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Chi Chapter TRIBUNE

Vol# 38 Issue # 8
August 1999

PICNIC

STUFF and THINGS

"You can never have enough 'STUFF'"
Denise, 1999

Couple weekends ago

It was a busy weekend in July. Friday evening the 23rd, Chi hosted a reception at the hotel for the Tri-Ess board of directors. Amanda, Connie and Sara, along with Kim and myself were amongst those present.

Saturday morning we held the board meeting and those results will be forthcoming in a future issue of the Femme Mirror. I will say, I was very happy with the outcome of the meeting, and I believe a lot was accomplished.

Saturday afternoon, this hardy group left the confines of the air conditioned hotel and traveled to the desert sands of West Chicago. It was SO hot, I thought I saw a camel dieing of thirst by the side of the road.

A total of 106 showed up to savor the warm air and (read HOT) cool breezes. (read no breezes). Anyway, the food was great, from sweet-sour chicken to beef, Stir fried veggies, topped off with chocolate dipped strawberries and cream puffs.

Chi Chapter Board members; Abby, Sara, Shelley, Denise and CGS President Olivia were there to show their support to sister members for a very big event in the Chicago gender community. The Garden Party welcomed the board of National Tri-Ess, Virginia Prince, Carol Beecroft, Jane Ellen, Francis Fairfax, Samantha Walls, Robin K., Lynda Frank, Naomi, Deanna, Donna Martin, and Marlene Liston, oh.. and me.

Sunday afternoon was cleanup time. Arriving at Julie Ann's at 1:00 pm, Kim and I were met by Sheila D. and Olivia, Robin from CGS and Tony. While Robin was busy washing dishes,

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Grills, Meat, Buns, Corn, Ants

On Sunday August 29th, Chi will be holding it's annual PICNIC at Sheila D's. Like last year, we will be co-hosting with CGS.

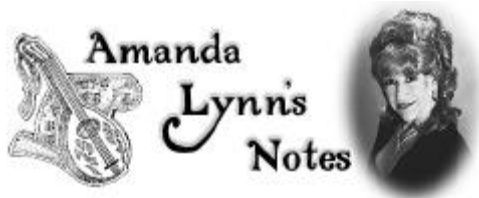
Scheduled are: Eating, cooking, the annual Volley ball championship's, eating and more eating. This is not a garden party, it's a Picnic, ants and all, dress as you wish. Details on the location are found inside. Sheila says: anytime after 1 pm is OK, bring a dish if you want and also please bring a chair. (No catered stuff here) Best of all, it's free. We have all the leftovers from the GP.(whadya mean it's supposed to be refrigerated?)

Abby's August Program Notes

Well girls, July was another great program that Abby had nothing to do with, except to show up and have a great time. Thanks to all involved for putting on a great afternoon and evening. Can't wait till next year.

For August, Abby and family will be away on vacation, so President Denise will be coming up with something for you. 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.

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In April of 1997 I posted a little web site. You all know I'm involved with newcomers, and the number of them that have found us over the internet prompted me to investigate the possibilities of creating a site of my own. (<http://www.mcs.net/~mandy>) The purpose was to have an internet presence that helped define mainstream CD's (as characterized by most of our membership) to the public.

I had surfed the net and come up with enough sites that displayed crossdressing in despicable ways. Some with nudity, others with fetishes, some very amateur in presentation and some with gross inaccuracies in what they had to say. Everybody has the right to their own presentation, but what I had found wasn't what I felt the majority of Tri-Ess girls would want to be categorized as. I saw many crossdressers with dismal poses, as if they were sad about their disposition. I wanted a site that expressed the joy of crossdressing and all my photos would have to relate that.

I worried about security, but most of you who have seen my male side have said that my female appearance is nothing like the male view. So I trusted in your comments, checked out technical security issues to keep hackers from finding out my true identity and went ahead with it. So far, so good. I have not had anyone come up to me and ask me if the girl they saw on the net was really me...yet!

So I scanned some favorite photos, worked up some text and posted a budget site that costs me just \$10 a month to maintain. Well it was a slow start. I was the only one surfing to it for the first few weeks. Then I e-mailed a few other CD's and asked them to link to my site. Little by little the number of visitors grew. One fine day I actually got 10 hits! Now, a little over two years later, I get nearly 3000 different people scoring well over 20,000 page hits every month. The site ranks 47th in hits to all transgendered pages, according to one agency that freely informed me of this fact. These numbers tell me that there are a lot more people out there looking at crossdressers than we might expect. The closet must be pretty big, but the internet is helping open the door. How can we get some of these folk to join us and enjoy being with others like themselves, in person and not in cyber space?

I have received hundreds of e-mails from persons who ask questions about themselves and their crossdressing. I reply to every decent mail. Some write back, maybe only once. With a few I have carried on some long-term discussions. Some even include their real names and are surprised when I tell them to be more cautious. Mail from wives asking for advice comes this way too, but not often. I rarely get sexual or derogatory mail. There have been a few, but nothing that alarmed me. There's a delete option that such mail gets as soon as I read it.

Many people read what I call 'Short Shorts', a collection of a

couple hundred brief TG experiences that others have related to me, or that I have personally had. Some are funny, some serious and a few are definitely tear jerkers. There are high hit counts on the photo pages. (If only Photoshop could come out with a line of makeup that could match what can be done digitally!) However, most people fall victim to a link that I labeled "Sex, Sex, Sex". Hey! How else are you going to get attention? It's actually a biological explanation of the different path a fetus takes in regards to sex and gender from conception to birth. Sorry to all those who were looking for a good time.

Maintaining the site is sometimes a chore, since I have to keep coming up with new material, and of course the obligatory pictures of me in a new outfit or pose. Oh vanity! I'm glad I went to a digital camera. I have saved hundreds in processing costs! Just need a bigger disk drive now.

There are a lot of others out there now that have posted decent sites. My current goal is to seek them out and create a page of links to those most like us. People who lead decent lives and just love to spend some time as a lady.

Do check out another web site. The It's Time, Illinois site has just completed phase one of a total makeover. One of the highlights is a page of terrific links. Go out to <http://www.itstimeil.org> and take a look.

(Continued from page 1) Denise

the rest of us began dismantling the lights, tents, tables and chairs. Olivia and I worked in the loft of Julie Ann's barn, lifting the packed tents by rope and pulley, warmed by the 120 degree temps. While Sheila and Tony moved the many tent posts into the barn. Kim kept us cool by occasionally dousing us with cold water. from the ice chests.

In all, the entire three days were a fun event. The following Chi members were present; Shelly & Linda, Teri & Abby, Keri & Heike, Nancy & Judy, Barb & Barbara, Gloria & Debbie, Christine & Cheryl, Ruby & Ann, Naomi & Rachel, Collette & Elizabeth, Denise & Kim, Sheila D, Monica Ann, Sara F., Laura B., Wallie, Janet T., Barb #1, Velma, Rori, Julie Ann, Olivia, Maureen, Carole A., Lorraine K, Carol Rodgers,

I was most pleased by the turn out of 11 chapter couples.

Post Office

The USPS has extended the deadline for the new PMB prefix until April 2000. They gave in because it looks as though there may be a congressional fight over this. I have several articles-etc but no room this month. If you are interested please e-mail me and I will send you what I have.

Amendments

At the August meeting, we will vote on the proposed bylaw amendments, following discussion.

A Special Thank You to Everyone

From
Barbara D. & Barb

Barb and I wish to Thank everyone who contributed to this years MS-Walk. With everyone's help it was a great success. I raised over \$1,300.00 for MS research this year and I couldn't have done it without the kindness and generosity of Chi-Chapter and its members who gave so much. A big hug and thank You to everyone from me and Barb.

Maybe some day if we keep giving in this way and helping others maybe we just might find a cure for MS some day. And don't forget to mark your calendars for next years walk on April 17, 2000.

**Sunday
August 29th**

At Sheila D's

Nope, NO Coupon

It's FREE

**Just bring a chair
and a dish if you wish.**

Dressing—optional

Volley Ball—mandatory (sort of)

ABBY'S ROAD

Hi everybody!! Remember me? Sorry I haven't written for a while, but with Terri's surgery, recovery, and related stuff, Abby hasn't been able to get out much. Anyway, last month Abby did get the chance to get out on the road (finally!!) under somewhat unusual circumstances.

Every summer, Terri and I have to attend a 3-day conference in Michigan. After eleven straight years of attendance, we decided that we could blow off all the Saturday activities and have an ABBY AND TERRI PLAY TOURIST DAY. Terri is a lighthouse fan and collector, so we decided to drive over to Lake Michigan to visit and photograph lighthouses.

Our first task was to create Abby. The conference was held at a college in central Michigan, so we had to leave and make the transformation while driving to our first lighthouse in Muskegon. It's really hard getting dressed and made up in a moving car, what with all the traffic, bumps, and confining spaces. The finishing touches were put on when we stopped in the parking lot of a factory than was closed for the weekend. It was going to be a sunny but cool summer day with temperatures in the low 70s. I wore a pink and turquoise plaid cotton jumper dress over a dark pink silk blouse and white flats.

In as much as it was unusually cool for July, I figured the beach areas would probably be less populated that unusual, thereby decreasing my anxiety level. WRONGO GIRL!! When we got to Muskegon, the beach was jammed and there we're no parking places anywhere. The Miller Lite National Sand Volleyball Tour was in town for the weekend, and it was one big beach party!

Fortunately the lighthouse was slightly north of the festivities, although we did have to walk a way after we found a place to park. The lighthouse was out at the end of a long breakwater, and Terri wanted to walk out to the end to take pictures. The entrance was through a Coast Guard Station surrounded by a chain link fence with signs like "Keep Out," "No Trespassing," "Authorized Personnel Only," etc. Terri wanted to walk right on through to the breakwater, but Abby was not to keen on venturing inside. Terri teased me by reminding me that signs like these had never stopped me before in any explorations. I had to remind her that on those other occasions I was not wearing a dress. Terri was not going to be deterred, and she went right on in, leaving me standing there by myself. Faced with the prospect of hanging around the entrance to the Coast Guard Station alone for the next half hour, I took a deep breath and hurried after her. We made it to the end and back, and escaped, without any problems. We even took a picture of Abby sitting on the breakwater.

Our next stop was Grand Haven. According to the Lighthouse Guidebook, the Grand Haven light is at the end of a public pier that is "frequented by droves of fishermen." I now know what a "drove" of fishermen is. It's every fisherman within a 100-mile radius. They were all there. It was more crowded

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 1) Abby's Program Notes

Down the road a few months, our November program will be a presentation on "passing". I'm looking for some volunteers who venture out on a regular basis to serve on a panel to take questions, just like we did with the PALS program back in March. Oh, and by the way, the Chi-Chapter theatrical players are working on a brand new play dealing with some of the trials and tribulations of "passing" which will be presented at the November program. We're looking for some new people to take on some very small roles in that play. If you would like to be involved, let me know at the picnic or the September meeting. Scripts will probably be distributed at the October meeting, so I need to know before then who wants to be in it. You can also e-mail me at [REDACTED]@hotmail.com

See you at the picnic!!

Saturday – August 21
Rori presents
Frumpy to Fab in 10 easy steps

A Note of Thanks...

Thank you to all of the Tri-Ess members who attended the second annual Garden Party this past weekend. I sincerely hope that the tradition of this joint effort can continue for years to come. Once again and on behalf of Chicago Gender Society your support is greatly appreciated.

Olivia Connors, President
Chicago Gender Society

Couples Group

Ti's Sweet Support

What a fantastic turn out we have had at our couples meetings! A deep and heartfelt thanks to all of you who were brave & fearless enough to share your thoughts and feelings within our group. Our dialogue on words has become very stimulating as well as fun. Being open and honest is hard enough just with our spouses and significant others much less in a room full of couples. But the one thing we all seem to have in common is we want to learn more about how we can love and accept unconditionally. Perhaps by our example we may see others in society do the same thing.

Jim and I have had several calls and emails from people needing information about cross-dressing and support. I have been encouraging the spouse/significant others to come to a PALS meeting prior to attending a couples meeting. The reasoning behind this is that it seems to be easier to talk for the first time about transgender issues just between women. Once the initial fear of finally sharing these feelings with someone is past, it is easier to move on to a group of couples. Jim and I have also offered one on one meetings with any couple who would like a more confidential setting.

Our next PALS meeting will be August 21 at 6:30 pm.
Our next Couples meeting will be August 28 at 7:00 pm.
For more information about either of our support meetings, please contact Linda via the Chi-Chapter Hotline 708-383-1677.

We had a terrific turn out of 11 couples at the Garden Party Luau on July 24th. What a great time everyone had dancing in those grass skirts. I think some of us wish our hips were double jointed. Although some of us were convinced we came really close to meltdown! Nobody melted! A big "Hip Hip Hooray" to all the LADIES with layers who stuck it out all evening.

We are in the process of planning an outing for our couples group September 25th to go to Tommy Gun's Garage. If anyone is interested please contact Jim or Linda. Since we will be getting information about reservations, price per couple and dinner choices, we will need to know how many are interested in participating in a fun evening. This would be in place of our regular couples meeting for September. You can email Linda at [REDACTED]@aol.com.

Till the next time
Linda

(Continued from page 3) Abby's Road

than the Sand Volleyball Tour. We walked all the way to the light at the end of the pier, dodging fishermen, roller bladers, cyclists, and sightseers just like us. Nobody paid any attention to us.

Our last lighthouse to visit was Holland, Michigan, but we were never able to find a way to get out to it, so we got some take out chicken and had a picnic in the park at the restored train station. We'll make it to the Holland light next year. All too soon it was time to head back for the evening festivities and put Abby back in the duffel bag. Getting undressed and un-made-up in a moving car is no easier than getting dressed and made up.

Playing tourist as Abby and Terri was an interesting and exciting experience. Hopefully, we'll do it again, soon.

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Saturday 11 to 5
Sunday Noon to 5

H A P P E N I N G S

Great Lakes Council of Gender Groups Activities Calendar AUGUST 1999 - SEPTEMBER 1999

AUGUST

| | | | |
|-----|------|---------|--|
| Tue | 8/10 | 8:30PM | CGS Meeting, Stardust, 5688 N. Milwaukee |
| Sat | 8/14 | 7:30PM | GGG meeting, Intersexed, Milwaukee, LGBT Center |
| Sat | 8/21 | 6:30PM | Chi Chapter Meeting, Elmhurst, Business meeting at 8 p.m. |
| Sat | 8/28 | 7:00 PM | Chi Chapter Couples Group. |
| Tue | 8/24 | 8:00PM | CGS Social at Hunters, Elk Grove Village |

September and beyond

Sat. 9/11 - GGG meeting, Unitarian church
Sat. 9/18 - Chi Chapter Meeting, Elmhurst
 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

November 2001—

Chi Chapter is proud to host the first Holiday EnFemme of the new Millennium. "2001, a Tri-Ess Odyssey".



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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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