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Chi Chapter TRIBUNE

Vol# 38 Issue # 9
September 1999

STUFF and THINGS

“You can never have enough ‘STUFF’”
Denise, 1999

Picnic We won !

I put the photo of the elusive trophy here to let you know it is still alive and kicking. Yes, we won the trophy for the second year in a row. Our hardy team players included; Shelly, Abby, Debbie, Carol R., Jamie (borrowed from CGS), and yours truly. The left me sore for several days as it did to the many others who played. The score of the first game was 15/11 and the second 15/9. I want to thank all of you that attended the picnic. In all there were at least 40 people there. Chi Chapter was represented by Denise, Abby, Shelley, and Sara, along with Barb and Barbara, Kim, Rachel, Janet, Debbie, Laurie Ann, Carol A., Carol R.. We also had a visitor from Crossport in Cincinnati, Jennette Craden who also serves as their newsletter editor.



Kim...

Many of you asked about Kim following her bout with a mild heart attack. She is doing great and more frisky than ever. It had to do with Sinus rhythm and not a blockage. She said the stress test was fun.

As most of you know, she volunteered to do the food in April 98 on a temporary basis. Waiting for a more permanent person (s) to come along. Well, she has decided that she will no longer do the food beginning with the September meeting. We are still looking for a volunteer(s). Give us a call at the hotline if interested. It's not scary, we only have one meal in the meeting room and that is for Thanksgiving. Otherwise it is just chips, pretzels and pop/coffee.

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Mark your calendars.....

Chi-Chapter proudly presents;

HOLIDAY EN-FEMME 2001 A TRI-ESS ODYSSEY

“Celebrate the first Holiday EnFemme
of the third Millennium”

Abby's September Program Notes

For September, we're going to have a “get acquainted” program which I'm calling SPECIAL OUTFITS. I would like as many of you as are willing, PALS included, to wear an outfit has a special meaning or significance to you. Then we'll have as many of you as possible get up and introduce yourself and tell us what is special about your outfit. Maybe it was worn for a special event, or was a gift, or was an eventful acquisition. Whatever it was, we want to hear about it. And maybe this will help each of us learn the names of some new sisters, or sisters that you just haven't met yet.

In October we will have a short play and the annual costume ball. In addition, Rachel has volunteered to coordinate a POT LUCK dinner. Please let Rachel know in September what you would like to bring in the way of a special dish. It can be a full meal or a desert, an ethnic entrée or a large bag of hostess Cupcakes.

NEXT MEETING: September 18th 8:00 p.m.
P.A.L.S. and Newcomers meet at 6:30 p.m.



FIREWORKS OVER HANNOVER

by Shelley Hartt

On my recent business trip to Germany I had a weekend free to take in the sites around Hannover. From my travels as a CD in this foreign country, I would like to share with you my experiences of that warm summer evening in July.

I had a reservation for a hotel that was nestled in a forest near the Oberharz foot hills about 75 miles southeast of Hannover. It turned out to be more of a resort, for the grounds were covered with flowers and each wing of the hotel looked like a Swiss chalet. After being out most of the afternoon taking in the local sites, I found myself back in my hotel room asking the question, where to go for dinner, and what to do that evening. In past trips to Germany, while staying in Frankfurt, I had found several fine restaurants and jazz clubs that featured live entertainment. So the decision was made to adventure out to the big city of Hannover.

After freshening up, I changed out of my new summer romper into what I thought to be a more appropriate outfit. It was my favorite one-piece short sleeve dress, black with large red roses scattered though out that flared out just above my knees. I chose off-black nylons with black patent leather heels and handbag. My hair was butterscotch blonde that was styled in a shoulder length straight cut with soft tapered layers. I decided to take with me a light gray doubled breasted jacket that was tailored to complement ones figure. With silver jewelry and red lips and nails I was ready to take on the town.

It would be at least an hour drive to Hannover, but mostly by way of the Autobahn. As I approached the city I found myself on the highway that circled the town and not knowing what exit to use. The plan was to follow the signs marked Centrale, which would lead me to the heart of the city where all the large stores, restaurants and theaters are. Not seeing any such signs, I decided to exit on the west side. With the setting sun in my rearview mirror, I traveled east through this straight city for the first time. As I came closer to what appear to be the Centrale, traffic was becoming heavy and I began seeing a large number of people, on both sides of the street, walking in the same direction I was going. The crowd was made up of both young adults, mostly dressed in jeans and printed tee shirts, and older couples, some in suits and fancy dresses. I asked myself "Where could this diverse group of people be going on a Saturday night?" Curious, I began following the crowd.

They led me to a park with several large buildings that looked like a museum or concert hall. People were gathering in the square in front. As the road took me away from the crowd I noticed that the parking lots and all the parking spots on the streets were full. I said to myself, "This is big and well worth checking out."

It took about 15 minutes driving up and down the side streets to find a parking spot about four blocks from the park. The evening had turned dark now, but the streets were well lit, and cooler, about 70. I was glad I had taken my jacket. I made my way through the crowd to the square, passing several police officers without any problems. In Europe the police patrol in pairs and look like soldiers. Both were carrying a machine gun swung over their shoulder. Very intimidating to say the least.

As I stood in the square trying to figure out what event was drawing all these people, I was approached by five young woman all dress in

casual jeans or sportswear, except for one. Standing about five-foot-four, with a cute round face and smile, she appeared to be wearing a costume that looked like a peasant gypsy girl. She was dressed in a long multi-colored skirt and a white long sleeve button down blouse with a gray and black opened vest. Her hair looked fake, black and straggly with a colorful scarf tied over it, and she was carrying a straw basket full with small bottles. She began talking to me in German and I answered, "Sorry I don't speak German, only English!" Then one of the other girls, the tallest, about six-two said, "Oh, are you American?" As I nodded yes, she began explaining about the gypsy girl, "He is getting married next weekend and we girls have dressed him up for the evening and are showing him a good time." As I was congratulating him, he suddenly pulled open his shirt revealing a wadded up crew sock saying, "See, these are not real and see what I have for a tummy." He then pulled on the elastic waistband on the skirt exposing a round flat loaf of bread tucked into a blue pair of leotards. Everyone was laughing and I couldn't believe what I was seeing. He then asked me if I could come to his wedding and if I would buy one of the small bottles. I told him, no thank you for I would not be in town. The tall girl then told him to kiss me and that it would even things out. Hesitating for a moment, he then kissed me on my cheek. As they were leaving I asked them what was going on here, meaning why the crowd had gathered. Misunderstanding the question, they said they were just out here to have fun.

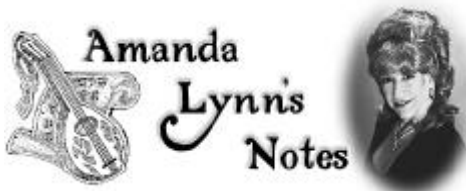
While standing there in awe for what had just happen and still not sure what was bringing all these people out, I noticed a number of posters on one of the buildings. What they described, from what I could determine, was a music festival called Stadt Hallenfest 99 that had started on Friday night with such bands as the Papa Chubby from New York and The Original Blues Brothers Band (I though John Bilucci was dead) and was continuing through this evening until the early morning hours. The posters showed that several bands were playing at the same time and that the next big groups to go on stage were Wolf Maahn and Jule Neigel + Band. This is what I was looking for, live music!

I began following some of the crowd who had formed a line at the far end of the building. As the line of people passed through the gateway, I noticed several young men passing out flyers for different events and nightclubs. One of them saw me coming and said, "Please wait one moment, I have something just for you." He reached into his rear pants pocket to get a deferent flyer, handing it to me as I past. As the line slowed down, I had a chance to read what he gave me. It was advertising for a club that featured drag shows and female impersonators. On the back, in big bright letters, read Gay and Lesbians Welcomed! I guess it's a universal belief that a man seen wearing a dress must be gay. Maybe someday the world will see us, the transgender, in a different light and look upon us, as we do, as unique human beings who's outer expression does not reflect our sexual orientation.

While waiting in line to buy a ticket, I noticed there were very few women wearing dresses and I began questioning my appearance. Was I over dressed? Did I stand out in the crowd? Why was I so easily read? As I reflected on what had happened, I realized I had been presenting a positive attitude that was attracting positive experiences. This has been my belief over the past four years, ever since I accepted myself in both gender identities. I look at this desire to express my feminine side as a gift and if I'm read, and I assume I am most of the time, that it does not matter. Although people may not understand, what they see is a happy person who feels good about themselves and when a smile most people can't help but smile back.

I could hear the music as we approach the side doors of a large auditorium. Inside at one end was a wide, five-foot high stage. The crowd had filled over half of the hall that was the size of a football

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Last year Gloria and I had both published stories of how we had the opportunities to crossdress at

office parties under the guise of acting out characters. Both of us wondered about what might be the fallout from such a performance. For the most part, it has gone well for both of us. But then last week I received an e-mail from a woman at the office who had seen my performance almost three years ago. It read: "A few of us girls are going to the Clinique bonus at Fields on Friday. Want to join us?"

Well can you imagine the high from that! I knew better than to immediately react to the message and say "YES, YES, YES!!!" So I decided not to answer until I had some time to think about my alternatives. I first recalled Deirdre, the UIC professor who visited us at the August meeting. Then I remembered some of the encouragement I have read in Rachel Miller's book and monthly newsletters. The stories of courage some of you sisters have told me also came to mind. They were stories of self-confidence enabling them to tell others of their gender variation, and live to tell even more people.

So I leaned on these lessons of courage and decided to go along with the girls, realizing that doing so would really out myself.

Four women decided to make the Fields trip. We met for lunch first, but no one brought up the subject of why I was tagging along. It was obvious that each was waiting for the other to say something, and I wasn't going to be the first one. Then finally as we left the cafeteria, one asked "Well are you going to get something for your wife?"

There it was. The question was asked. I had wanted it to be asked. I even rehearsed what I would say when asked. So I responded: "No I'm going to buy some cosmetics for myself".

"You mean Clinique for men?"

"No, women's cosmetics for this man. I enjoy crossdressing and I buy almost all my cosmetics at bonus sales."

Well she was blown away with surprise and was quickly poised along with the others to hear more. I was calm, laid back and quite confident. Inside I was jumping for joy. The conversation continued with me telling little tidbits about being transgendered and what it meant. The women were quite touched by my revelation and had some very kind remarks about having to accept the way ones path in life took them.

We arrived at the counter and they wanted to know what I was going to buy and if I was going to tell the clerk it was for me. I just told them to watch me in action. When my turn came I asked for the things I wanted by product name, color and strength. (I had done my homework at www.clinique.com the night before.) The clerk asked, "for your wife?" I answered, "No, for me" and smiled. With a returned smile and a cute "O.K.", she found the items, rang up my Visa, and bagged them and the freebies together. I left the counter listening to her wish for me to "Have a nice day and enjoy your cosmetics!"

The girls realized by now that I was a card-carrying crossdresser. On the way back to work we chatted more about it and they were quite supportive. Of course, I brought some photos along to show them

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DRESSING ON FAMILY VACATION

By Christine Adams

I must start by admitting that I have an unusual advantage over many crossdressers. Both my wife and daughter know my secret. However, my daughter has never seen me dressed and wants to keep it that way. Therefore, in the spirit of compromise, we reached an agreement on my dressing before we even left home. I could go out 1 day on our vacation if I didn't dress until after my wife and daughter had gone out and if I agreed to return to the hotel room before they did.

Our vacation was to New York City. On the agreed day, my wife and daughter left the hotel about 11 AM. Between shaving my legs and arms, doing my hair and makeup, and my desire for perfection, I wasn't ready to step out until 2 PM. I wore a Disney top and



jumper with hose and blue tennies. Given that this was New York, I probably could have dressed a lot fancier, but I decided to stay with a casual look. Once I got out, I was walking on air. I took a leisurely stroll down Fifth Avenue. Since I was feeling so good, I decided not to ruin the mood by looking at any price tags in the designer stores. Instead, I opted for the Disney Store (OK, so I'm still a little girl at heart - I do own Disney stock). I bought a couple hairpins for my hair and wore them out of the store (For those of you who don't know me, I use my own hair instead of a wig). When I continued my walk down Fifth Avenue, I almost ran into my wife and daughter. Luckily, I saw them first and was able to cross the street before they saw me. I then decided to take a stroll through Central Park. Since this was a beautiful Saturday, there was a fair crowd in the park. Being an avid Beatle fan, I visited Strawberry Fields, a part of the park set aside as a memorial to John Lennon across the street from his apartment. I also enjoyed several different street musicians who were playing at various locations throughout the park. When I finally started walking back to the hotel, I noticed two 13 year old girls who did a double take on me. They were the only people I noticed who might have read me. I got back to the hotel at 5:30 and had showered and changed when my wife and daughter came in at 6:15. Although my outing was brief, it was still a few hours of sheer delight.

DRESSING-UP ACCORDING TO KIKI

Why do I dress up?

Why? The obvious reason I do is because I enjoy it! Many times I've called it "Creative Excitement" because I was able to get "the excitement" from looking at Kiki in the mirror. I certainly do not want to be a woman but I sure enjoy looking at Kiki when she is looking her best and/or sexiest. Many times I would see a particularly attractive gal then try to buy what she was wearing and duplicate the way she looked. In a way I always considered it a self-defense mechanism of some sort. Instead of being driven nuts by a good-looking woman and my mind saying, "I WANT A WOMAN!" when none was available, I could get dressed up and somehow-or-other satisfy myself by becoming in my mind that which turned me on. And that is not to imply that I was not able to have a good-looking woman, I've had my share.

Then after the initial "excitement" abates, or perhaps the next time I would get dressed, the reason for dressing changed to a challenge of how good I could look, or how well I could walk, or how fashionable I could be. The challenge could be any number of things that present a problem in acting and passing as a woman.

Then there is curiosity factor, which raises its interesting head. Can I turn a man on? What's it like to be hit on by a man? What's it like to dance slow with a man rather than just moving around each other about 2 feet apart? What's it like to have date with a man? What is the female experience like?

Then there is the good feeling that comes when the "excitement" is gone or at least dormant, the curiosity is somewhat experienced, and the challenge of being able to look not only passable but to be a decent looking woman in our own eye is met. The beautiful pleasure that comes from looking and acting like an attractive woman in our own eye and becoming the very thing that attracts us.

When I'm all dressed up looking great and sexy, sometimes I've thought that perhaps I'm a dirty old man trapped in the body of a beautiful female. (Hee hee.)

Transgendered. What in the world does that mean? Does it mean that we are born with one sex and we want to be physically the other sex? In usage, it seems to mean anyone who is a cross-dresser, a transvestite, a Drag Queen, or a transsexual. Men and women are all transgendered to various degrees and switch back and forth between many of the so-called gender characteristics of male and female every day. We don't have to wear the clothes of the opposite sex to do it. Virginia Prince coined the term to describe a person who lives full time as a female but does not anticipate changing their sex. Over the years, the definition has been bent and reformed by whoever thought they knew better where it now seems to mean anyone who is a straight or gay cross-dresser, a transvestite, a Drag Queen, or a pre or post-op transsexual..

However, it does not explain why some of us dress-up yet do not want to become woman, nor does it explain why some women have more male characteristics than other women and some want to become men.

I have one gender and its more male than female. I do like to imitate the female in certain ways and then revert to my true gender but my basic gender is male and always will be. So I'm TransImaged not Transgendered. This obviously means that I want to look and act like

the opposite sex at times rather than be the opposite sex or live full time as the opposite sex. Transgendered should mean we are one sex/gender and want to become the opposite sex/gender or live full time as the opposite sex.

Cross-dressing can become addictive. Perhaps we work as our male selves and immediately upon coming home, assuming its possible, we get dressed as a girl and it feels good and very comfortable. Then somehow or other we convince ourselves that being a female would be the answer to all our problems in life. Perhaps you have joined a support group or found support on the Internet where you can be directed to professional counseling and start hormones. The mind is an unfathomable thing and can be convinced of a lot of things that are not true as long as you want them to be true. Unless you are a guy that looks almost female to begin with and has a lot more female gender characteristics than male, forget about the operation. You'll be much happier in the long run remaining a genetic male and dressing as a female when you want to as long as it doesn't interfere with your survival. Survival to me means, friends, family and a job.

I have known a few guys who have gone on hormones and to shrinks thinking they wanted to be female and eventually had the operation. They became addicted to dressing-up and should no more have had the operation than Mike Tyson! And their so-called doctors were advising them to have the change! Criminal to say the least. I've also known a few who have made the transition to female reasonably well and even married. Unfortunately in one case, it meant moving away and having nothing to do with the friends that were developed over the transition years and living in fear that she will be discovered. Strangely enough, many that went through counseling, hormones and have had the operation, never had any attraction for men in the first place, never dated men while cross-dressed as near as I could tell, and after the transition, ended up having a lesbian relationship. Hey, if there're happy, more power to 'em, but I don't think they should have dumped their wives, their kids, alienated their families, and caused in many cases, insurmountable problems in the work place.

Why don't the shrinks require that to become a female you should at least be attracted to men and as part of their transition require that they experiment in sex with men? If men do not turn them on, forget it! Go back to being a cross-dresser. Be normal as least somewhat normal. Real normal sucks.

It seems that shrinks will advise you to do almost anything as long as you want to do it bad enough regardless of its practicality.

There is a very attractive cross-dresser on the Internet who after a few years of going out in public and passing, thought he wanted to become a woman. He went to counseling, took hormones, quit his job and began living as a woman with some guy he/she was in love with. He had saved his money up for the transition and was prepared for the operation. After three months of putting on make-up, the waist cincher, and working hard to look his best every morning and also thinking that with the operation, he would never be able to have kids of his own, he quit cold turkey! Now he is happily married, living in Texas, has a couple kids, and maintains one of the best sites on the WWW for the Transgendered. (Michelle's Mid-Day Break)BTW, he only dresses occasionally now.

I don't have gender dysphoria either. Dysphoria is an emotional state characterized by anxiety, depression and restlessness. When I get dressed-up I feel good and I also feel good when dressed as my male self so how my dressing-up can be called gender dysphoria is a mystery. Maybe it should be called you gender euphoria. Euphoria: a feeling of great happiness or well being.

As far as developing my "femininity" is concerned, I certainly don't

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(Continued from page 4) Why? Kiki

have to get dressed up as a female to do that. I can do it every day in every way. If I'm working on my "femininity" as Kiki, I'm only trying to work on the challenge of acting female. (On the Internet it would mean looking as sexy as possible.) They say today's woman can change between what is considered feminine to put it simply, nurturing and artistic, and masculine, being aggressive and tough, without batting an eye. I know guys who can do the same thing. So I think these so-called experts are all wet when they say we are transgendered, have gender dysphoria, or dress-up because we are developing our femininity. What we are working on is our female image.

To sum up, some of us dress up because of:

The "excitement",

The challenge,

The curiosity,

The attention, (The 100 % increase in attention you get from being a good-looking female and the 200 % increase in attention if there is a suspicion you might be something other than what you look like.)

The good feeling from becoming what attracts us! (And the better you can look, the better it is.) And last but far from least,

The fantasy of being different than you really are, of being like Alice In Wonderland so to speak, going through the mirror and becoming someone else.

And ask yourself this question, why does an actor act? Because he enjoys being someone else for a little while! Could that be added to the list of why we dress up?

Granted, I didn't start dressing up until my mid-forties but for those that started at an early age, I believe that only some minor changes would make it fit. The basic reasons remain the same.

Cross-dressers are TransImaged not Transgendered.

Transgendered should mean anyone who lives full time as the opposite sex or wants to be the opposite sex. It should not include cross-dressers.

Gender Dysphoria should not apply to cross-dressers. Perhaps Gender Euphoria would be a better word.

"Developing my femininity" should be called "developing my feminine image".

At least that's the way I see it.

Editor's note: This article is currently on Kiki's web site and has received much praise from other crossdressers. I thought you would enjoy it. Next, "Why I don't dress any more."

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Christine Adams (630) 397-6975

(Continued from page 2) Shelley

field. There were no chairs and everyone was standing or dancing to the rock music. I made my way through the dimly lit crowd to an open spot about twenty feet from the stage. The five piece all male band, three of which were guitars, sounded good but loud. It was great to hear them singing in English. I had fun moving to the music and at one point joining in with a group of girls that were dancing. It was also interesting to watch the people. Have you ever noticed men do not dance? They were just standing still, watching the band while sipping on their glass of beer. Us girls, on the other hand, love to shake-it-up and are not afraid to sing along.

After the band finished playing, I decided to get something to drink from one of the refreshment stands that were on each side of the hall. As I stood in front of one of the four lines that formed, waiting for my drink order to be filled, a short man to my left began to stare. He looked me up and down, not once or twice, but three times with a shocked look as I noticed him out of the corner of my eye. Across from me was a young man filling a drink who was observing. We both began smiling as I shrugged my shoulders as to say "What's this guys problem? What's the big deal?"

He nodded his head as to agree with me. As the man to my left was about to leave, I looked at him with a big smile on my face, raising my eyebrows as to say, "You'll just have to deal with it."

As the young lady behind him moved to the front of the line, she started talking to me in German. I told her that I didn't understand the language. She then spoke to me in English saying, "Boy, some people can really be jerks." And with a big smile said, "And I think you look cute." I thanked her and she then asked, "You are out here to have a good time, right?" I nodded "Yes" and thanked her again as I left with my drink. As I looked back at what just happened, I realized that I was reflecting an image of someone who was proud of who they were, for what could have been a bad experience turned out to be very good.

As another band was setting up, I decided to checkout the rest of the festival. Exiting the building through a different group of doors at the opposite side of the hall, I found myself outside in a crowded court surrounded by a large variety of food vendors. This was quite appealing, for I hadn't eaten anything since the early afternoon. After purchasing a couple slices of pizza, I made my way into the park. The pathways that crisscrossed through the park were all lit up with strings of white lights. I could see more food and refreshment stands scattered about with several large beer gardens. As I sat down to finish eating my dinner in one of the gardens, all the lights in the park and around the stands went off. A minute later the sky became illuminated with a beautiful display of fireworks. As I watched this colorful light show I could see that hundreds of people had gathered on the lawn at the one end of the park where the fireworks were being launched. The show ended about twenty minutes later with a spectacular finale.

After the park lights came back on, I walked around and found more music and dancing. There was a DJ playing Disco while people danced to his beat. At another spot was a fifties band with a skinny guy who sang Roy Orbison tunes and a heavy set woman that sounded like Peggy Lee. It was great watching both young and old dancing to their music. There was a band singing German melodies in one of the beer gardens and inside the other building was a nightclub playing Retro. Truly a music fest for all. Back in the main hall, I saw the late set of a rock band with a laser light show. They featured a dynamic female singer that had the crowd jumping. On the way out I saw people still buying tickets for the mid-night show.

What a night! As I found my way back to the car, I couldn't help think the fireworks were just for me. A celebration of me living my life the way I want by being myself, a Bi-gendered person, and loving every minute of it.

Couples Group

PALS, COUPLES AND STUFF

At our August PALS meeting, we had six in attendance. Five of us were slightly and well-seasoned members and one newcomer. We always enjoy welcoming a newcomer to our group and encourage them to come back and continue with our ongoing support for each other. At our next meeting I would like to discuss the possibility of our group having a PALS LADIES NIGHT OUT. We could all meet at a local restaurant, comedy club, movie theatre or where ever we decide. Let's give it some thought ladies.

Our Couples Group met on August 28th at J.D.'s and my home. We had a total of six couples in attendance. I just love a full house! Thank you to all whom participated and brought some delicious goodies to munch on.

At this month's meeting I presented a story I had written about two characters named Forrest and Tillie. As in Dragnet, the names and places had been changed to protect the innocent. The story talked about how two people lack the art of communication and consequently are misunderstood. Feelings are hurt, pride steps in and before you know it each are punishing the other for how they feel by releasing their anxiety towards the little irritations that cross our paths each day. "Can't you put anything away after you use it." "I haven't been able to find a dark pair of socks in days." "It would be nice if someone would put a light bulb in the lamp when it burns out." After reading the story aloud, I raised some questions to the group.

1. Have you ever felt like you're being punished for something you said or did?
2. Have you ever felt guilty for something you said or did?
3. Have you ever apologized for something but the apology not acknowledged?
4. Have you ever gotten the SILENT treatment?
5. Have you felt uncomfortable or unable to express your true feelings for fear of rejection or anger?
6. Have you expected your spouse/significant other to know why you're upset or how you feel without discussing it?
7. Who is responsible for the way you feel?
8. Who is responsible for your happiness?

These questions brought up some interesting and lively discussions. We had a very mixed bag of feelings and opinions that made the evening quite interesting and fun as well. And I can speak for at least J.D. and I that we are really glad we can laugh and put fun into this new side of our relationship.

I started out as chairperson of PALS to do my best to reach some of the women that were going through a very emotional, confusing and often-lonely time in their relationship. It is so important to be able to share feelings during this time when we seem too be riding an emotional roller coaster. Not certain if after the next drop we'll still be on our way back up. I prepare for each month's PALS and Couples group meetings with the thought of sharing experiences or emotions which have brought me growth and helped me to move forward on my journey.

J.D. and I have learned to be brutally honest with each other. This does not mean saying anything that comes out of our mouths without considering the possibility of hurt feelings. It means being able to give criticism or comments to each other to help us recognize the need for growth or improvement. Each of us has the opportunity to take what we need from what is said and leave the rest behind for another time when we are ready for it, respecting each other's place in our separate journeys.

J.D. pointed out to me that at times during the couples meeting, I sounded like a teacher more than a chairperson. That he thought I

might try presenting a group of questions or topic to discuss and letting the group share their own experiences and feelings that were raised. I responded by saying I thought I did that by introducing the story then asking for a response to the questions. After reflecting on the evening, I saw myself as being opinionated and there was a right or wrong way to feel as people in the group spoke their minds. This kind of response comes from my old habit and need to be in control. To be able to fix someone's way of thinking if it isn't like mine. Even if I have found that something has been very successful in working through the ups and downs of our journey, everyone needs to be where they are on the universal spectrum in order to experience their own growth in their own time.

I am truly blessed to have a person like J.D. in my life, who is not afraid to take the risk of being honest with me and does it with so much love and support. I am also thankful to all the couples who take the risk of opening their hearts and keep coming back.

The next couples group meeting will be an outing just for FUN! J.D. and I will be researching and making reservations at a restaurant, comedy club or theatre that we can all enjoy. I will be making phone calls to all couples regarding time and cost and place of the outing. Even if it's just one couple that gives a positive response, J.D. & I will still be going out on the town September 25th. If you feel I do not have your phone number or need to contact us before the 25th, you can email me at [REDACTED]@aol.com. See you there or be square!

Food for Thought

"Love is the free exercise of choice. Two people love each other only when they are quite capable of living without each other but choose to live with each other." Scott Peck

Chi-Chapter Recipe Book

Don't forget to share your favorite tried and true recipes for our new recipe book to be out in print before the holidays. This means we need those recipes A.S.A.P.! Sara has offered to help print and bind the book and this will give our chapter some well needed funds for the holiday season. We are accepting all recipes. There will be a separate section in the cookbook for Holiday Recipes. Bring them to the next meeting or email them to me at [REDACTED]@aol.com.

Linda

Approximately 1/2 of the couples group



Naomi

Kelly

Nancy

Denise

Keri

Norma
Shelley

2001 ??

OK, I know it's early to advertise the 2001 Holiday, but one thing you learn from running these is that the only thing you can't buy is time. Advertising, brochures even though preliminary should all be mailed at least 10 months early. Hotels need at least a years notice if you want a good location. Final seminar and event flyers should be available before even asking for money and no sooner than 7 months. How can you charge for an event when you don't even know what your expenses are? And who would buy a ticket for something unknown.??

Another thing is letting other groups know of the events so that similar events are not scheduled on the same dates.

Amendments

At the August meeting the Bylaw amendment was approved by the membership with one exception. The first Article revision was withdrawn by the board as too vague and will be resubmitted in the future.

Elections

Nominations for the Chi board will be held in October. If you are interested in serving the chapter, please think about it. There will be "job" description sheets available at the September meeting.

August Fashion

I want to thank Rori for the great program, 'From Frumpy to Fab in 10 easy steps' The only thing was I was wearing an outfit which she said is a no-no. Well someone had to.



Denise & Olivia posing with the Trophy. Which was found in Sheila's basement.

Official Picnic Photos



Hostess with the mostess, Sheila D.



**The official picnic security dog
Protecting the trophy.**

NOTE-ABLES

Here is an interesting article from the Sun-Times that you may wish to include in our chapter newsletter titled "How the 'West' was fun" from their Entertainment section of June 29th.

Question to Will Smith: To disguise himself, macho James West dresses up like a woman. Were you in touch with your feminine side?

Smith: I am in touch with my feminine side, but I must say I found it annoying to have breasts. Breasts are an eye magnet. I found the men on the set staring at my chest and I felt genuinely embarrassed. I was humiliated! Damn, men are pigs!

Interviewer: I didn't mean to make you nervous.

Smith: But then again, I was hot. Kevin (Kline), however, also had to dress up like a girl, and let's get this right on the record. He is a butt-ugly woman. Plus, if you want the truth, Kevin had six hours in makeup to get himself that ugly, I had 45 minutes and I was glowing, baby.

Interviewer: Kevin, did you want to be an inspiration to, um, tall women everywhere?

Kevin: Oh, how nice of you. You didn't really want to say tall. You wanted to say horrendous. My view is that I think this culture is obsessed with gender. So what if I put on a dress? I do have a scene where a cowboy chooses me over Salma Hayek.

Interviewer: Obviously, the film is a fantasy. Let's go to the authority.

Sonnenfeld (the other actor in the movie): Look, Kevin had better breasts and Will has a better (bottom). And I can't be any more honest or they'll hurt me.

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) - Cher isn't the only one dressed outrageously at her concerts. The audience usually includes drag queens done up in the style of their fashion idol.

"It's been 35 years of drag queens, so I'm a connoisseur," she told the Television Critics Association on Thursday via satellite. Her Las Vegas concert will air on HBO later this summer.

One man so impressed Cher that she ended up including him in her act.

"There were several nights we'd be working across the stage from one another and I would look at him. It was really kind of eerie because he does me so well," she said.

Cher is on her first concert tour in eight years, propelled by the success of the dance single "Believe," her biggest hit in 25 years.

"Everyone says I've reinvented myself, but I'm pretty much the same that I've always been and doing pretty much the same things," she said. "I'm just the same old same old."

(Continued from page 3) Amanda

what they didn't see at the office party. They were quite impressed and each had a different favorite pose. We parted with their self-initiated pledge to keep this episode among themselves, and a request for me to take a day off and come join them for lunch as Amanda. How cool!

Like others have said, "Our own fears are our worst enemies." I had my fears, but was bolstered by the courage of others who had done this before me. I had the burning desire to spread the word about us through my own example which is so like many of us: a veteran respected

employee, married for many years with a bunch of grown kids, and can live to tell of his happy transgendered life with pride and dignity.

Thank you, God!

May you too have the same courage when your turn for a 'bonus' in life comes.

A tip of the wig to Cheryl H. who is a good friend of some of us. She visited us in November of '97 and is studying for her doctorate in psychology. Cheryl made a public statement in our behalf when she witnessed a sales person mistreating a crossdresser. She challenged the clerk on his ridiculing of the CD. "What difference does it make, you're going to take his money anyway. Right? So why tear him down." She continued on with much more tongue lashing of the ignorant prejudiced clerk. Her support for us was even more emphasized by canceling an expensive purchase she was about to make and leaving the store with all the rest of the customers having witnessed what she said in our behalf. Way to go, Cheryl! We passed a thank-you card around at the August meeting and she melted when she received it with all your signatures.

Fall Harvest 99

MAGGIE's 10th annual Fall Harvest comes to Milwaukee in 1999. Here you'll find support, information and friends in a welcoming atmosphere. Professionals, vendors and leaders from the whole spectrum of the transgender community will be on hand for three days of learning, networking and fun.

Fall Harvest 99

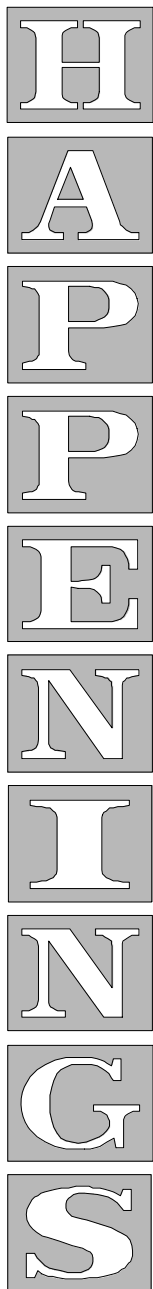
PO Box 44211

Milwaukee WI 53214

Voicemail: (414) 297-9328

Www.netwurx.net/~fallharv99

E-mail: fallharvest99@usa.net



Great Lakes Council of Gender Groups

Activities Calendar

SEPTEMBER 1999 - OCTOBER 1999

SEPTEMBER

Sat	9/11	7:30PM	GGG meeting, Milwaukee, Unitarian church
Tue	9/14	8:30PM	CGS Meeting, Stardust, 5688 N. Milwaukee
Sat	9/18	6:30PM	Chi Chapter Meeting, Elmhurst, 8 p.m. Newcomers 6:30 pm
Sat	9/25	7:00 PM	Chi Chapter Couples Group On The Town.
Sun	9/26		AIDS walk-Chicago
Tue	9/28	8:00PM	CGS Social, Temptations

October and beyond

Mon	10/4	Miss CGS Pageant Baton
	10/15-17	Douglas Dunes, Michigan
Sat	10/16	Chi chapter, Elmhurst Halloween 8 p.m.
Fri	10/22	Skyscrapers Halloween Party—Golden Flame
Nov.	10-14	Holiday En-Femme, Houston, Texas
Nov.	11-14	Fall Harvest, Milwaukee, 414-297-9328
Dec	18	Puttin on the Ritz
November	2001—	
Chi Chapter is proud to host the first Holiday EnFemme of the new Millennium. "2001, a Tri-Ess Odyssey".		



2nd ANNUAL RAINBOW COTILLION

Friday, October 22 from 6 P.M. to Midnight
at the 19th Century Women's Club of Oak Park
Dining - Dancing - Prizes \$75 per ticket
Sponsored by MCCI Church of Oak Park and
LesBiGay Radio, Call 1-888-WE ARE GAY
or see Rori at Transformations or Lori Fox

Skyscraper Heels Halloween Party

"Austin Powers" The 1960's
Friday, October 22nd, '99 7:30p.m. to 1:00a.m.
Golden Flame "Ruby Room"
6417 W. Higgins in Chicago

Tickets can be purchased at one of three places, Skyscraper Heels, Rachel's Wigs, and Transformation's by Rori. \$10.00 in advance, or \$20.00 at the door.

We're having a Halloween Party w/ a theme, the 1960's. You can wear whatever you like. I'm having a great Drag Show, with Gabriela Govianti, Xviara Cuffey Colby Snow, Regina Upright, and Deja. Of course there will also be, my C.G.S. sister Amy Marie.

So come dance the night away with us, with a great D.J., raffle of course and a cash bar. Hope to see you all there! Luci of Skyscraper Heels

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