and innocence) and joins in to devour medium rare filets that literally melt in one's mouth! Ohhhh! Then the awards to organizers and presenters. Then, entertainment. Songs of mirth and songs of poignancy delivered by the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus—we're there checking out all these handsome guys and they're there looking over all these beautiful women and probably nobody's really sure what to think; then other musical offerings by convention participants; and a highlight: the musical and joke-laden routine of Wendy Parker, of California, which had practically everyone rolling on the floor in stitches. Incredibly talented young lady, she is; oughtta go pro if she hasn't already. Then, break up for informal gatherings, the most notable of which [for JLA, who came upon this after prolonged fruitless searching, looking for the hot action] involved a sixties-style songfest with guitar and wine and shoes kicked off, feet up on the table, including: IFGE "personalities" Yvonne Cook, Holly Cross, and Merissa Sherrill Lynn; Dallas Denny, editor of the Atlanta-based *Chrysalis Quarterly*, well worth a subscription; noted author and keynoter Dr. Sheila Kirk; Holly B, a recent Tapestry cover girl; and, among others, the golden-voiced Trevor who—unfortunately or otherwise—was too young to recall ever hearing the lyrics to most of what we rendered into song. Or, more simply, rendered, while Rena Swifhawk made mysterious tapping noises on the nearby window. Yes, dear, you can have it all: wine, women, and song!

Gosh! Sunday morning already! A great full Southern buffet breakfast with all kinds of goodies spread out. But JLA, having splurged for three days straight, climbed back onto the wagon and munched Bran Flakes washed down with caffeine. (The latter, which Dr. Endocrinologist told me the next day to avoid. Ho hum. You can't win for tryin'.) Then the final sessions. People are filtering out. We drive over to the mall to return Trevor's tux to the rental place. Back at the motel the literature tables are being cleared, end of the line.

The most moving moment? Hard to say, there were many. Old, enduring friendships renewed. Maybe Saturday night at the banquet when a father who had come up from Florida just to be there for support spoke of his love for and acceptance of his child, whatever she found she had to do, whatever path she took. Or perhaps it was the momentary breakdown of a participant who, speaking from the floor at one session, couldn't bear to face up to Monday, when all this would be past, back to the ordinary un-magical everyday work world. We all understood only too well.

Some random observations. Just as the eskimos are purported to possess at least 27 distinct terms for different kinds of snow, so does our community employ a similar number to describe each and every perceived variation of gender orientation. Likewise, a variety of opinions was expressed on many topics, based upon differing

individual experiences and viewpoints: the best and worst surgeons and methods; modes of electrolysis; hormones—to cycle or not to cycle; how to deal with friends and family, even when they reject you; how best to transition in the workplace, and so on. Yet despite our personal differences, a shared mutual respect and increased understanding remained steadfast.

Though some had to leave, most sat transfixed through Dr. Gilbert's graphic full-color slideshow depicting stages of corrective surgical procedures (both ways). And Dr. Singer's computerized cosmetic surgery photo images so captivated attendees that some of them were actually late to mess call. (But not JLA, I must admit. Not for lack of interest, but rather... for purely selfish, pedestrian, utilitarian reasons. Like hunger, but mainly because so many people crowded around the monitor I couldn't see very well.)

By the way, if you happen to be chromosomally intersexed (that is, neither exactly XX or XY) as determined by a buccal smear (cost: about \$200), then you are ushered immediately past the Benjamin Standards into reassignment, with full no-quibbling insurance coverage, instantly, no muss, no fuss, bingo! Get out of jail free, pass GO and collect your heart's desire. Nobody ever said life was fair. If so, they lied.

Anyhow, here we are and life goes on. Monday came and went and some of the magical glow has worn off. But Monday wasn't really too awful. I gobbled down my pills; another day of letting Nature take her [phenotypic, not genotypic] course, with a gentle nudge—I get by with a little help from my friends. (I wonder if young Trevor remembers where that line came from?!) Then a visit to Dr. Shrink. And a visit to Dr. Endocrinologist, a busy day, all in all, productive. The purse may be a bit lighter, but I'm a day closer. Gotta be patient. One day at a time. The Convention was over so quickly, it seems. Time sure flies when you're havin' fun. Sigh. After all, tomorrow IS another day.

XX

HELP WANTED !!!

We desperately need help for XX Newsletter Production.

We promise: No benefits, Lots of Hard Work, and No Pay. Position does come with the everlasting thanks of our editorial staff. Fringe benefits include our stimulating company, ongoing entertainment provided by two wierd cats, and exposure to a high technology, fully equipped, Novell multiple-server computer network: test, consulting and engineering facility.

DATA ENTRY HELP NEEDED

As part of our regional outreach efforts, the XX Club needs volunteers to assist in data entry. Our goal is to make the XX Club and the GICNE known to helping professionals and human resource organizations throughout our region. We have been requested to provide this service by professionals who were astonished to find us.

SURGERY IN MONTREAL

Information on Dr. Yvon Menard

By Sonia

This article does not imply an endorsement of Dr. Yvon Menard, or any other surgeon by the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, The Twenty Club, or its individual members. This information is common knowledge within some areas of the gender community. The Twenty Club, or its individual members cannot be held responsible for the eventual outcome, whether positive or negative of an individual sex reassignment surgery. Every pre-op transsexual is ultimately responsible for the decision of having sex reassignment surgery and in choosing a surgeon.

To be eligible for sex reassignment surgery, you must have been examined by two psychiatrists who must recommend the operation and send Dr. Menard their evaluation. Also, you must be followed by an endocrinologist in regard to hormone therapy who must send their report. All the reports from these physicians must be at Dr. Menard's office before your visit. Dr. Menard would also like you to send him a recent photograph of yourself, give your date of birth, where you were born and your name at birth. Please do not forget to indicate your phone number at home and at work.

If you decide to have the surgery, Dr. Menard must meet with you two or three months prior to the operation to discuss the procedure plus the post-operative care. When the date of the operation is decided, you must send immediately a non-refundable \$500 Canadian deposit. If the deposit is not at his office 10 days later, your surgical date will be cancelled. The final payment must be sent two weeks before the operation. You have to make a foreign draft in Canadian funds for the final payment.

In order to obtain a foreign draft, you must first find a commercial bank that has a foreign currency desk. You are usually required to open an account and the cheque will then be drawn from those funds. The fee is around \$25.00 for this service. As for the cost of the operation itself, it is \$6000 Canadian which includes hospital care, anesthesia and the surgery. Post operative services are optional and will be discussed in a future article.

Estrogen therapy must be discontinued one month before the operation. Prior to the surgery, you must have the following tests: C.B.C., B.U.N., Glucose, Urine analysis, Chest X-Ray, E.K.G. (over 40), and H.I.V. test. It is very important that Dr. Menard receive the test results at his office at least four weeks before the operation date.

My room mate and I already knew each other, and we set our date together for that reason. Although most people have no problem with their roommate, it is nice if you are already friends. The girl who had her surgery the week before us had a real personality conflict with her roommate and said she was miserable all week.

Please note that during your stay at the clinic, you will not be allowed to smoke.

Pre-operative procedure for a sex change:

1 - No aspirin during the three weeks preceding the operation: Aspirin can interfere with blood clotting.

2 - No alcoholic beverages during the five days preceding the operation: Alcohol can interfere with blood clotting. 3 - Shave the pubic area: You will have to do this on Sunday before you check in to the clinic. This is a rather unpleasant and difficult task. I used Bikini Bare cream depilatory. If you do not have adverse reactions to this method, it is much easier than shaving with a razor.

4 - Fleet or other enema: This also must be done on Sunday just before you leave for the hospital.

Concerning the operation itself, it is performed in a private hospital. You are hospitalized for five days. You must remain in Montreal for five more days post operatively before returning home.

The following account is based on my own personal experience in November of 1991.

You should arrive at the clinic Sunday evening between 7:00pm and 8:00pm. When you arrive, you will be asked to fill out and sign several consent forms. Some of these are in French, but the nurse will assist you. After the forms are out of the way, you will be shown to your room. The nurse will give you an Enema bottle and a pill. The pill should be taken about 15 minutes before you wish to go to sleep. It will put you out even if you are nervous. Remember you can't have any food or water after midnight, so take the pill before then. You must also take the Enema sometime before going to sleep.

Around 7:00am, the anesthesiologist will come in and go over your medical history. (One of the forms you filled out the night before.) Once he's finished, you will be left alone until the nurse comes to take the first patient to the prep. room. (Of the two beds in the room, the person closest to the window will be taken first.) The time of your surgery will depend on the doctor's schedule that day. In My case, I went in at about 9:00am and my roommate went at about noon.

When the nurse comes for you, they tell you to use the bathroom and strip down to just your hospital gown. (Not even underwear.) The rather chilly trip through the hall, into the elevator, then on to a gurney in the prep/recovery room is mercifully short. You climb into bed and receive a shot to relax you. They leave you there for a little while to allow the sedative to take effect. All you have to do is lie there and count the ceiling tiles, but I'll break the suspense and tell you there are 46.

Someone will come and ask you if you're ready and then they wheel you to the operating room. You then slide over onto the operating table and the nurses cover you with warmed blankets. Meanwhile, the anesthesiologist inserts an IV into your left hand and then administers several injections. Within a minute, you're out. The surgery takes about one and a half hours, but all you know is one minute you're on the O.R., and the next, you're in recovery.

I can only speak from my own personal experience, but the pain

January 1992

didn't seem all that bad. The only real sense was that of being very cold. I'm told I was in recovery for over an hour, but I was conscious for only a minute or so.

Once you are returned to your room, (for which you may or may not be awake) you will be given an injection for the pain as needed, up to every four hours. You will be conscious for very short periods of time until after your last injection at around 4:00am Tuesday. During the brief periods of consciousness, you will be very thirsty. While you are in the hospital you will have a catheter in you, and it is not uncommon to feel as if you have to urinate; some people are alarmed with this at first but it is nothing to worry about. Also, you will probably find your lips are very dry, having a tube of chapstick is advisable.

There was not a lot of pain to speak of. At least not until after the last shot wore off, and even then they gave us pain pills. The amount of pain experienced is different for everyone, but in my own case, it wasn't nearly as bad as I had been imagining. I'd describe it more as relentlessly uncomfortable.

Neither my roommate nor I could eat anything for breakfast Tuesday morning, but by lunch we both had our appetites back. They put you on a special diet to keep you from having a bowel movement while in the hospital, but in spite of that, the food was excellent. You will be confined to your bed until Wednesday morning, at which time you become responsible for emptying your urine bag. Getting up and walking around a bit is a little uncomfortable, but after two days in bed- in the same position- it is a real relief. It is a good idea to get used to sitting up so you will be prepared for Friday when you leave the hospital.

The biggest problem while in the hospital is that of boredom- there is only one position possible to maintain, and that is flat on your back. The pain was enough to keep me from being able to concentrate on reading, and there are only two television stations that broadcast in English. Bring a Walkman type tape player or any type of radio with headphones; it was very helpful for me to relax.

I found that being stuck on my back for a week caused me to rough up my elbows a bit on the bed sheets. It may be a good idea to bring some hand lotion to help with this.

Everyone on the hospital staff speaks some English, but try to simplify every request or question. Simply asking for something for pain or to have them raise the head of your bed is enough to get the message across. I found all of the nurses to be very polite and helpful, and communication problems were minimal even though I speak no French.

After lunch on Friday, Dr. Menard pays you a visit and removes some of the stitches, gives you a couple of prescriptions, asks you how you're doing, and tells releases you from the hospital. It is at this time that you get your first look at the surgery. Be prepared for it to look NOTHING like a woman's genitals; you will be very swollen. This swelling will take a few months to go away completely, but don't panic, it will eventually look like what it's supposed to.

You are then free to get dressed and leave. I encourage anyone having surgery in Montreal to take advantage of the post-op care offered by a former patient who lives in the city. (More on that in my next article) This care includes room & board and transportation to and from the hospital. Regardless of these arrangements, you will have to go to a pharmacy and have your prescriptions filled. Remember that after spending a week in bed in the hospital, without a shower, you will not be looking your best.

On Monday, you will have to return to the hospital to have your stitches and packing out. The ride to the hospital and the wait in the lobby are the worst parts of the entire experience. You have to sit for quite a while and it does not feel at all pleasant. While Dr. Menard is performing this last service, you have a chance to ask him any questions and if necessary get a prescription for sleeping pills or tranquilizers. At this time he will give you your dialator & stint and explain what to do with them. His procedures are constantly being updated so I won't get into too much detail other than to say that dilation is your most important task post-operatively. If you fail to follow the Doctor's instructions on this subject you may find that your vagina is not deep or wide enough to allow you a normal sex life as a woman.

After the doctor releases you from his care, you are free to go home. It is advisable that you stay in Montreal for a couple of days because the longer you recuperate before traveling, the better off you will be.

Here is a list of a few other things that you will need to bring along.

- 1 - Bring a box of sanitary napkins: there's a lot of yuck after surgery. It is a good idea to get super maxi pads- you will need the protection.

- 2 - Bring a panty brief type girdle: this will be needed to hold in the stint once your vaginal packing is removed.

- 3 - Doughnut: also known as an invalid ring will be indispensable for you to sit with some kind of comfort.

- 4 - KY jelly: this will be required for dilation after your packing is out.

- 5 - Betadine: used to disinfect bath water. You will need to take what is known as a sitz bath after each bowel movement for about three or four weeks post-operatively.

Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon:

Yvon Menard, MD, FRCS 1003 Est. Boul. St-Joseph Montreal, Quebec Canada H2J 1L2

XX

Gender Clinic Board Meeting Scheduled

The next meeting of the board of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, will be on Thursday, January 16th, at 7:PM. If you are scheduled to appear before the clinic, please be on time. Representatives of the XX Club will be there for moral support and to serve refreshments.

If you have questions, please call Canon Jones at (203) 646-8651

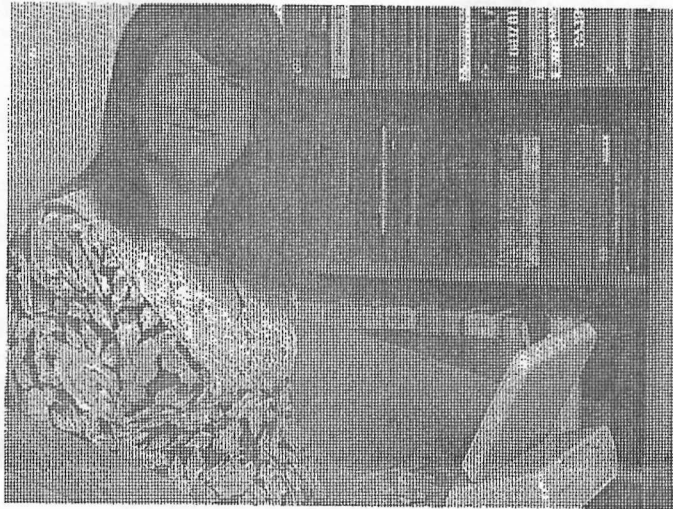
A Girl at Heart

Imagine for a moment waking up one morning and finding yourself suddenly transformed into a member of the opposite sex. Your mind, your sense of identity, your likes, dislikes and preferences are still the same. When you think about yourself, you see yourself in your original sex, but when you look in the mirror you see the other sex.

If you can imagine your feelings, then you know how a transsexual feels every day of his or her life. I know: I'm a transsexual.

The services in the GenderLine section of the Human Sexuality Forum have made a significant difference in my life. During my first few conferences, I was a bit timid, but everybody made me feel so welcome that I was soon joining conversations, posting messages, even uploading documents. Finally, I had found people who understood how I felt, because they had felt the same things. They provided encouragement, support, advice, friendship, even a shoulder to cry on occasionally.

It sounds strange to talk about electronic impulses this way, but I could feel love radiating from the computer screen. Sometimes when you live in the twilight region between genders you just need a hug from someone who cares. The conferences were like a big worldwide electronic hug.



The support I received from the conferences gave me the courage to contact a gender counselor and begin making plans for sex reassignment surgery. The files helped me locate an excellent doctor, and tips found on the message board have helped me deal with some of the practical problems of making such a difficult transition.

I still wake up feeling misplaced in body, but with the support of the people on CompuServe's GenderLine and my counselor-friend I am on the road to an exciting new life.

While the above does not serve as an endorsement, the article above appeared in *Compuserve Magazine*, December 1991, page 17

This article originally appeared in the January 1992 issue of Redbook magazine, Page 19.

The Right Hormones For The Job

Ever wonder what made you choose your career? Think testosterone, the hormone responsible for sex drive and aggression.

After analyzing several studies, James M. Dabbs, Ph.D., a psychology professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta, concludes that people with lots of testosterone work at jobs where they must beat the competition in order to succeed. Actors have the most of all, and doctors and trial lawyers score high too. Nurses and ministers, who focus more on helping others than outdoing them, have the lowest levels.

Since women with even higher than average levels of testosterone will still have only one tenth the amount that men do, does that mean they won't match male colleagues in skill? Not at all, says Dabbs. "Success is not dependent on testosterone. Biology is important, but it's not destiny."

All By Myself !

Yes, those were the words used by my friend right after her surgery. There was nobody there, no sister, no brother, no friend, no family, no support group.

Because my friend was once an "ugly duckling" to start with no one wanted her around. After being hospitalized for a severe injury her parents discovered her secret and withdrew. To add to her trauma her mother soon passed away. All with the lack of close support from us, she made it!

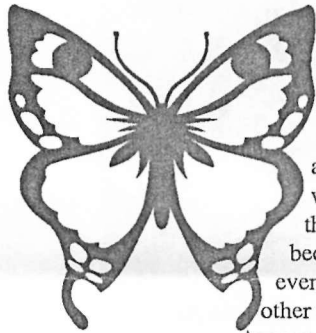
There are pangs of jealousy and this does make me want "it" so much more. A more shining example I may never see again. It is still my belief that a person who wants this bad enough will get it with or without a support group. It would have been nice had one been available, even if there was controversy.

It becomes evident we need to practice more; that we are here to support, not to take inventory as so many have done habitually in the past, (even I'm guilty). Well I guess there isn't much else except for those of you who know real support please pass it on, and those of you who do take inventory, "shame!"

CONGRATULATIONS PAULA ! WITH CONCERN, Christine.

In Praise of Butterflies

By Jennifer S.



I am prompted to write this piece for two reasons. Firstly, because over the last two years I have read a lot of articles that were loaded with grim warnings of what awaits the neophyte woman/man. Secondly, because I was in Hartford the other evening sitting around with nine or ten other women waiting to be interviewed.

As we waited we did talk of our hard times, but what I heard more of were the successes and how those new to the group could have similar successes. We listened with empathy and supported our new friend, not with unrealistic promises of good times but with truths.

I would like to offer the story of my growth out of my cocoon of maleness. It is a story with some sadness in it, some fear and some loss but all outweighed by my new happiness. It is not meant to suggest that what I am going through is easy. What I want to suggest is that with the right type of support and a truck load of courage, and maybe another loaded with the right naively, some of us can make a comparatively fast and easy transition.

My final metamorphose started January 1990 when I was informed by my spouse that she wanted me out of the house. She had enough of me and my "condition". As this was to be the end of a sixteen year union we tried some compromises for a few months before we both realized that our needs were finally irreconcilable. In July I went looking for a rental and moved into it on the 1st. of September 1990.

In January 1990, with the growing realization of what I was about to do, and being unemployed at the time, I started looking for a job that would allow me some flexibility in my work schedule. I found a job in March that allowed me to take time off to do research in the medical library and have appointments with a psychologist. My first psychologist became, to my mind, unsupportive of what I planned to do and I finally left him and found an ACSW who I could comfortably work with. I could not have done all that I have without her and I think that is very important that one finds a supportive person to work through this time of transition with.

During 1990 I planned and re-planned the next two years as carefully as I could, set a timetable and went with it. Nothing was going to stop me. My seasonal farm job was to finish October 31st. and I decided that November 1st. was to be the start of my "new life". I was determined to live through the coming winter as best I could and emerge with the spring like a butterfly from its cocoon, a new, beautiful woman.

The final push was underway. During September and October 1990

I kept a low profile and led a double life, sometimes leaving home dressed one way, sometimes another. I found the XX Club and Cannon Jones. I made appointments with all the board members for one day in early November and arranged to come before the board on the 15th of November.

With the 1st. of November I reversed the habit of a life time and threw out all my male clothes, and from that day I have not looked back. From that day my transition has been steady and fast. I started on hormones on the 16th. of November. I started a volunteer job on the 4th. of January. I started electrolysis on the 7th. of Feb. I started work, in a women's clothing store, on the 20th. of March. I am sure that I made a fool of myself on numerous occasions, and maybe sometimes still do, but I lived through it and I learned from it. There were days that I would come home in tears because of something I had done or said, but there were other days that I came home floating on air.

When I started my metamorphosis in the fall I had selected the analogy of a butterfly emerging from a cocoon. I formed certain expectations of how this butterfly would look and act when she emerged in the spring. She was going to be a new person altogether. She was going to be physically beautiful, looking like a blend between my mother and a New York fashion model, erring if possible to the fashion model side. She was also to have the poise and confidence to go with these new looks. As the spring arrived I waited for the cocoon to open and the new woman to emerge and spread her wings. Well, she did finally start to come out and I basically liked what I was starting to see, but where was that new face that I was waiting for? Where were the sensuous movements, the feline poise and grace? The New York model? And then one morning this summer I looked in the mirror and saw the face I had been waiting for: but the surprise was that the face was me, just as always. I realized that what I had done was to complete a spiral. I had started with a male persona and outlook and over a period of months had spiraled up until I reached a point where I was facing the same outlook but with a whole new mind set. I saw that all the guards, pretences and falsehoods that I had built around myself to prove my "manhood", not my physical appearance, had been my real cocoon. They had slipped away and there, with few physical changes, was the butterfly I had been waiting for. For the first time ever I can look in a mirror and honestly say that I like what I see. I have also learned, at last, to love the person behind the face.

I am now happier than I have ever been, I have salvaged all the good from my old life such as the new friends that have stood by me, the good memories, the achievements and successes. These I am carefully blending with an assortment of new friends, experiences and successes and continuing on with what my life should always have been. I have had and still have sadness, as I said at the start. I have lost a marriage. My father does not talk to me. My sisters barely talk to me. People that I once called "friend" avoid me. I knew the risks when I started and weighed and accepted them, I am not going to dwell on them. Time may heal some of the family contacts but if not - so be it.

I have found what I am doing in is not a guarantee of perfect happiness nor fashion model beauty but as I look around I see a lot of very unhappy people in this world. I see that physical beauty is

not guaranteed to all women, nor is it a prerequisite to being a woman. I am satisfied with where I am headed. What more can I ask for?

Am I recommending my course of action to anyone else? No. I did what I needed to do for myself, and I did it in a way that I could and can handle. Is my transition complete? No. Far from it, but it has progressed from a forty year destructive obsession to shed my "XY" guise to a gentle search for growth and self. Do I regret what I have done? No, not once. Not even at the deepest point my despair reached during the last two years. Will I ever go back? Now this question I saved for last. For me there is nothing to go back to. I am a Woman who has been suffering all her life from a condition called transsexualism, I have recognized the condition and confronted it, just as an alcoholic or other afflicted person needs to confront their condition. Yes, I could revert to suffering that the condition inflicts, BUT - I am NOT about to. I could not stand the suffering and pain now that I have seen how good life can be.

So, while I agree with the majority of the warnings issued I would like to suggest that one should not be limited by them, but that one should learn from them. We should all set our own pace and go with it. Some of us will decide that now is not the time, or that the price is higher both emotionally and financially than we care to pay. I strongly believe that we all need to find this for ourselves rather than being freighted off by the fears of others. With a small body frame and slow growing, pale colored facial hair I have been able to assimilate faster than some. Some with youth and fine features will have it easier than I did and some, naturally will have a harder time, but we should not look to our handicaps and the handicaps of others, we need to look to our assets and use them. Learn from other peoples experiences both good and bad, sure, - but concentrate on the good.



The Biggest Breakthrough of All

By Dallas Denny

Executive Director, American Educational Gender Information Service P.O. Box 33724 Decatur, GA 30033 (404) 939-0244

Some time ago, I was asked to write an article for breakthroughs in the gender field for the newsletter of a local support group. The proposed issue of that newsletter never materialized — nor did my article, although I continued to bat the idea of breakthroughs about in my head. Which one of the many fascinating things that have happened in the last 40 years should I write about? I was just unable to make up my mind.

Now, a year and more later, I find that my writer's block has lifted. It was not that I had nothing to say about breakthroughs. It was that I was unable to choose any single one of the many significant things that happened — things which have made the REAL breakthrough possible.

When I think about breakthroughs in the field of gender, many ideas come to mind. I think about John Money's work with intersexed

(hermaphroditic) people at Johns Hopkins University, which led, in 1955, to his making a distinction between gender and sex (previously they had been considered to be the same). I think about recent genetic research in pursuit of a gene which "switches on" masculinize development. I think about the publication, in 1979, of the Standards of Care of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Institute, Inc., which standardized the treatment of transsexual people. I think about the recent realization by researchers that transsexualism is not a single clinical entity, but a behavioral manifestation common to an unknown number of syndromes with underlying causes which might be biological, psychological, sociological, or familial in nature. I think about recent progress in hormonal treatment (the use of antiandrogens, replacement of oral administration with transdermal and other routes). I think about the advent, in the 1980's, of the use of the radial forearm flap, which revolutionized female-to-male reassignment surgery. I think about innovative hair replacement surgeries. I think about the blossoming of the gender community. I think about all these, and more, only to reject them in favor of the biggest breakthrough of all — the unique combination of social and psychological and medical factors which has for the first time in history made it realistic for genetic males to live their lives as women, and for genetic females to live their lives as men.

There have always been transsexual people, and there will always be. In the future, sex reassignment may or may not be available. Certainly it has not been in the past. But during the past two decades, reassignment has become a realistic goal for those willing to work long enough and hard enough to achieve gender congruity. Consider: if you had been born at any time in history except the second half of the twentieth century, you would have (unless you were one of the fortunate few who happened to look sufficiently like the opposite sex) been stuck in the gender normally associated with your biological sex. Electrolysis was not available. Sex hormones had not been artificially synthesized. Sex reassignment surgery was not performed.

Before 1949, the word transsexual had not even been coined. In the scientific literature, transsexual people were called transvestites, and sometimes Eonists. People who were confused about their gender did not even consider that something could be done about it.

It was in 1952, with the breaking of the "GI Becomes Blonde Bombshell" headlines about Christine Jorgensen, that things began to change. Transsexual people began to go to other countries to seek SRS. The 1960s saw the founding of the first gender clinic in the United States, and in the 1970s, SRS became widely available. The 1980s brought increased media coverage of transsexualism, and the formation of a national umbrella organization for transgendered people.

And where does this leave us? Well, in a difficult position, to be sure. The struggle to change one's gender is probably the most significant event of one's lifetime — but it is now, thanks to hormonal and surgical techniques and the social acceptance of transsexualism, within the realm of possibility for Everyman (and Everywoman).

And THAT, my friends, is a breakthrough.



Letters to The Editor

Dear Brenda:

I am writing for several reasons. First, I would like to commend you for what is shaping up as a worthy successor to the venerable Twenty Minutes. I would also like to thank you for running my article, "Tripping the Light Fantastic: Staying Sane and Whole While in Transition." I would be happy to submit material to you in the future, if you are interested.

The other reason I am writing is because of Page 12 of the November/December issue. I think it was a good editorial decision to run our press release about Caroline Cossey ("Tula") in juxtaposition with the letter from Vickie F. of Crossroads Buffalo. I would, however, like to comment on Vickie's letter which was inaccurate on a number of accounts. I would appreciate it if you would print this letter in XX (Twenty) so that the truth will be known to your readers.

First, Vickie is in error in her conclusion that birth certificates can universally be changed. They cannot be changed in some states of the union, and they certainly cannot be changed in Great Britain. For some years now, Ms. Cossey, who legally is a man in England, has been fighting in the European courts to have the right to be considered a woman and to win that most basic of human rights, the right to marry.

I have never heard Ms. Cossey claim to be speaking for American transsexual people. She does repeatedly say that she is fighting for the rights of more than 10,000 transsexual men and women in Britain who are stigmatized by her government's obdurate refusal to grant them proper legal status.

Vickey is also mistaken in her assumption that Ms. Cossey has voluntarily sought exposure. The fact is that she was a successful international model and actress for six years before being cruelly outed by the British tabloid, "News of the World." After the "Bond Girl Was a Boy" Headlines, there was absolutely no chance for her to remain anonymous. I think that all of us can relate to how that must have made her feel.

Vickie's claim that Ms. Cossey was in Playboy solely because she is transsexual is not true for several reasons, First she was in Playboy years ago, as a woman, back in the days before when nobody knew of her transsexualism. The simple fact is she makes the grade. She was in Playboy this September first, because she is beautiful; second, because she is a celebrity; and third, because she has a message, and she correctly saw Playboy as a way of conveying that message to tens of millions of people. She is a model, and her body is her tool. The Playboy appearance was an effective use of that tool. The article was not a "freak show" as Vickie claims. It was quite tastefully done. The freak shows are the talk shows on daytime television.

It is all well and good for us to mail our limited circulation newsletters around the country to each other, but their impact does not to any significant degree extend outside the gender community.

I dare say that Ms. Cossey's appearance in Playboy has caused more positive attitude change in the general public than the combined efforts of the entire gender community. We reach one or two at a time; she reached tens of millions. Ms. Cossey is living proof that transsexual people can be viable and attractive in their gender. Playboy's reader response rate was higher for her article than any other they had ever run, and the vast majority were positive.

The gender community is full of people made bitter by their gender conflicts. Certainly, Ms. Cossey, who has had as hard a time as any of us, would be entitled to disillusionment. But the fact is that she is holding her head high. She is not ashamed of being transsexual, and she wants the world to know she is proud of who she is. She is an articulate spokesperson, and I for one, would be proud to have her represent me.

It is because Ms. Cossey is a champion of human rights that AEGIS gave her a Certificate of Appreciation and welcomed her to our Advisory Board. Our private party was proof of her power to reach out and unify, for we had all factions of the sexual and gender communities together at one time.

Ms. Cossey has spent but limited time in this country, but we will be seeing more of her, for she has just bought a condominium here in Atlanta. She has told me that she is interested in learning about how our plight differs from that of our peers in Great Britain. I am sure that she would be happy to hear any suggestions that Vickie F. and other Crossroads members or XX Club members might have on ways in which she could improve her television and radio presentations. I would be glad to forward any ideas to her.

Perhaps Vickie and the members of Crossroads who she is representing should take the chips off their shoulders and try to be more positive. Slamming someone who is doing their best to make things better for the rest of us makes absolutely no sense.

Sincerely,

Ms. Dallas Denny, M.A. Licensed Psychological Examiner
(Tennessee) Executive Director (... of AEGIS.)

Dear Dallas,

From all of us at XX, thanks for the compliments. Please let me underscore this is not a one-person effort by any means.

Both submissions were interpreted as opinions. Controversy is good for a newspaper, not for a non-judgmental support group newsletter. If Vickie has another reply... to your reply, that will be printed. If Ms. Cossey has anything in her own behalf, that will be printed.

XX does not have unlimited resources, enough to fuel an ongoing controversy, and I hope direct communication to all parties would be established by this time. Other submissions would be very welcome!

Brenda

This letter was officially addressed to Carol K. (The XX Club Treasurer) who kindly forwarded it to us. I personally wanted it printed because I feel it is humbling.

Dear Carol,

Thanks for sending me the sample of your newsletter XX (Twenty). I was impressed with its content, its print quality and layout - there were a few errors (see later) but these are easily forgiven.

(Business Aspects Were Removed...)

As to the minor errors in the newsletter (Nov/Dec 1991 issue): a) on the "clip application form" p.17, you give the name of the organization as The (Twenty) Club, Inc.) on pp. 1,2 and 3, you give it as The XX Club, Inc. c) on p. 1 of the newsletter, you have two versions of the newsletter name both on the first line: XX Twenty , on the left hand side, and (Twenty) on the right hand side. d). on p. 3 you also list two versions of the newsletter name: XX (Twenty) in column 1, and (XX) in column 2! ... I won't go on.) on p.2 you promised a treasure's report in January 1991!

Anyway, don't worry about the above. I only mention the confusion to raise a smile. Keep up the good work. Let me know what you decide to officially call the club and the newsletter !!!!! <grin>.

love to you all,

Michelline J.

Dear Michelline J.

I hope you don't mind that we printed your letter. As you stated, the chances of getting a treasurer's report out eleven months ago seems unlikely. As for the continuity, we do try. Let me also state that XX and Twenty are interchangeable, and we reserve the right to do so, and the Twenty Club IS incorporated and has been for some time (as a non-profit organization).

Dear Brenda,

I would like to comment on the article, "Things to Think About" written by Holly, from the IFGE. It seems to me to be another critique of what it means to suffer from transsexualism, written by some one who never felt the deep, debilitating anguish that transsexualism causes. If holly had stuck to some of the more obvious problems of being a transsexual person it could have been a good article. Yes I agree that money needs to be invested, hormones taken and electrolysis suffered. These basic facts we read again and again and they are things that can be observed and written about by everyone.

There are, however, some things in Holly's article that I feel are inaccurate. Firstly it is under debate as to whether transsexualism is physiological or psychological. From other articles I have read I do not feel that one should categorically state that transsexualism is a psychological condition at this time. It may require the aid of a psychiatrist to work through its symptoms but that is very different to saying that it is a psychological problem. And this brings me to

another comment.

I believe that the word "shrink" that Holly uses is highly derogatory. I object to its use as I do any other word used to denigrate a group of people, maybe I know from experience how much damage and hurt such words can do.

Now the comment on electrolysis. Despite what it said in bold print let me assure Holly that there are some people who start electrolysis after starting to "live as a woman". I know this as I did it. When I started work in a local women's wear store I had ten hours of electrolysis. "Pancake make-up?". No, I never used more than some blush and lipstick.

Finally, I can guarantee Holly that it is not the hormones I am taking that make (or made) me a woman. They may change my appearance to one more acceptable to our society's perception of how a woman should look, but make me a woman? NO! The surgery I will have is not going to make me a woman either. I have been female forever.

And as for going off to "be a woman whenever it seems convenient". I am sorry but it is beyond my comprehension how anyone can make a comment like that so I guess we will just disagree on that one.

Jenny S.

ADVERTISEMENT

Boston TS Group

A support group for pre-op and post-operative transsexuals, hermaphrodites, and intersexes has been meeting for a year in Boston. It is intended to be very much like the XX Club of Hartford. The group provides:

- a place where people with similar interests and concerns can connect with others like themselves,
- a source of emotional and moral support for each other, and
- a forum for the sharing and collecting of information useful for getting through the reassignment process in the best shape possible, and
- eventually, a gender clinic or referral network in Boston.

Those planning to have sex change surgery, especially post-ops, are invited. 'Admirers' are excluded, but those who are sympathetic may come to social functions.

We meet monthly in downtown Boston at a place with free indoor parking and police security, close to all four MBTA lines; we are accepted there.

If you would like more information about us, please write to me at following address:

Dale Hamilton,
c/o Boxholder
Post Office Box 174
Nonantum, MA 02195

Please pass on this information to TS's and therapists.

The Needed Prescription

Like many transsexual persons, I have been through the clinic (Gender Identity Clinic of New England).

I have spent my time with the clinic professionals. First the psychiatrist, then the psychologist, and finally the endocrinologist.

Then before the clinic board in order to receive hormonal, and subsequently surgical approval.

Like others, I have experienced my fair share of ups and downs throughout my transition.

Through it all, however, I learned one prescription that had not been written - laughter!

It's a shame, because some of us, including myself tend to take ourselves too seriously at times.

I realize that it's hard to find humor in things, especially when it seems that everyone is putting us down - family, friends, and our own imagination. It's hard to find something to laugh about. Some problems are serious and have to be handled accordingly.

However, even the serious problems, if we look hard enough, could have some humor in them.

You have nothing to loose by trying.

This will not be a cure for all of our problems, but it does help with some. Besides, it won't hurt, and it's an inexpensive prescription.

Just think, it could be habit forming if you're lucky.

So laugh!

Jamie Lee R. (XX)



RESOURCES

The following organizations are known to the editors to provide valuable support to the gender community. This does not constitute an official endorsement by XX, The XX Club or The GICNE, however you are encouraged to investigate any and all resources and judge their value to yourself. Updates and additional information are welcome.

REGIONAL RESOURCES

The Connecticut Self-Help Mutual Support Network 389 Whitney Avenue New Haven, CT 06511 Telephone (203) 789-7645
Resource Type: This is non-profit Ct. State organization that has knowledge of over 400 support groups of all types.

Connecticut Outreach Society P.O Box 163 Farmington, Ct 06034
Meetings: 2ND Sat & 4TH Wed in West Hartford, (203) 371-6292
Resource Type: TV & TS Support & Social Group

Crossroads of Buffalo. 2316 Delaware Ave., Suite 102, Buffalo, NY 14216
Resource Type: TV & TS Support Group

Harriet Lane's TV Set P.O Box 4002 Wallingford, Ct 06492
Meetings: 2ND & 4TH Saturday Evenings 8-12PM
Resource Type: TV & TS Social Group

Renaissance Education Association P.O Box 552 King of Prussia, PA 19406 Telephone (215) 630-1437
Resource Types: TV & TS Support Group and Newsletter

TGIC - Transgenderists' Independence Club, P. O. Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604 Tel: (518) 436-4513 (Thursday 7-9PM)
Resource Type: TV & TS Support & Social Group

Transsexual Support Group formed by The Tiffany Club of New England. Meetings: 1ST and 3RD Sundays at 6 Cushing St in Waltham, MA from 10:00 to Noon. For information Call Vivian Purves (617) 899-2212
Resource Type: TS Support Group

The XX Club, Inc. - That's Us!
P. O. Box 387, Hartford, CT 06141-0387
Resource Type: TS Support Group and Newsletter

NATIONAL RESOURCES

AEGIS - Chrysalis Quarterly P.O Box 33724 Decatur, GA 30033
Telephone (404) 939-0244 (Evenings & Weekends)
Resource Type: Publisher of a TS Newsletter

HBIGDA - The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc. - 1515 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Tel: (415) 326-4645
Resource Type: The international association of gender professionals. Establishes the Standard of Care.

IFGE - International Foundation for Gender Education - TV/TS Tapestry Journal, P.O Box 367 Wayland, MA 01778
Tel: (617) 894-83402
Resource Type: Umbrella organization for transgendered support groups. Publisher of a TS & TV Magazine.

J2CP Information Services - P. O. Box 184, San Caspitano, CA 92693
Resource Type: TS Information and Referrals.

The Transsexual Voice P.O Box 16314 Atlanta, GA 30321
Resource Type: Publisher of a TS Newsletter

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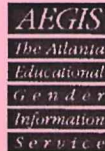
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Our Guest Speaker

January 11th - XX Club Meeting

"Gender Dysphoria - A Medical Perspective"

Dr. Elliot Sternthal, M.D., F.A.C.P., will address the special medical management needs of the gender dysphoric individual at this meeting.

Dr. Sternthal is an Endocrinologist in private practice in Bloomfield, CT. Some of us know Dr. Sternthal better as a member of the board of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc. - and our clinic Endocrinologist. He is a Board Certified Endocrinologist, and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

This is your chance to ask all the questions that you have been dying to ask. Come with your lists. This meeting will certainly not be dull!

Our Special Guest Speaker

February 8th - XX Club Meeting

"Definitions, Etiology, & The Current Status of

Gender Dysphoria in Society"

Dr. Leah Shaffer, Ph.D., President of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc., will be our honored guest speaker at this meeting.

In addition to her work with the Harry Benjamin Foundation, Dr. Shaffer is a Clinical Psychologist in private practice in New York City. Upon the death of Dr. Harry Benjamin, Dr. Shaffer was entrusted with the records of Dr. Benjamin's life study of gender dysphoria.

We will be honoring Dr. Shaffer for her outstanding contributions to the study of Gender Dysphoria at this meeting.