

TV GUISE

Vol. I, Issue 8

A Polygenderous Polemic In Process

November, 1991

Godmother Of All Modern TV's

Virginia Prince, whose birthday will be celebrated (if ya send a card— P.O. Box 36091, Los Angeles, Ca 90036) November 23, was born in 1912. In 1962, Virginia founded the first social-contact club for cross-dressers (limited to heterosexuals), and the first magazine dedicated to cross-dressing, *Transvestia*.

In her man-life, she earned a Ph.D in pharmacology, operated a successful chemical business, and married twice. Subject of many radio and television interviews in the early 1960's, she became a public representative of cross-dressers, and a beacon of light that pierced the isolated darkness of many a closet. In 1967, she began living full time as a woman after her second divorce, and after selling the business.

Author of three published books, she lives in Southern California with her dog, Princess. She continues to take science classes at UCLA, and is writing her autobiography.

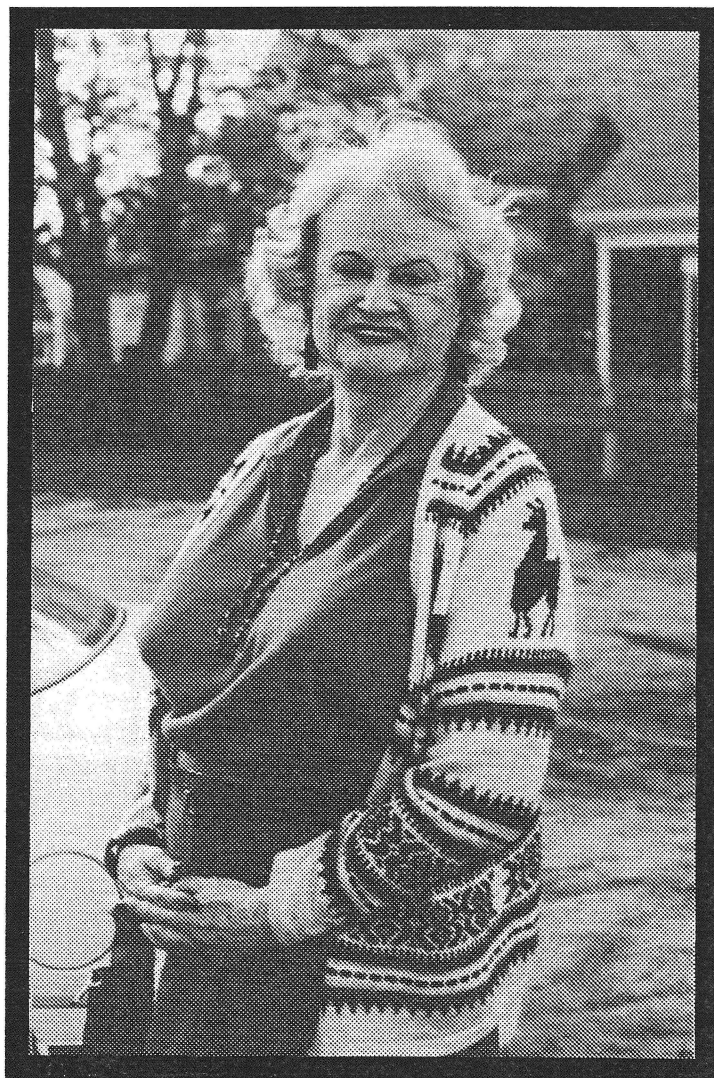
Recent conversations with her begin on page 5.

Diablo Valley Girls

Those sweethearts were at it again in Walnut Creek, kids. The best drop-in social, for conversation and sharing, in the Far East Bay— and, they actually cough up dough for **TV Guise!**

A big hug and an extra special thanx to Donna Freeman, Cami Lyn, and Janet! (\$5 each), and Bobby (\$3). I'm not just mentioning them because they grease the 'ol palmette; no way. Every time I've attended one of these socials I always stay longer than I intend to because every one there is becoming family— luv ya! (Note: DVG has added the first Tuesday of the month to their social calendar.)

Calendar— see back page



Virginia Prince at Fantasia Fair '91

FanFair Donates Dough

Two fund raisers were part of the Fantasia Fair '91 program. The first, a benefit showing of *Paris Is Burning*, netted \$750.00 for the Provincetown Art Association. The second, a week-long effort culminating at the Fantasy Ball, netted \$1,000.00 for the Provincetown AIDS Support Group.

Billie Jean Blabs

Dear Darlings,

Whadda faahhbuuluous coupla weeks I had in Massachusetts. Of course, owing to my own inexperience in traveling, I was just a teensie weensie little bit crazy the last coupla days here in Sacramento. First, after finishing the October issue, I went shopping for luggage—in thrift stores, naturally. Oh yes, after checking out the prices in discount department stores, I managed to get two folding wardrobe cases and two suitcases for eleven dollars total. Yow! And, having saved all that dough, I picked up two outfits at one of my favorite consignment stores for about thirty dollars each, plus a pair of tri-color suede heels from Spain—twenty-four bucks, brand new! Gee whiz. Then Chare called from my favorite shoe store, to say she had the perfect cocktail heels—black suede with gold and silver bows to go with the little dress I purchased from Macy's last month. Golly!

By Wednesday afternoon I was so ready to pack everything that I decided to get my nails done in a french manicure. So I drove to a salon at 4:45pm and had them put on acrylic tips. Funny thing—when I walked in there were five women blabbing with five manicurists but they all stopped blabbing when said I wanted long nails. I suppose they don't see very many men who haven't shaved for five days get their nails done. Well, I felt like blabbing, so while my manicurist was working on my nails, I started asking the other women what kind of nails they were getting. Pretty soon we were all blabbing and gabbing about our children and my upcoming adventure to Fantasia Fair with a hundred and fifty cross-dressers. Pretty soon I realized having your nails done takes a long time and I hadn't started packing. Damn. At 7:30pm I walked out with a beautiful set of nails (pink blush french style), and a worried feeling that I better get going—I've missed flights before.

My apartment was full of suitcases and wardrobe. I was tired (five hours sleep each of the last two nights), hungry (no lunch or dinner) and had forgot just what time my flight was supposed to leave (12:30am). Ya know, it's not the easiest thing in the world to pack a buncha nice clothes with brand new long, thick fingernails—sheesh. I won't bore ya with all the details, except one of the evenings at FanFair was to be a pajama/lingerie party. So, I had bought a cute, black lace nightgown to go with a long, sheer black gown I had. A friend had told me she used to travel a lot, and one of her tips was to roll clothes, instead of folding them. After I had filled the hanging wardrobe bags, I started rolling up skirts and blouses and fitting them around the hanging clothes. I rolled up the fancy nightgowns and fitted them in the bag, zipped it up and got the zipper stuck! Damn!! I tried and tried and tried—damn! damn! damn! No way could I get the zipper loose from the silky, fragile material. I even scratched two of my nails. Then, ten minutes later, I got the scissors. A jagged two-inch hole in the black robe. Urrgh!

It took me 'til 11:30pm to get packed. I didn't have room for everything, so I decided to leave the flats, (Big Mistake) a coupla other pairs of heels, a coat and a buncha skin care stuff I figured I could buy in Mass. I made a list. I carried three bulging suitcases, two bulging wardrobe bags, my camera case, a tall wig box and a long, heavy wool coat to my car. I raced to the airport, parked in a ten minute zone, made three trips in with my stuff, and checked in. "Too much luggage," the man said. "I'll pay," I said. "A hundred bucks," he said. "Yikes," I said. "How ya wanna pay," he asked.

"Cash," I answered while fumbling in my wallet for a C-note. Jeez, here I am: frazzled, sweaty, rings on every finger, two bracelets, a woman's watch, beautiful, long nails, a five day beard, baggy pants, tennis shoes, white T-shirt, black windbreaker and long, disheveled black hair. "Okay, Mr. Jones, you're all set—plane leaves in seven minutes." I started up to the departure gates, then remembered my car in the ten minute zone. Boo!

I jogged out with the camera case, the wig box and the long, heavy coat. Unlocked the beast of steel, fired it up and raced around to the long-term parking, screeched into a spot as close to the terminal as I could, grabbed my stuff and sprinted—oh the agony of the long distance runner. I huffed and puffed back in, struggled up the escalator and dumped my stuff on the X-ray conveyor, staggered through the metal detector while wondering if they thought my camera, two flash units, a tape recorder and a stun gun looked like a bomb.

No.

I jogged to the gate, and guess what? Give up?

My plane was still there!

I wobbled on board, dumped the wig box in first class, the coat overhead my seat and flopped in. Whew!

The plane left immediately, climbed to altitude, leveled off, and the cabin people started serving drinks and peanuts. "Is there any food on this flight?" I asked a stew. "No," she answered. "Oh no," I moaned, "I haven't had no feedbag all day!" "Sorry," she pouted back. "Do you have extra peanuts?" I asked while ripping the bag open and devouring the miniscule portion. "If we have extras, I'll bring you some," she announced. Four bags later I spread out and tried to sleep my way to Texas.

We hit turbulence an hour-and-a-half later. As near as I could tell, I'd been having a nice dream. For the next hour I faded in and out of a tortured series of maybe asleep, certainly awake.

Texas time: 5:30am. Change planes. U-shaped terminal a mile-and-a-half long. Walking bleary-eyed, heavy coat, heavy camera case, tall wig box. People get out of my way. Restaurants closed. Texas time: 6am. Arrive at proper terminal, dumpy cafeteria opens, slosh coffee, spoon slippery eggs, chomp toast, burp. Board plane in dull buzz, plane fills up with bright-eyed commuters to Boston. Try for sleep—no way. Sun floods cabin. Breakfast is served. Eat fruit, muffin. Read book. Nod out. Head snaps. Nod, snap, nod, snap; book laying on floor.

Boston time: 11:30 am. Depart. Get rental car. Load baggage. Cruise through mondo traffic, through Sumner Tunnel (\$1.), Mass Turnpike four miles (50¢), another four-and-a-half miles (another 50¢), five miles later I escape the stop and go toll booths for the 128 exit, turn off at 20 East, stop at a market to fill my list of stuff I didn't pack. Funny thing—everybody here has an accent, and all the trees are freaking out in yellow, gold, orange, crimson. Find Moody Street, cross a river, turn left on Cushing, park in lot. Walk to Woolworths to find items not in first store. No have. Walk back,

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check out Vernon's Specialties. Meet Michelle, a TG. Walk upstairs to find Vivian Purves, Editor of Tapestry. Not in. Meet Evonne Cook: "May I help you?" (At this point I need sleep, food, a shower, etc.) So we blab for a while and Vivian arrives, we go to lunch. Dumpy diner (my favorite kinda place). The people are very warm, open and talkative. We leave, Vivian goes upstairs to work, I drive to another store to find vitamins and other missing items. (After three stores, only two thirds of my list has been filled.)

Back to the Tapestry office and meet Stacy, Christina, Nancy, and Merissa. Change eight-foot long fluorescent tubes in high ceiling (gee, I felt like a handyman for a while there). Blab session. Nancy has just arrived from Kansas City and is going over a presentation she will give at FanFair on leadership. Merissa and I blab about her surgery and how she got her name. I take a few photos. More blabbing. Dinner with Stacy, Vivian and Christina—three nice ladies and one disheveled Californicator. After dinner, I follow Vivian to the Tiffany Club in Waltham where I will spend the night on one of the couches.

I get a tour of the house. In the lower level (kind of a basement) is a wardrobe room. I count thirty-three hanging clothes bags—members store their clothes here, dress here, make up in the next room (six stations) and either go out or stay for the evening. Vivian says several members never go beyond the house. She returns to the Tapestry office where the 'normal' workday is 2pm to 2am. I crash.

In the morning I shower and put on a clean T-shirt. There is no coffee around until Barbara finds me, we blab and she slips me a little of Merissa's secret stash of instant (hey Merissa, don't get honked-off at Barbara, I moaned and wailed and pierced her tender emotions, see?). Vivian appears and we go to breakfast—another dumpy diner, almost like a coffee shop in a logging town, except everyone has that funny accent. We return to the house, I pack my stuff, hug Vivian and depart for Provincetown, site of the 17th Annual Fantasia Fair. I avoid the Mass Turnpike, and am awed by the riot of color on yonder trees while reflecting on what a kind, considerate person Vivian is.

It's a two hour, forty-five minute drive to P-town, an hour-and-a-half on Cape Cod. Couldn't see anything except the road and trees—had a hard time keeping the 'ol eyes open. Until I arrived on the outskirts of P-town.

Registration: A lot of tall women milling about, a coupla men, and me—the hairy one. "Ariadne!" "Billie Jean!" Hugs. "I didn't think you would recognize me," I said. "It's that California elan," Ari replies with a smile. I get all registered, find my room at the inn (TradeWinds Inn) and spend two hours unpacking, which leaves no time to shave, make up and dress for the evening event (by this time, that's what I wanted to do even though I had originally decided not to in order to save my face). Golly-gee, darlings, at least I brought a sportcoat, slacks, a shirt and tie, so I changed in to those and proceeded to the cocktail party or whatever it was called. Damn, I was the only person in man-drag!

"Are you a cross-dresser?" someone finally asked me. "Well," I said, looking at my wardrobe, "actually, I'm feeling my femme-self and when I look at these clothes, I realize I am cross-dressed at the moment."

So, darlings, that's how I arrived at FanFair. It's November 9, today and I'm sitting here in Sacramento in a silky, cream blouse, wool, plum pants, black flats, some modest accessories and fairly light make up. It's 11:34am and I've been up since 5:30am. I think

I started writing this at 9:30, but what I want to do now is call somebody up and go have lunch. Scuze me—I'll call Bev... damn, she's not home. Okay, try Karen... heck, she's not home either. Oh well, I haven't seen my friend Maugham for a while... crapola, he's not there either. Whadda bummer, here I am looking pretty, even did a fair job on my hair, and there's nobody to play with! This wouldn't have happened at FanFair. No way.

Hmmmm, I guess I'm back home in Dullsville.

Coda: So I drove to a little neighborhood market to buy cigarettes. The storekeeper, an Asian lady, smiled and informed me I could get three packs for the price of two. So I did. "Have a good day," she bubbled. Next, the post office. Stand in line, stand in line, stand in line. "Next," the clerk called out. "Air mail to Japan," I warbled. "Yes, ma'am... that's fifty cents." A drive to the dry cleaners; two blazers and a slinky dress. The tailors; pick up alterations (after going to this shop for seven months completely cross-dressed, I dropped off this garment in man-drag, Mr. Su didn't recognize me at first but after he glanced at the women's clothes in my hand and I spoke, he broke into grin and said: "Ah! Hello!"). Drove over to my favorite shoe store, Chare had asked me "to come in sometime when you're in drag" (I had only shown her pictures). "I thought that was you," she said with a smile. The store was full of women. She held out her hand and said, "so, I finally get to meet Billie Jean." "Here I am," I giggled. (By the way, Chare keeps a couple of copies of **TV Guide** behind the counter for those men who come in looking for size 11, 12, 13 shoes for their "wives.") Purchased a nice pair of low-heeled cream pumps with my Billie Jean Visa card. "Must be expensive to have double ID," Chare commented. "Not really, I just added another person to my account," I informed; "and, I got checks on the same account as an AKA (also known as), didn't cost anything except the check cost." Dropped off newsletters at Our Place and Faces. Went home. Karen and Bev had left messages. We decided to have dinner together. Gerry called from Davis: "What's happening?" We blabbed for over an hour; Gerry saying: "You're lucky because you don't have to worry about being discovered." Me saying, "Well, the more I do it, the less people think it's weird." Bev and Karen arrive and we go to dinner at a "straight" Italian restaurant. A large group of high school kids in fancy clothes (homecoming?) are having dinner. We are just three ladies gabbing and eating. Back at my apartment we blab until 10:30 and say "Good night." Hugs.

See there? When in Dullsville, start something—breathe some life into the world and the beat goes on.

Luv,

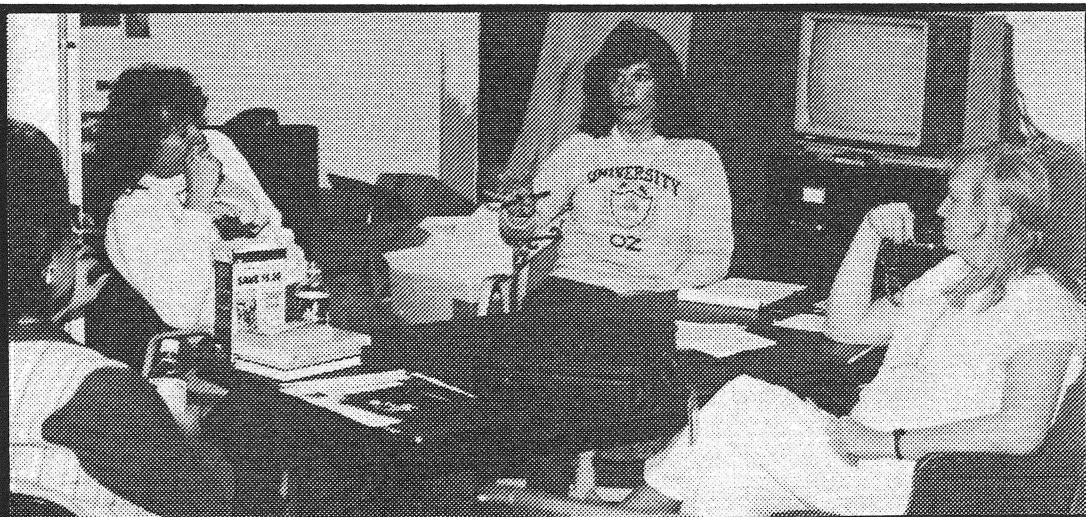


Reach Out And Help Someone...

The Boulton & Park Society is conducting a survey of people who cross-dress for whatever reason, whether bi, hetero, or homo-sexual. Several groups and individuals around the country are assisting B&P by distributing copies of the ten page questionnaire. The **TV Guide** cash fund has been plundered to produce a free copy to anyone who will take the time to fill out the survey and mail it (which will cost you 52¢ in postage). Additionally, I will hand them out when you invite me to your parties (hint, hint).

RIGHT: (L to R) Christina Young, Yvonne Cook, Nancy Cole, Merissa Sherrill Lynn hard at work blabbing about Nancy's recent adventures in Oz (first, I took the Yellow Brick Road out of Kansas...).

LOWER RIGHT: Vivian Purves hard at work on the next issue of Tapestry (or is she playing video games perhaps?).



Gender Chains

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I just recently attended a TV group and found it very interesting, and the people very nice. I would love to find a group that would accept and love me as I am, but I feel this is not it. I have only an occasional desire to "pass" as a female.

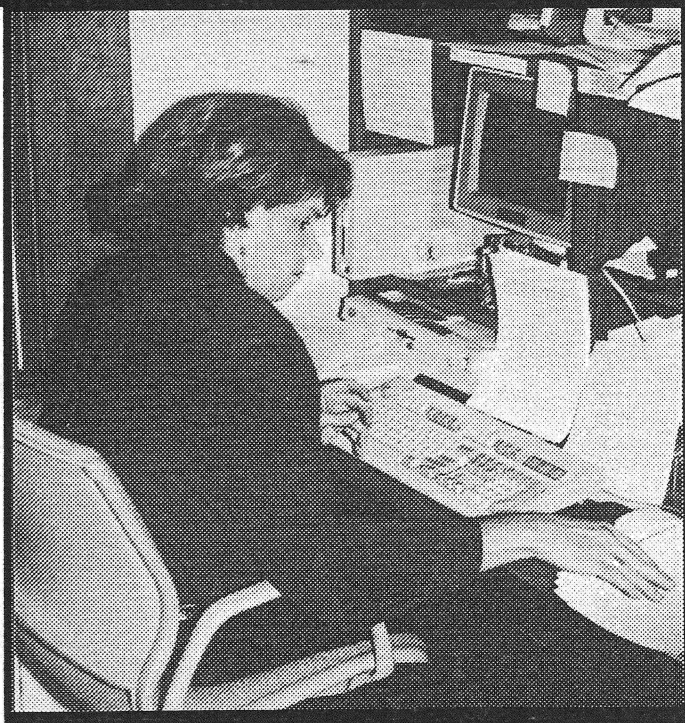
I need the right, as a man, to wear whatever I please. In particular, to be pretty, even beautiful in ways that have been considered "feminine" for the past few hundred years. While this includes eventually wearing dresses, nylons and such, for now I do with a good figure and colorful, well fitted clothes such as tights. Ironically, wearing clothes that would have gotten women arrested for transvestism fifty years ago, I am now mistaken for a woman from time to time and harassed by closet gay boys leaning out of speeding cars.

Why are there so few female transvestites? Because women fought for their right to wear whatever they damn well please fifty years ago!

It's time men fought for freedom of appearance. I don't even consider dresses feminine. Men have and do wear dresses in various cultures. The TV's I have talked to, and the TV publications I have read do not seem to agree.

I would like some feedback on this. I am a man. For years I wanted to be female so I could have the social rights and privileges that women do. I realized that I wanted the privileges and rights, not the sex change. I have become very strong in my acceptance of my own maleness, my own masculinity. I am angered by the treatment I got as a man that was so bad I wanted to change my sex. I want men to wake up and throw off the oppressive male role model they have been socialized to. It now seems so pitiful to me that "macho" men worry so much about being "real men": As if they could be anything else no matter how hard they try.

Though I wish that men wearing dresses and make up and high heels, and whatever women wear was acceptable, I am not comfortable pretending to be female. I am not that comfortable "pretending" to be anything I am not. Also, I am not going to be happy



discovering the "woman" I have fallen in love with is genetically a man, either (as has happened). I can't imagine going through the pain of a nose job, much less a sex change operation "only" because society refuses to accept my behavior otherwise.

Fuck Off Society! No one tells me how to dress or wear make up or not. I wish all people, particularly men, would tell this aspect of oppressive society to go to hell!

Nonetheless, if you want to have an operation I find distasteful, or say things I think wrong, I still defend your right to live free and do as your heart demands.

But, back to my question: I do not consider myself a TV even though many people think so. This is the wrong group for me, isn't it? If it's the wrong group, do you know of any groups trying to throw off the chains of gender roles?

—Brian D.

(See Bravo Brian! on page 12.)

Conversations with Virginia Prince

I introduced myself to Virginia at Fantasia Fair by greeting her with: "Hello there you living legend, I'm Billie Jean Jones!" She wasn't particularly impressed. We blabbed for a few minutes, I told her I'd like to interview her, she was dubious and wanted to know what kind of newsletter/magazines I wanted an interview for. "Well, it's kind of a crazy mix of all kinds a stuff," I replied. "I figured that just by talking with you," she answered dryly.

Over the next coupla days, Virginia and I traded puns, jokes, jabs and silliness until she was asking me, "When do you want to do this interview?" Owing to a full schedule, neither of us had a great deal of time to spare, and every time I'd ask her a question, she usually told a story, or regurgitated some history (herstory), and when I'd say: "But Godmother, what about..." She'd say: "Don't rush me, I'll get there."

Anyway, we decided to get together at the Inn she was staying at and blab. When I arrived, she was being interviewed by Evelyn, a beautiful German journalist from Stern Magazine. We all decided to go to dinner together, and then to an Art Museum benefit that was part of the FanFair program. After a six block walk in the brisk breeze, we settled in for our feedbag at a restaurant that did not include 'feedbag' in it's vocabulary—kind of a fancy place, see?

The maitre d' escorted us to a table, described the specials, offered the wine list and departed. Our waiter arrived, took Virginia's and Evelyn's order, turned and asked me: "And, for you?"

TVG: "I'll have the Scrod special, please."

VP: "That reminds me about a guy who went to Boston, and while he was there, somebody gave him Scrod. Well, he thought it was delicious. He went back home to Texas and told his friends and family about this marvelous fish dish they had in Boston. He said: 'If you ever go to Boston, be sure they take you someplace where you can get some of that stuff—it's delicious!' So, a few months later he has to go back to Boston. He lands at Logan Airport and gets a taxi. The cab driver says: 'Where to?' The guy says: 'I don't want to go to my hotel just yet—take me someplace where I can get Scrod.' The cab driver says: 'I've heard that in every tense but the past pluperfect subjunctive.'"

TVG: "You're bad."

VP: "I know, you can turn that off, now."

TVG: "I like it; tell us another."

VP: "Okay, I'll tell you the best pun story there is; I challenge anybody to come up with a better one: It's about three Indians living down in Oklahoma. Oil is discovered on their land and they got pretty wealthy. They were buying all kinds of things and so forth. Well, this one chief went to a taxidermy shop and had a deerskin trimmed and tanned and softened up to make a beautiful bedspread, and gave it to his squaw. They had a big dinner, invited the other two couples over, and showed off the beautiful deerskin bedspread. The second Indian racked his brain to come up with something to top that, decided on a buffalo hide and had it trimmed, tanned and softened, gave it to his squaw, and they invited the other couples over for dinner. Now, the third Indian was really in a spot: how could he top that? He racked his brain, thought of every animal he could, and finally went to the library and checked out a book on animals. He got an inspiration, sent a cable to Kenya, Africa and ordered a hippopotamus hide trimmed, tanned and softened for a

beautiful bedspread. When it arrived he gave it to his squaw and they invited the other couples over for dinner. Well, as it so happened, a few months later, the squaw who got the deerskin gave birth to a papoose. A month after that, the squaw who got the buffalo hide gave birth to twins. Now, by extrapolation, you can figure where this story is going, because the squaw who got the hippopotamus hide had triplets. Now this story proves something—it's not just a simple story—if you had known it in high school, you might have gotten a better grade in geometry class. What this proves is that the squaw on the hippopotamus was equal to the sum of the squaws on the other two hides."

[Our meals arrived and we daintily set about devouring dinner.]

VP: "You say you're from Hamburg?"

Evelyn: "Yes."

VP: "I remember Hamburg. About ten years ago I bought a little 120 Mercedes in Beverly Hills and arranged to take delivery in Stuttgart. I was going to a convention in Dubrovnik anyway. While I was at the convention I met a professor from the University of Hawaii. He wanted to know what else I was going to do, and since we both had a few extra days, I convinced him to go to Stuttgart with me, pick up the car and tour some of the countryside. So we arranged to meet at the Zurich airport and fly to Stuttgart. This was at the time of all the hijacking scares and all the men had to line up in one line, and all the women in another, to go through security. So I'm standing in line and my friend is laughing like mad. Well, I knew he was laughing because I had to go through security, but I've gone through quite a few things like that before and I always make it a point to go to the ladies' room beforehand and make sure everything is 'under control,' shall we say?

"So I passed and we went to Stuttgart where I had a hotel reservation. I made sure there were twin beds in the room, got the keys and we went upstairs with the bellboy. After he left, my friend said: 'That's the first time I ever had the woman get the room.'

"We drove around southern Germany, into Austria and into Innsbruck where we got a room for sixty schillings—all the Inns are on the slope above the road and you make a deal at little kiosks along the highway. We made a deal, got a slip of paper and went up to the Inn. The next morning we were having breakfast and talking, and this fellow was sitting close by. He was an Austrian who lived in Brooklyn and he spoke English. When we went to pay the bill, I presented the paper we got the night before that said 'sixty schillings.' The innkeeper wanted eighty schillings and I said: 'No way.' I didn't speak enough German to argue very well, so I finally told my friend to give him sixty schillings and let's just go—'let him just call the police if he wants to!' I picked up the bags and went outside. Well, the English-speaking guy had been listening while I was getting tough, and he went over to my friend and said: 'That woman is one tough cookie!'

"So, at the end of the three days, we'd had a lot of fun driving around—and, I'd had the social pleasure of being a woman with a man. But, it was time for my friend to leave and I drove him to the train station, kissed him goodbye and he left. I was devastated—I was suddenly lost, alone and frightened; a woman in a foreign country—what do I do now? I was so into being Virginia with a man, and dependent on my escort that his leaving just pulled the rug out—poor little me."

TVG & Evelyn: "Ohhhh."

VP: "Don't cry."

(Continued on next page)

Virginia— (Continued from page 5)

TVG: "What did you do then, Godmother?"

VP: "I went back to my hotel, had breakfast, packed everything into the car, got behind the wheel, and drove over the Groszlockner Pass— everything was back under control and I was a self-reliant Virginia again."

TVG: "You call Ariadne Kane and Merrissa Sheryl Lynn your daughters— how did you meet them?"

VP: "They were part of the Boston chapter of FPE [Full Personality Expression—the first social/support group for cross-dressers], although I didn't meet them right away. It wasn't until after Merrissa started the Tiffany Club, IFGE and Tapestry; and after Ari started Fantasia Fair."

Evelyn: "Why have you stopped doing television interviews?"

VP: "Well, since I changed to full-time living [twenty-four years ago], I cut down the interviews and I stopped doing the television shows. I did a lot of travelling with tour groups around the world and frequently I got a genetic woman as a roommate. Now, if somebody on the tour were to say: 'Hey! I know you, you're that transvestite that was on WNBC...' I'd be dumped off the tour."

TVG: "So, in order to continue passing as a female..."

VP: "I am not trying to pass as a female—I am a woman. Males and females are a biological fact, men and women are cultural impositions."

TVG: "What about the freak show aspect of these television shows—a transsexual in San Francisco wrote an essay putting forth the idea that putting TG's, TV's and TS's on these talk shows is the equivalent of the old time freak shows."

VP: "I don't agree with that, but I'm not surprised a TS said it. The comment is partially true, but it's not the whole truth. Obviously, we are a strange breed that the world doesn't understand. So, they get an enormous amount of response every time they get TV's on their shows. In fact, when they rate the shows—I forget what they call it..."

Evelyn: "Sweeps week?"

VP: "Yes. When it's that time of year they put on a TV, or a replay. And, just based on that, you have some justification that everybody is watching the freaks. But, on the other hand, if you look at the fact that I found, or I should say *I let* any number of TV's find me because I couldn't find them, and if you ask around the Fair a lot of people found out there were other TV's because they saw me on television, or heard me on radio— so when other people do this, it always brings a lot of people out of the woodwork."

Evelyn: "Yep. And the letters in *Tapestry* say, like, 'You saved my life. I saw you on *Phil Donahue* and found out there were others like me.' It happens a lot."

VP: "So the point of it is, television shows do a lot of good. Literally, they prevent suicide. This TS doesn't understand that. She knows what she is, if you'll pardon the expression, he or she is a freak; because society would regard any male who would cut off his male organs as being at least a little crazy. So she gets sensitive to the idea of the freakiness of transsexuality— she doesn't see the TV part, the discovery that you are not the only one in the world. Not only are there others like you, but they feel the same way you feel. And, there is somewhere to go, people you can contact. After a Donahue show that four of our people from the Chicago Tri-Ess group went on, over a thousand replies came in. Membership almost doubled because of that show."

TVG: "In my opinion, the person that wrote the article is well balanced, speaks well and is in a committed lesbian relationship. She says she enjoys her life much more after surgery, than before. Does this strike you as unusual?"

VP: "Well, not unusual— I know of a bunch of these people. What is unusual, this person was undoubtedly heterosexual before surgery— yes or no?"

TVG: "Was married and fathered one child."

VP: "Okay, so she's heterosexual. She goes and has the surgery, becomes a lesbian— a lesbian is a female; she's not a female, she's no longer a male but she's not a female. The logic, if there is any logic in changing a pole for a hole—pardon the analogy but that's the way it is, that's the simplest way of thinking about sex: the body has three poles and three holes, some combination of them is what makes sex of any kind you want to name."

Evelyn: "What are the other two poles?"

VP: [Showing her tongue and finger] "This and this. The mouth, vagina and anus are the three holes; the tongue, finger and penis are the poles. So, the only possible logic in cutting off your pole, and create a hole, is to receive a pole. But, they don't do that very often."

TVG: "She likes vibrators."

VP: "Well naturally, everybody likes vibrators."

Evelyn: "Ha."

TVG: "I don't."

VP: "Maybe you haven't ever used one right."

TVG: "Oh."

VP: "The point of it is— it's kind of ridiculous to go and cut off the very thing that makes you interested in women, and then continue to be interested in women. It's kind of an admission that they made a mistake, but they'll never tell you that— that's my diagnosis. If they really wanted to have the thing done, and they really wanted a vagina, then presumably they would want to be a female physically, relative to a male. Not to go back and be attracted to the same kind of a person you were attracted to before— why the hell would you cut it off? Here's another thing— this TS friend of yours, what can she do to another female that she couldn't have done before the surgery?"

TVG: "She's happy to have another orifice that can be explored in her own body— that was one of her comments."

VP: "Ha-ha. That's also her rationalization, in my book. It's true there's an orifice that wasn't there before, but if she's going to be a lesbian with somebody else it's most likely to be oral..."

Evelyn: [To this writer] "Are you thinking about maybe..."

TVG: [Exaggerated shaking of the head.]

Evelyn: "No."

TVG: "Listen to my poem: I love my cock, I think it's grand— I often find it in my hand."

Evelyn: "Aha-ha-ha."

VP: "What's the second verse?"

TVG: "I don't have one, yet. [To Evelyn] I am who I anatomically am. I've had a lot of time to explore who I am, persona wise and socially. I've always had the desire to cross-dress, but not to change sex. And, I like being culturally interactive as a woman, although, as you can see, I'm not trying to pass tonight. *[Because my face couldn't take it, I have a day-and-a-half beard, no make up except lipstick, wind-blown hair— however, I am in heels, a tight, black cat suit with curves and obvious cleavage. In fact, several lesbians around town had been whistling and complimenting my*

look all day long.] What I'm exploring these days is gender blending— some people call it 'gender fuck.'"

Evelyn: "Here, I'll get it," as our waiter brings the bill.

TVG: "Thank You!" as the waiter scurries off with Evelyn's American Express card.

VP: "Are you sure?"

Evelyn: "Oh yes, it's on the expense account."

VP: "It's great to be a woman and have someone else pay the bill."

Evelyn: "Uhm."

VP: "Some people can't get the idea that you don't have to be female to be a woman—that's why I say the whole business of sex and gender is the most significant issue in our subculture."

TVG: "In your classifications then, a woman can either be a genetic female or a genetic male?"

VP: "You have two of them right here— she's a female woman and I'm a male woman."

TVG: [To Evelyn] "What kind of woman do you think Virginia is?"

Evelyn: "What do you mean: what kind of woman she is?"

TVG: "You know, is she..."

VP: "Wanton?"

Evelyn: "Oh yeah— spunky."

TVG: "She's tough, don't you think?"

Evelyn: "Oh yeah; tough bitch."

TVG: "Do you think there are any women who could 'take her on'?"

Evelyn: "No."

VP: "Take her on doing what?"

TVG: "Godmother, do you remember your earliest experiences of cross-dressing?"

VP: "Sure."

TVG: "How old were you?"

VP: "I'll tell you a little story to illustrate that. When I was sixteen I went on a trip to London with my parents. My father was an orthopedic surgeon and his association was having a meeting there. We went by ship. In those days it was customary for the Captain's Dinner, which was the last night out, to be a masquerade party. I had gotten very friendly with the wife of one of the other doctors, who came up with the idea that it would be real fun to dress me up as a girl. I hadn't said anything about this to anyone, she came up with it on her own. Two reactions: one, there was absolutely nothing in the world I would rather do than be a pretty, sixteen-year-old girl, admired, talked about, and complimented by everybody in the place—I would have given everything for that; [two] but I also knew there was nothing in the world that was going to make me do it. That's the dichotomy. So, I remember I was sixteen at that time and I had been doing it for about four years— so I've picked the age of twelve as the beginning."

TVG: "You kept it hidden?"

VP: "Oh yeah."

TVG: "And you wouldn't do on the ship?"

VP: "No. I had my own self-respect to deal with, and I had the question as to what my parents would think about me. I had never given any indication that I had inclinations in this direction because people always related it to being gay. I knew I wasn't gay."

TVG: "Were you happy?"

VP: "Not very."

Evelyn: "Where did you do it?"

VP: "At home whenever my parents were gone."

Evelyn: "What clothes?"

VP: "Mothers'. I'll tell you a funny experience—you know that old adage, if something is good, more is better? We lived two blocks from Wilshire Boulevard, which was the main drag. Well, I would get dressed at home, walk two blocks to Wilshire, and up two blocks on Wilshire and go back home. BIG, big experience. So, I loved wearing mother's rayon panties, rayon slips, and her dresses and shoes."

TVG: "What did you do for hair?"

VP: "She had a switch, a fall. I put on one of her big hats and had this hair coming down from under it. Anyway, I figured that since it was exciting to wear one pair of panties, it would be a lot more exciting to wear six pair of panties and six slips. So I did it. In those days, we had double-decker buses, and they tend to sway. I got dressed, got on the bus, went up to the top and sat down big as life—and had to hang on for dear life! With twelve layers of rayon between me and the seat, I slid all over. Never did that again!"

TVG: "So you went out in public as a teenager— how old were you when you went out as an adult?"

VP: "About eighteen or twenty the first time."

TVG: "Did you talk to anyone about it?"

VP: "Before I got married the first time, I went to three psychiatrists."

TVG: "Were they terribly sick?"

VP: "Yes—I made 'em that way, but I cured them, too. You take the word disease and you divide it, you get dis-ease; meaning ill-at-ease. Now psychiatrists are supposed to know everything about everything— so I walk in the door, spill out my whole life story and immediately the psychiatrist becomes dis-eased because he doesn't know what's wrong with this patient; has no idea how to proceed. He looked at me, nodded his head, stroked his beard and said, 'I see, you like to wear dresses like your mother— *unresolved Oedipus complex!*' That cured him instantaneously because he thought he knew what he was talking about, and he thought he knew what he could do for people like me. It helped him, he was cured. It didn't do me any good, so I never went back. Some time later I found somebody else. Same routine; I told him my history; he became dis-eased; he stroked his beard, told me: 'So, you like to wear high heels: *phallic symbolism!*' He was cured. I wasn't. I did it for three of them. They were cured because you can only cure a dis-ease. You can't cure a TV because that's not a disease."

TVG: "Why did you go to a psychiatrist in the first place?"

VP: "Because I was going to get married and I had an unusual behavior."

Evelyn: "So you got married and your first wife didn't know anything about it at all?"

VP: "Not at that time."

TVG: "How did she find out— did you tell her?"

VP: "Yes, quite some little time later. We belonged to a church, I'm not religious but I ended up being deacon of the church, and we had what was called the Church of Youth, for younger people. I was very active in it, Sunday School class, and so on and so forth. Before we were married, when I was courting her, on two or three occasions the church would have a Halloween or New Year's party and I would get dressed up in some kind of outfit. One time I ran a mock wedding where I was the bride—it gave me a good excuse to wear

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Virginia— (Continued from page 7)

a bridal gown—which almost all TV's do at one time or another."

Evelyn: "This bridal gown thing—yep—it's a big thing, I know."

VP: "So, she had seen me do this—she wasn't very pleased about it because, after all, it was her place to be the woman. After we got married we moved up to Oakland, and after I finished my stint there, we moved back to LA, in a suburb. The church was going to have another one of these parties. I was going to go as a half-man half-woman. My sister had left a long red evening dress in her closet at home—she wasn't living there at the time and I had a tuxedo. I went out to a Salvation Army store and bought three-inch heel black sandals and three-inch heel gold sandals. On the Thursday before the party, I decided to have a dress rehearsal to see if I could do this. I tucked one sleeve into the other, one pant leg into the other, put the dress on first, pulled on the pant leg and pinned it, got the jacket on, one black sandal, one gold sandal and put half a lipstick on. When I got done and found out it worked, I took off tux part off, put on the other gold sandal, went out to the living room, laid down on the davenport and started reading the paper. She looked up and says: 'Take those silly things off, you look ridiculous.' I said, 'I will.' Five minutes later she said it again: 'Take those things off! I didn't say anything. By the time she said it for the third time, I was 'T'd off' about the whole thing and I swung around with my feet on the floor and said: 'I'm not going to take them off! I like to wear them! I'll take 'em off when I get damn good and ready! I'll tell you all about this next Sunday night, because tomorrow night we have to go to dinner and Saturday is the party; Sunday night I'll tell you about it, in the meantime let it lay.'

"So, Sunday night I told her. She indicated she hadn't liked it whenever I did it before, but now that she knew I liked to do it—it was terrible: 'Bad enough to do it, but you don't have to like to do it—you gotta be really sick.' Then she said, 'If you have to do it, tell me when, I'll go in the other room and you can have the rest of the house.' We lived in one of these little bitty bungalows that was divided into four rooms. She would go back in the corner bedroom and I'd have the rest of the house to myself. I made a mark on the wall every time it got to the point I felt I had to dress. It turned out, in the next eighteen months, to average once every two weeks. But, I began to feel like a naughty little boy who had been told to stand in the corner with his face to the wall so nobody could see him."

Evelyn: "Even so, that was pretty generous of her, wasn't it? I mean, she probably felt she was being generous with you, don't you think?"

VP: "I wasn't trying to make a comment about her feelings—just how I felt: I felt like a naughty little boy who wasn't fit to be seen."

Evelyn: "Okay."

VP: "After a while, we moved out of that house. Her mother was taking care of my aunt back in Illinois. My wife went to Minneapolis, where she came from, stayed there for a while, went to see a psychiatrist, went to my aunts' where her mother was. I flew out, bought a car to go to New Orleans on business, and then we came back to California. About a week later, she called me up one morning at the office and told me she had taken our son, the family silver and all the valuable wedding presents, and had gone over to her sister's apartment. I went over there, banged on the door—she wouldn't let me in. She finally called the cops. When they came, I told them: 'This is my wife and my son, she walked out on me and I came to see my son.' They didn't want to get involved in a

domestic quarrel and suggested we go someplace for counseling. And, I did. I took their tests and so forth; she never did. She filed for divorce."

TVG: "How many years did the marriage last?"

VP: "Nine years."

TVG: "How many children?"

VP: "One son"

TVG: "Did your son accept your lifestyle?"

VP: "Pretty much. But it was all strained because he got into trouble living with his mother, and then into further trouble. When I got him out here, he stayed with my second wife and I for a while. One night, I had to go to UCLA and give a talk [as Virginia], when I got home he was in the living room, so I came in the back and hollered around the corner: 'Are you ready to meet your Aunt Virginia?' He said, 'Oh, sure.' So I came in and we met. A couple of weeks later, after I had taken him to dinner on Monday as Virginia, and as his father on Thursday, I asked him: 'What does this do to you; how do you feel about seeing me both ways?' And he said: 'Oh, I don't much care, but I think I like Virginia better because she doesn't come down on me so hard.' Ha-ha, a typical mother-father relationship choice."

TVG: "How old was your son at that time?"

VP: "Oh, about twenty, twenty-one."

TVG: "Your second wife was accepting of it?"

VP: "My wife!? You're not supposed to ask a girl about her 'wife.'"

TVG: "Okay: Was your second spouse more accepting?"

VP: "She understood. There's a funny story about that, too. She was from England, and she became my mother's housekeeper. When she came over here she could only take about two hundred dollars out of England, so she had to take the first job she could find. In England she had been called a housekeeper, but it was for a royal family member and she had a staff of more than thirty people. My mother had run an advertisement for a housekeeper, meaning someone to do the cooking, cleaning and such. Doreen applied, mother hired her. She would eat with the family. Well, even though I had been disowned during the course of my divorce, I was trying to make up with my folks, so I would go over and have dinner once in a while. One night, mother said: 'Why don't you two kids take the car and go to a movie?' So we went to a movie in Pasadena, which was about twenty miles away. We took the Pasadena freeway which is all full of curves. On the way home, every time I'd take a right-hand curve, she'd fall on my shoulder. I began to get the message. But, she was English and wore flat, suede shoes, tortoise shell glasses and necklace, hair pulled back in a bun, no make up, and a very plain dress. I took her down to the beach one night and tried to explain: 'I'm sorry, you just don't have what it takes to interest a real red-blooded American boy.' I was very cruel."

Evelyn: "Very!"

VP: "It was necessary; she was putting the heat on me; I was my dad's son, he was moderately famous—I was a good catch (she didn't know she was catching two at a time).

Evelyn: "So, how did she react—did she slap you? [Chuckles]"

VP: "Beg your pardon? No. Let's see if I can get the chronology straight. On New Year's Eve I was going to go down to the church and do a little skit. My aunt from back East was visiting at my parent's house and I went over there to get mother's evening wrap.

They were both sitting in the living room and I said 'Hi, I came to get a coat.' I went upstairs for about twenty minutes, came back down and Doreen said: 'I suppose you've been up there admiring yourself in the mirror for the last twenty minutes.' I said, 'I have and it's been marvelous.' That was kind of an introduction to the situation. One thing led to another, over time, until finally she called me up in the middle of the night, at three o'clock in the morning. 'Who is it?' I said. 'It's me,' she said— 'I understand, I understand about Virginia.' I said, 'What about Virginia?' I finally got it that she had come to an understanding, in her mind, so that she could deal with it.

"So, she started coming over to my apartment, and then she got the idea that I would look prettier with my hair in a chignon, a kind of double bun of hair I could attach to my wig at the neckline. She still wore hers all pulled back, which I didn't think was very attractive. Anyway, one day I called her up at work and asked if she was coming over that night—we were getting to be friends by this time—and she said, 'Yes, I'll come over later'. I said, 'Well, if you have something to do I can pick you up and bring you over.' She said, 'No, I'll come over; you get dressed and I'll see you later.'"

[We are getting ready to leave the restaurant.]

TVG: "So did you go home and dress as Virginia?"

VP: "Yes."

TVG: "Did she finally come over in some nice spike heels?"

VP: "Don't jump ahead so fast. I had to go to the wig shop and get these two chignons... [looks in her compact] — let me go to the restroom and fix my face and then we'll go."

—*This is where the tape ended. We left the restaurant to go to the Art Museum benefit and Virginia finished the story but I don't remember the details. The next evening we went to dinner early and continued our repartee. Afterward, we walked back to my rental car which I had parked in a public lot right next to the toll booth. I suppose my deep voice was obvious to the toll collector as we passed by, and as we sat in the car talking while he calculated the toll. "That'll be \$1.25, sir," he announced. Virginia thumped my shoulder and said: "You tell him to call you ma'am." Well, always ready for a new experience, I handed over \$2.00 and said: "Excuse me sir, but Virginia says you should call me ma'am." "Well, uh," he sputtered, "uh sorry, I just get so used to, uh, sorry about that; here's your change, ma'am." "Thank you, sir," I replied and drove away. Virginia chuckled and said: "He'll remember that for a long time."*

We had several conversations through the week, but no time to 'finish' the 'interview.' After the Fair we unexpectedly met in the Tapestry office the following Tuesday evening. Virginia was part of the assembly line stuffing new Tapestries and flyers in envelopes. I had just discovered that I left my camera case with my airline tickets and travellers checks back in Provincetown, in Ariadne Kane's room at the Fairbanks Inn. We had spent a couple of hours together blabbing and walking on the beach getting sandblasted by the surging winds which later in the week caused a lot of damage along Cape Cod. So I was approaching panic because I knew Ari had been packing to leave for Maine, and because I didn't have any phone numbers with me to contact Ari. Yvonne Cook pulled an index card with various Ari numbers on them and offered a phone to use. While I was trying to figure out which line to use, Ari called to say: "I'll be there in fifteen minutes." Whew. I joined the assembly line. An hour later Ari, Virginia and I went to dinner, Ari

continued home and Godmother and I rejoined the assembly line. The next day, I gave her a ride to the Airport, dropped her off, returned the rental car, and caught my flight. I transcribed the tape a few "daze" later, laughed at myself for the abrupt ending and forgotten details, and mailed a copy to her with a note to call me ASAP.

A week-and-a-half later, she picked up her P.O. Box mail and called me. Yesterday, I flew south, she met me at the airport, gave me a mini tour of Burbank, West Hollywood, and a grocery store where she did a little shopping before going to her house. We got comfortable in the back yard, I turned on the tape recorder and Virginia continued until I realized I hadn't turned the tape over.

TVG: "Sorry to interrupt, Godmother, but nothing you just said was recorded."

VP: "From where?"

TVG: "You got these two chignons..."

VP: "Back to the story: I went home and got dressed, fastened the chignons to the wig and was putting it on when I heard her coming up the stairs—I had a third floor apartment in an old house and the entry landing to my apartment was visible to all the other houses around it, and I turned off the lights, including the landing light, so that my neighbors who knew a man lived there wouldn't see a woman open the door. When she got to the top of the stairs, I opened the door and let her in. We went to the living room, I turned the lights back on, and what do you know? Just as I had got the chignons to improve my appearance for her, she had gone to a beauty shop and had her hair permed and styled to please me!"

TVG: "Was she wearing make up, too?"

VP: "A little. Eventually, I got her into decent looking clothes, good looking glasses, one thing and another, and she was a very attractive girl when I got done with her. As a matter of fact, she was so good looking that one day, when she was walking down a busy LA street, a policeman on a motor bike made a U-turn, pulled up next to her and said: 'Excuse me madam, but I must tell you how attractive you look.' That kind of thing doesn't happen in England and she really didn't know how to react. It was a measure of how far she had come. She was now an attractive lady who I could fall in love with, which I did. We moved into another apartment together and got along famously. One day I went downtown and bought two very beautiful chocolate colored *Vanity Fair* teddies in our respective sizes. On this particular night, we had both put on these teddies, we were wearing hose and heels, and we were made up nicely. We were sitting on a Hollywood bed, we couldn't afford much furniture so we used it as a couch, and she mentioned that she had received a letter from England that day. She explained that it was a letter from the National Health Service. She posed the question that if she were to stay over here, there wasn't any point in paying money to British health, but on the other hand, if she were to go back she should keep the payments up. I very quickly got the message, which might be translated as 'fish or cut bait.' So, I proposed to her right then and there all prettied up in my chocolate teddy, hose and heels— Virginia proposed to Doreen."

TVG: "How long were you two married?"

VP: "I think it was about nine years. We went up to Santa Barbara and got married. Then we got the idea to design our own house and bought a lot in the Hollywood hills about a quarter of a mile from here."

TVG: "How long have you been in this house?"

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Virginia— (Continued from page 9)

VP: "About twenty-two years."

TVG: "So this has always been Virginia's house?"

VP: "Yes."

TVG: "Have you ever considered getting married again?"

VP: "I think everyone should get married once for the experience, and since anybody can make a mistake, getting married a second time is okay, but anyone who gets married a third time is a fool and deserves everything they get, right between their eyes."

TVG: "Godmother, have you ever taken hormones?"

VP: "Yes, in the late sixties I started taking them, and then I went on a trip to Europe and visited a lot of famous museums. All the sculptures and paintings of the most beautiful women through history, depicted them with B-cup breasts. At that time I had achieved a B-cup so I figured if that was the epitome of feminine beauty, I better quit while I'm ahead. So I stopped. My breasts stayed the same contrary to what some people tell you—I talked to a group of doctors for about an hour-and-a-half one night, trying to persuade them that you don't have to keep on feeding breasts like you do goldfish every day. The point of it is, once you get differentiation of the glandular tissue, and it is no longer just a little lump of fat on your chest, the effects are irreversible. But, twenty years later I regretted I hadn't stayed on hormones longer because I wanted to be somewhat bigger. I went to a local endocrinologist that worked with TV/TS's and asked about taking hormones again. He recommended against it, because at my age, he thought the cancer risk was too high. He said I should get a mammogram and made an appointment for me. I went to the appointment, stripped to the waist and this gal took the mammograms on both sides. While I was getting dressed again, she said: 'Don't you think you should get a pap smear, too?' I was momentarily nonplussed, but I recovered and said, 'No, I don't think so— if the doctor thought I should have one, he would have prescribed it.'"

TVG: "How did you get the first hormones?"

VP: "Dr. Benjamin prescribed Enovid, which is a birth control pill. When I give lectures to students, I kid them by telling them: 'I took birth-control pills, and I want to assure you girls that they really work, because I didn't get pregnant.'"

TVG: "You founded Tri-Ess, or FPE became Tri-Ess— what happened there?"

VP: "I founded FPE in 1962 and ran it with the help of another friend for about fifteen or seventeen years. Carol Beecroft, who had been an FPE Alpha Chapter member here in California, decided to start a group of her own which she called Mamselle Sorority. It became evident to her after a while that she didn't have much access to new people outside of this area. She approached me about amalgamating the two groups. We worked out a deal whereby FPE and Mademoiselle became one organization, and I cooked up the name Society for the Second Self. Since I was tired of publishing magazines and running an organization, I decided to be the Treasurer and let Carol be the Executive Director of Tri-Ess. That's gone on ever since. So Tri-Ess is the oldest TV organization if you consider it started in 1962, even though under another name. It's also the biggest organization, not only in this country, but in the world."

TVG: "One of the basic premises of Tri-Ess is that it is for 'heterosexual cross-dressers' and their families, and by that very nature, it excludes gays, bisexuals and transsexuals— are you happy with that?"

VP: "Oh yes, definitely, I put it that way in the first place because my whole motivation, even before when I started publishing *Transvestia*, was that I had been through the usual hell of guilt, shame, fear, purges, and I wanted to help other people who were like me. The biggest problem that TV's, or 'bigendered' people have is their wives. I figured that in order to help cross-dressers understand and accept themselves, and deal with their cross-dressing, then obviously one of the best places to start was with their wives—that's what led me to write the book *The Transvestite and His Wife*. The biggest primary problem the wives have is worrying whether their husband is either gay or a transsexual. I couldn't see how a wife who had been induced to come to a meeting by her husband would feel assured if she sat with TV girls who talked about their boyfriend or upcoming surgery— she'd be off to a divorce attorney. So I decided the best thing was to exclude these people so the wife could meet TV's like her husband— a heterosexual family man. I figured that would make it simpler for her; it was my contribution to helping with domestic tranquility at the time, and it's been that way ever since."

TVG: "Tri-Ess has grown into the largest organization, and is in a way, your child. Are you happy with the development of Tri-Ess?"

VP: "Yes. I'm considerably happier now that we have a Board of Directors and the work of the organization has been spread around."

TVG: "I've been getting the *Wives Associated with Crossdressers* newsletter from Cynthia Phillips; are there other 'wives' newsletters?"

VP: "That's the only Tri-Ess newsletter for wives. Cynthia is in charge of that, and one of the benefits is that it's not just for Tri-Ess members, but for wives anywhere even if they don't belong to Tri-Ess."

TVG: "When we were in Provincetown, I asked you if you had any prejudice toward gay or bisexual people whether they were cross-dressers or not, and you told me 'no.'"

VP: "I'm glad you brought that up again, because the reason we exclude them is exactly as I stated. Personally, I have a number of friends in the gay community, I've known many of the leaders in the gay movement since way back in the '60's. That's their life, they can lead it; it's not mine. I also have a number of very good friends who are transsexuals, even though I'm not known for being pro-TS. I don't happen to think that most people who claim to be transsexuals really are, but that's a whole separate discussion by itself. It isn't that I put any of these behaviors down in principle, and we don't exclude them because we're prejudiced, biased or antagonistic toward them, we had a perfectly valid reason to exclude them, which is that it easily confuses the marital situation with wives."

TVG: "In your opinion, has this turned out to be a good arrangement for females married to cross-dressing males?"

VP: "I believe so. We have a great number of wives who belong to Tri-Ess, I'm the Treasurer and every time I get new member checks, several are from wives who join."

TVG: "We talked on the phone a little bit about the use of the term 'Transgendered,' a word you coined to mean a person who lives full-time in the opposite gender role from their sex classification. Now, down in Texas specifically, some people are using that term to describe any person who expresses either gender role for whatever reason whether part-time or full time. What do you have to say

about that?"

VP: "Well, historically, gender has been expressed as masculine or feminine, so people who switch back and forth between one gender role and the other should be called 'Bigenderal' or 'Bigenderists.' I think that's a good term because society is already familiar with the prefix bi meaning two, and with the word bisexual meaning with either sex, and since most people in society believe sex and gender are the same thing, which they're not, this term could help them understand they are separate. Secondly, the prefix trans means to cross over, and society is familiar with transsexual meaning to change sex. Transgender means change gender roles, it applies to people like myself who have changed their gender but not their sex—their anatomy—not switch back and forth. It will only add to confusion. And, to apply that term to the 'gender community,' which is a dumb term anyway since everybody has a gender, and call it the 'transgendered community' is wrong. The people who wrote that are cross-dressers, they're married, and they cross-dress some of the time: they are bigendered."

TVG: "There's a question I just have to ask—you've been living your life as a woman for twenty-four years, you can't call yourself a cross-dresser anymore, can you?"

VP: No."

TVG: "But you did tell me that, about twelve years ago, you went to visit your father..."

VP: "Dressed as his son because that was the only way he'd see me."

TVG: "Was that the last time you saw him?"

VP: "Yes, and the last time I did it."

TVG: "So tell me, woman— what did it feel like to be out in public cross-dressed as a man?"

VP: "It felt very weird. He had an office in a hospital and I had to go there to see him. I was a little nervous and I asked the nurse at the desk where the restrooms were and she pointed them out. I started in the first one, but suddenly realized: 'Oh-oh, not today.'"

TVG: "You're virtually a legend, bigger-than-life in some ways, how does that impact your personal life?"

VP: "Number one, I don't think I'm bigger-than-life; number two, a legend is a series of stories about someone we know little about, but we have a pretty good idea they lived at one time. I don't fit that situation, really. Saying someone is a legend in their own time is a misuse of the term, actually. To accomplish something that means something to a lot of other people, and if you're still alive, to be thanked for it is an honor. But it's also kind of embarrassing—if I had set out to accomplish a certain task that would be one thing, but I didn't set out to do much of anything, it all just kind of happened, and with very nice results. To think back to the original ten guys in the Hose & Heels Club, and then look at *Tapestry* and find over two-hundred organizations listed, *that* is a fantastic development, it's not an accomplishment, I didn't do it. I may have given it a start but it took off by its own."

TVG: "Are you able to be the person you want to be, or do you find yourself having to live up to the image of Virginia Prince?"

VP: Well, the latter is true to a certain degree. If I were to do certain things, then people might say, 'Gee, I didn't think Virginia was that kind of person, I didn't think she would do *that*.' It is kind of restricting to me. Take the case of the chorus girl costume I wore back at Fantasia Fair, a skimpy little bra and string bikini with fringe. One of the wives wrote me a letter saying she had thought

very highly of me, had recommended my books to other people and so forth, but it seemed to her that it reflected poorly on her judgement because I wore that costume in public. Why the hell shouldn't I? It was a Fantasy Ball, it happened to have been a fantasy of mine to be a chorus girl. Why am I not just as entitled to have a fantasy and do something that is as far-out as anybody else? I'm not trying to do things to make people think less of me, but when they build you up to a point where you have to live up to their ideals, that's not fun. I want to live up to my ideals, not yours. I do feel constrained when I think about doing something but then consider: 'I better not because what will people think?'"

TVG: "On the one hand, you've had a cumulative life of almost eighty years, but you're only about a thirty year-old woman— would you say?"

VP: "Well, thirty-one."

TVG: "Thirty-one? Well I am surprised you admit to being over twenty-nine and didn't hit me."

VP: "Well, that's a special concession just for today. I do feel young in spirit and attitude— I don't feel I'm seventy-nine even though I know I am by the books."

TVG: "Do you have any last words to say?"

VP: "Not really."

TVG: "Are you glad you met me?"

VP: "Gee, now there's a tough question. I'm going to lose either way on that. By the way, what is all this Godmother stuff, anyway?"

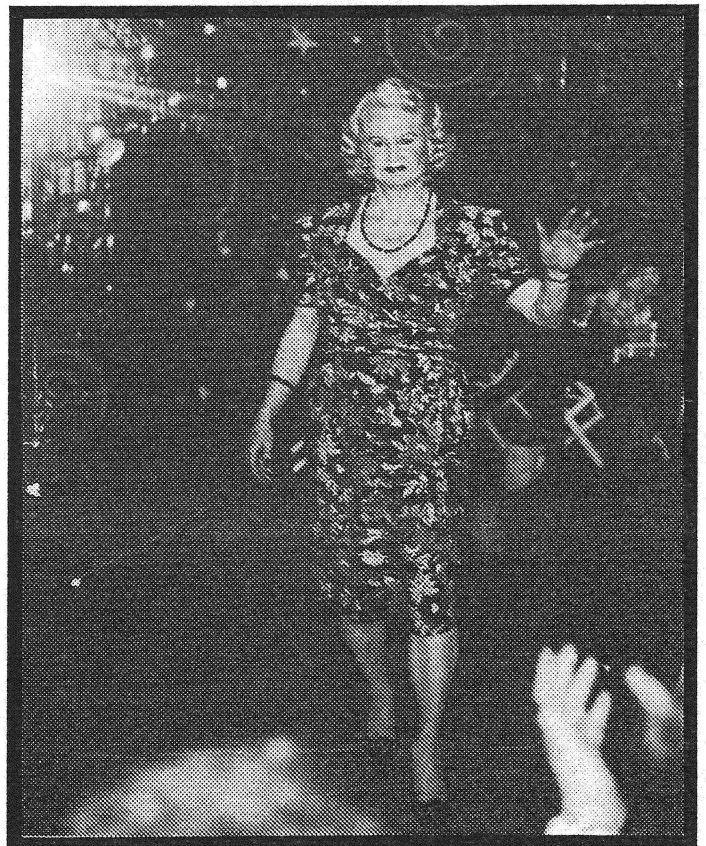
TVG: "I wanted to run a headline that says: 'Godmother Of All Modern TV's.'"

VP: "If I'm your Godmother, what does that make you?"

TVG: "Uh, your god damn child?"

VP: "Billie Jean, I like you but you're crazy."

TVG: "Thank you, Godmother."



Focus Film Plane

(I ain't never done no book review before, so I hope this turns out all hunky-dory— geez, I couldn't even find my Betty Crocker manuscript recipe book, neither.)

When I was a trade school photography student, we studied physics and chemistry. We learned how light reflects, refracts, bends, disperses and can be focussed through a series of glass shapes to excite latent silver particles suspended in gelatin. We learned of the "circle of confusion" and to focus on the film plane.

Mariette Pathy Allen went to art school to study painting, and became a photographer. She told me: "Painting is so isolated, I wanted to be out in the world, not in a studio." That comment took me back to those isolated hours and hours in darkrooms learning the technical aspects of what turned out to be a job that required hours and hours in the darkroom— when what I really wanted was to be out in the world. So, after five years, I got into construction.

Mariette has stayed in the world, out of the darkroom and out of the isolation many people find themselves trapped in. In *Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them*, she focuses her film plane on a variety of people who are "out in the world," and allows them to tell their own stories in accompanying text.

This book is literally a labor of love, and offers an intimate look into the lives of several cross-dressers, their lovers and family. One could hardly find a better way to "come out" to family and friends than to have this book on the 'ol coffee table. And, I couldn't think of a better gift to give your family, friends, spouse, or SO if you wanted to help them understand the variety within the man-to-woman cross-dresser community.

As an outreach publication it is superb, the result of over ten years worth of exploration into what Mariette describes as: "the transgendered world." In her Introduction, Mariette writes, "To depict them where they belong, in the daylight of daily life, rich in relationships with spouses, children, siblings, parents, and friends is my tribute to their courage."

Over a lunch of garlic with some pasta thrown in, I asked her what her husband thought about her time spent with cross-dressers. "He's for it. We see many of these people socially, and we invite some to parties with our other friends."

As to the book's acceptance within the larger culture, Mariette is disappointed with the lack of reviews being published. No major newspaper has reviewed it. "The *Village Voice* did a good review but then they changed editors, or something, and didn't publish it." Ah yes, censorship by omission— it's the American way.

Time out for a little sermon (after all, I've been a registered minister since 1968— welcome to The Church Of No Redemption Necessary): If every person who read this would call at least one local bookstore (the more the better) and asked for a copy of *Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them* by Mariette Pathy Allen, published by E.P. Dutton 1989 (24.95, approx. 160 pages, photos & text), the bookstores may order some and then the people you want to see this book (the general public), may actually see it. Get the picture? Good. —Om.

Anyway, we blabbed about our kids, and aspects of our lives that don't have anything to do with a book review, dabbed our lips with napkins (of course I had to touch up my lipstick) then we went outside so Mariette could get to her next photo session, except that she started snapping pictures of the people around her—typical

photographer—and there's always people around her because she so vivacious, good-humored and beautiful that ya can't help but wanna share the glow (Hey Mariette—honk, honk—when ya read this I hope you'll go over to the photos and dig up those shots and send 'em to me, I'm the one in the girl-face with boy-clothes holding your camera bag— damn, I hope she does it, after all, I paid full retail for the book, ya know).

So darlings, if ya wanna cough up some wardrobe budget for a good book, or give a great gift that could pay off big rewards, get *Transformations*. Where? Oh, glad you asked. I tried Books Inc. (721-1200— hint, hint) and they said they didn't carry it! Can you imagine? Call 'em up right now and give 'em a piece of your mind! B. Dalton Bookseller (dial 442-7609) said they carried it but not in-store: special order, a week to ten days— call 'em and remind 'em the holiday are upon us. Cody's Books (in Berkeley, call toll free 800-479-7744) said they carry it, order two at a time, have one in stock, and normal restock time is one to two weeks— Yea Cody's! Tower Books (okay, use the touch-tone: 444-6688) stocked it at one time, currently the warehouse is out and it would take about a month to order from the publisher— check this out: the manager is the only one who orders— call 'em! And after ya do that, and ya wanna order your own copy through the gender "community" or "paraculture": try IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778, \$24.05 plus \$2.50 S&H; or Outreach Book Services, 126 Western Ave, Suite 222, Augusta ME 04330, same price.

Well, that's about it for my first book review— how am I doing? I didn't get lost in a circle of confusion did I? Ya think I oughta end it right here? How 'bout here? Okay, okay, okay— geez, here then.

Comments on **Gender Chains**— (from page 4)

Bravo Brian!

Thanks for your comments, Brian. I happen to agree with your ideas, as do several people I have had the pleasure of discussing these issues with. In fact, I have been trying to elicit help in presenting articles on the subject: Is Cross-dressing An Aspect Of Masculinity?

There are a few groups that are dealing with mens' issues: National Organization for Changing Men (couldn't get a voice phone; BBS is (213)381-2006); The National Organization for Women accepts men as full members; the Gay Community has a few groups that deal primarily with gay issues, role models being an aspect; within the B&D/S&M community, one can also find aspects of alternative role models for men.

A recent book, *Iron John* by Robert Bly has some interesting insights for men (and women) regarding historical cultural role model knowledge. *Changing Men* is a magazine "covering gender, sex, and political issues, with a pro-feminist viewpoint." (\$16 for two years; 4 issues, 306 N.Brooks St., Madison WI 53715.)

As to the "chains of gender roles": where cross-dressing and gender-blending are a primary aspect, the TG, TS, TV "community" offer what I consider the second best venue for gender role exploration. The main problem within this venue, as you have touched upon, is the prevalent attitude (usually unspoken) that one should try to be "passable" at all times (What John Money, Ph.D calls "Gynemimes"—the phenomenon of men who mime women). In my not-so-humble opinion, this is an example of trading one

rigidity for another, and as such, can be extremely self-limiting. Particularly narrow is the "Donna Reed" stereotype (here's Donna in pearls and heels vacuuming the carpet while preparing dinner). All well and good when it's just one aspect of expression; a tight, little coffin when it's the only aspect; a terribly oppressive dogma when it becomes a group aspect. The same could be said for mainstream society, yes?

I consider the best venue for gender exploration to be ordinary every day life. In fact, today (11/11/91) I'm sitting here in men's clothes except for brown pumps (and red panties but no one can see them). Over the last few months I have been out in public in various visibly "mixed" clothing (and jewelry). I do "normal" things like grocery shopping, post office, car repairs— just about everything I need or want to do. I do not feel "abnormal" about any of this, but I know I am not typical. However, if changes are desired, one must first change themselves and then interact with the larger culture.

I hope you will consider visiting "TV groups" and add your perspective to the group(s) because there are many like you who do not care for the focus on "passing." The only way to make these groups more accepting (and therefor larger) is to show differences, to add diversity, and to learn together how to accept differences. This is the only way the larger culture will change, also.

It seems to me that many of us need to outreach into the developing "Men's Movement" and add our perspective to those groups, too. Otherwise, we will be left out in our self-imposed isolation. And, based on many, many comments from genetic females, genetic males may find a greater degree of acceptance from the larger human community if they would stick to expanding definitions of masculinity, rather than defining femininity (aren't males who define femininity another example of patriarchal oppression?). After all, the women's movement didn't concern themselves with definitions of men, or masculinity (though some called us pigs and such); and they didn't include men in their effort to define women, nor did they adopt rigid stereotypes of men in order to express their cultural gender role.

So, why should we?

Virginia Prince, in a keynote address to the IFGE's first annual Coming Together Convention (3/7/87) stated that whereas women needed liberation TO, that is, to become independent, to become professionals in work, to enter politics, etc; men need liberation FROM, that is, from being the strong guy who doesn't cry, from being expected to handle whatever comes along; from being masculine under fear of being labelled a wimp, a panty waist, a fag. Virginia asserted that cross-dressers, regardless of whether they were TG's, TS's, TV's, gay or straight, were in the vanguard of mens' liberation because cross-dressers have already confronted their inner femininity; had already, in effect, trashed the narrow confines of "masculinity" by exposing their inner desires. Virginia is also fond of saying: "Sex (in the biological sense) is between your legs; Gender is between your ears."

Whether one desires to express their femininity, or as so often may be the case, to "throw off the chains of gender roles" as you phrase it, there is growing support for males (whether they desire to be men, women, androgynes, or whatever) to define themselves beyond the roles that our culture seems to impose.

Some of the comments I've heard in the cross-gender community are: "I couldn't make it (or, take it) as a man." "I would have made a shitty man." "I never felt like I was a man." I often question

these statements as an indication of dissatisfaction with the cultural definition of being a man, rather than an indication of "a female trapped in a male's body" (to paraphrase Christine Jorgenson). This rejection of the man-role may be why many gender-conflicted people consider themselves transsexuals. It may also be a main reason why many do not proceed with surgical reassignment, and why some consider their reassignment a mistake (you can't go back). There are a great number of people who live permanently in the opposite role from their biology (transgendered), but leave the option open that they may revert back later in life. To me, and my questioning mind, these are solid indications of the rejection of what it is to be a man in our culture.

Back to Virginia: "Clothing is an admission ticket to a certain way of life. Women's clothing is a means to an end, not an end in itself. For most crossdressers, the feminine clothing simply gets them out of jail, so they can, for a limited time, be the kind of person they cannot be for the rest of the time. Ideal liberation, for all people, is not to become women and men respectively, but to achieve the right to express and enjoy the variety of ways people can approach life without having to deal with the label of 'masculine' or 'feminine.' Gender is an anachronism."

Merissa Sherrill Lynn: "I believe in human liberation."

Ariadne Kane: "What attributes do you select to become yourself?"

One of the most unique and gifted individuals I met at Fantasia Fair was Sterling Stowell. Sterling is a gay male (here go the labels) who helped found the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY) about ten years ago. BAGLY is a support group designed to aid young people under 22 who are, for the most part, runaways or children kicked out for their sexual orientation. Sterling was part of the FanFair support staff rather than a paid participant, and provided a lot of good spirit in addition to handling a myriad of dull details necessary to the success of the Fair. Sterling's basic event wardrobe would go something like this: Women's blazer, blouse, slacks and low-heeled pumps or flats— with men's underwear, no padding. Earrings, a necklace, couple rings and a bracelet; light make up with penciled eyebrows, occasionally some lipstick. I asked Sterling if he ever padded himself and tried to pass as a woman. "No." His everyday wardrobe was jeans and a sweat shirt/blouse. Sterling never looked like a typical man, and yet, Sterling is changing society's concept of men in the Boston area, and he certainly gave the FanFair participants something to think about— Hooray for Sterling!

"We" have a basis to build upon, new perceptions of cultural gender roles will occur only if individuals "push against the envelope," and expand rather than contract choices.

Thanks again for your letter, Brian. I hope this will trigger more comments, and I hope you will attend a few more "TV group" meetings. Please feel free to share what you learn.

Gratuitious Filler

Back issues of **TV Guide** (April, May & June) are still available by mail for one-fifty (\$1.50) postage paid; the July, August, September & October issues are available for two bucks (\$2.00) postage paid (first class USA only). Also, for those may want **TV Guide** to continue, contributions (articles, letters, etc.), and faith donations (cash preferred) will be gladly, joyously, gratefully accepted. Due to demand, future issues will be mailed on a month-to-month basis for \$2.00 each, paid in advance (please include your address).

Fantasia Fair

So, what's Fantasia Fair like? It's like Disneyland except no one sits in the parking lot and gets high before entering. You get high from participating; a ten-day adrenaline rush with a steady release of endorphins; a unique opportunity to commune and bond with diverse spirits; an excursion in a theme park where you can't possibly take everything in.

Let's start with Alison in Genderland— meet Alison Laing, author of *Speaking as a Woman*, one of the co-founders of Renaissance, spouse, parent and a very warm, caring person. Alison's wonderful spouse Dottie came to this year's FanFair with a secret: their eldest daughter would be arriving from California Saturday morning to surprise dad, er, mom, er— well, Alison *for the first time!* So, at the Flagship Restaurant, where Participant Orientation took place (imagine a hundred and ten cross-dressers in full bloom sitting in a waterfront dining room flooded with 10am morning light), Alison was elevated to joyful tears. This was the first time any of the children had been with "dad" as Alison (they knew and had seen photos). A very warm and uplifting morning. (Daughter and I had a long blab session Sunday night at a private dinner party, she referred to me as "Miss Sacramento" thereafter— way cool.)

An interesting occurrence at Orientation: representatives of the Provincetown Police came to welcome us and advise us that if any untoward actions were directed our way, we should immediately contact them through 911 (no such thing happened). When they asked if we had questions, I inquired as to the legality of carrying my stun-gun. "You need a permit in the State of Massachusetts" an officer informed; "however, if someone was harassing me and I had one, well..." (As it was, the stun-gun was perhaps the most useless item I brought along. Another note: in addition to the Police, letters of welcome from the P-town Chamber of Commerce and the Provincetown Business Guild were included in our Participant's and Program Guides.)

Trans Gender Airways— Meet Danielle [redacted], a latecomer who flew in from Tokyo, Japan. Danielle (an American) has lived in Japan the last five years and we met while I was toiling away at the first issue of the *Fan Fair Gazette*, a daily rag that updates schedule changes, news, notes and articles by participants and, as a new feature this year, a one page, hot dishy rumor column, full of irreverent quips and other nonsense by yours truly called *Billie Jean Blabs (and blabs and...)* Anyway, here I was in the FanFair office trying to type with these long nails, no dictionary and not enough time. Enter Danielle. She is assigned a room at the same Inn I have a room in. We blab. Danielle, as her boy-self, flew Tokyo to Chicago, changed planes, and while flying Chicago to Boston, she tells a stew she is going to meet her fiance in Boston, and that whenever they get to see each other they try to surprise each other. This time Danielle is going to meet the fiance as a girl. So she goes to the restroom and changes (she was already wearing lingerie), puts on her face and voila! She returns to her seat, tells the stew she really likes her eye make up and the stew spends fifteen minutes doing Danielle's eyes! Way wacky cool stuff, hey kids? Danielle also got the honorary award in our house for being the person who overtly enjoyed her lingerie the most (like at our PJ house party where Danielle wore bra, panties,

garter belt, stockings, camisole and half-slip, and kept smoothing her slip and asking if the garter tabs were showing. "Yes, dear." Good," she replied while rubbing her legs together— what a slut! (and thanks for the feather boa, sweetheart!).

The Red Nails Run— meet Lisa Martin, a devoted runner who patiently waited every morning (except one— too much dancing the night before; actually Lisa should have gotten an award for the person who danced the most) until 7:15am, and then it was off to the races with whoever showed up (get a clue: I never even considered it!). See Lisa through half-awake eyes enter the house in fluorescent yellow tights, headband, wrist bands, tennis shoes; see Lisa glistening with sweat pour coffee and munching sweet bread that Kevin, our house manager, provided at 8:30 every morning. See the rest of us lounging in nightgowns and robes wondering where the hell this fifty year-old got such energy. (Well, not everybody lounged around like I did, some of them were actually rarin' to go by 9am.) Lisa and I had some fun conversations and adventures, but the best one (for me) happened later in the week when I actually took some time to shop in P-towns stores. We were walking down the yellow brick road (actually Commercial Street) in flats, pants (jeans for Lisa, wool slacks for me) and tops; light make up— almost tourist looking (the difference between cross-dressers and women tourists in P-town is that the CD's usually wear skirts and pumps, whereas the tourists wear pants and flats; the difference between residents and tourists is that residents wear jeans and tennis



Lisa, Billie Jean, Danielle. PHOTO CREDIT: HELEN STRONG

shoes). Anyhoo, we were blabbing and meandering when a car came up behind us (it's a narrow one way street) and passed by. A woman stuck her head out, eye-balled us real good and exclaimed: "You two look really good— I couldn't tell!" (I figure she "made" us because of the make up— genetic women rarely wear foundation in the daytime; of course, I'm six feet and Lisa's a little taller.)

By the way, without exception, every place I went in town I never felt like any one objected to my gender presentations. For the majority of people and places not associated with the Fair, I was treated like any other tourist (it is a tourist town), and in many, many

(Continued on back page)

Gender Organizations

C.G.N.I.E., Inc. (Court of the Great Northwest Imperial Empire, Inc.) POB 160636, Sac, CA 95816. CGNIE was organized to raise funds for charities and continues to do so. Primarily part of the gay community, membership is open to anyone with an interest. Annual events include elections of Emperor & Empress, Grand Duke & Duchess with related campaign events culminating in Coronation Ball and Grand Ducal Ball; and other Balls as selected by the Court. A variety of other events and fund raisers are scheduled by the reigning Court. Court Imperial (general meetings) held on first Tuesday of the month at Faces, 2000 K Street, Sac, CA, 7:30pm. No door charge. Annual dues—\$22 (or \$2 per month).

DVG (Diablo Valley Girls)—POB 272885, Concord, CA 94527–2885. DVG is a non-sexual social club currently forming in the Cocord/Walnut Creek area. Monthly socials held at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, CA on the first Tuesday and third Monday of each month, 8pm. Write for details.

ETVC (Educational TV Channel)—POB 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Phone (Hotline) (415) 763-3959. ETVC is a non-sexual organization with the purpose of serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends and professionals in the helping services. ETVC is the largest organization of this type in Northern California and provides a wide variety of support including: rap groups, a significant other support group, print & video libraries, outreach, education and lots of social activities, plus more. Theme socials the last Thursday of each month, Chez Mollet restaurant, 527 Bryant St., SF, \$3. members, \$5 non-members (certain event/themes may be higher priced). Newsletter every other month included with annual dues—\$20.

FTM (Female to Male) Newsletter— [REDACTED] SF, CA 94117. FTM publishes a newsletter for women cross-dressers and transsexuals, and is currently selling paperback copies off Lou Sullivan's *Information For The Female-To-Male Crossdresser And Transsexual*, \$10.

G.A.L. (Gender Alternatives League) POB 3392, Napa, CA 94558 Phone: [REDACTED] GAL is a group attempting national representation of "Genderists." Predisposed to politi-

cal activism, GAL is also publishing "The Genderist" four times a year—\$20.

I.F.G.E. (International Foundation for Gender Education) POB 367, Wayland MA 01778. The largest informational organization concerned with the CD/TV/TS Community. Publishers of TV/TS Tapestry Journal, and more.

I.M.A.G.E. (I'm Making A Gender Expression) 2094 California St., Sutter, CA 95982 Phone: [REDACTED] between 6pm-11pm. IMAGE is a closed social club; new members must be sponsored by an existing member and accepted by membership vote. Three classes of membership: Individual, Couples & Honorary. Annual dues not established.

RGA (Rainbow Gender Association) POB 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. RGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. Poker Socials, Rap Group (with ETVC), Computer Bulletin Board: [REDACTED] (300-2400 baud), plus more. General meetings twice a month (1st & 3rd Fridays at 8pm) at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. No dues or door charge; contributions accepted. Newsletter every other month for \$10 per year.

S.G.A. (Sacramento Gender Association) POB 215456, Sac, CA 95821-1456. Phone: [REDACTED] SGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. Social meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of the month at Joseph's Town & Country, 2062 Auburn Blvd., Sac, CA, 7pm if you want dinner, meeting follows, 8pm. \$2 door fee (\$4 non-members). SGA Executive Committee meeting (club business and planning) held the third Friday, same location, 7:30pm, open to members and guests—free. Call SGA for current schedule of their significant others support group. Annual dues—\$20.

Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess)—POB 194, Tulare, CA 93275. Tri-Ess is a 'sorority' for heterosexual males who cross-dress, and their families. A variety of social and educational services are designed to foster self-acceptance and expression. Individual chapters are located throughout the US and abroad. Publishes the *Femme Mirror* four times a year which is included in annual dues of \$35. Write for application & info.

Support Organizations & Services

ETVC/RGA Rap Group meets the second Monday of each month at the New Community of Faith Church in San Jose, from 8 to 10pm. Contact Kim at [REDACTED] or Martina at [REDACTED]

A peer support group is forming for Transgenderists who have recently crossed over, or are seriously contemplating doing so. Contact: Boxholder 229, 3311 Mission St, SF, CA 94110.

ETVC's Significant Others Support Group meets the second Thursday of each month, from 8 to 9pm. SOS meetings are open to people involved with a CD/TV/TG/TS person, but who are not one themselves. Write ETVC, or call Ginny at [REDACTED]

W.A.C.S Newsletter [Women Associated with Cross-dressers Communication Network], c/o Cynthia Phililps: POB 17, Bulverde, TX 78163.

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute is addressed at: 405 Western Avenue, Suite 345, South Portland, ME 04106. (207) 775 0858. HOAI sponsors the following services: GAIN (Gender Awareness and Involvement Network), a service for helping professionals to access and share information relative to counseling and therapy; a Speakers Bureau; dozens of Seminars and Workshops; Information Packets and Periodical Publications; Fantasia Fair; and jointly with Theseus Counseling Services, HOPEFUL (Helping Our Partners Experience the Fullness of United Love), a program for couples who have learned to live with cross-dressing but who want more out of their relationship. Write for free brochures. Theseus Counseling Services is addressed at: 233 Harvard Street, Suite 302, Brookline, MA 02146. (617) 277-4360.

Fantasia Fair — (Continued from page 14)

encounters I was greeted and received openly, cheerfully and with a certain warmth that comes from people who love people.

My First-Time Ever— meet Alycia Anne [redacted] who I found Friday night at the Welcome Open House Cocktail Party, the Fair's first event beside registration. Here I am in man-drag, six day beard; here's Alycia, alone at a table sipping a soft drink. "Hi!" I said, "I'm Billie Jean." "Alycia [redacted]" she answered. "Are ya havin' fun?" I asked. "I'm a little nervous," she replied fiddling with the straw, "this is my first time." "This is my first time at the Fair, too," I announced. "It's my first time anyplace dressed," she explained. And so it was. Alycia had come to the Fair, a successful businessman who had had it— she had nothing to live for; fed up; disgusted. I didn't find that out until a couple nights later when we blabbed until 3:30am. She brought poems she had written, all about the dark side of not being who she was; about wanting to die; about the light at the end of the darkness being the Fair. I cried. She told me I was the most free and open person she had ever met. I cried more because I felt her pain, I knew her pain; I knew exactly where that pain comes from, and that it is a long slow process of healing, and that I wasn't so free and open as she thought— but I couldn't tell her that, I could only cry and tell that she had the power to be who she had the potential to be. We hugged and I stumbled off to bed.

At the FanFair Follies '91, on Thursday night, Alycia did a very touching song about her struggle to be, to become. And at the Awards Banquet on the following Saturday, she received the Ms. Cinderella Award, an annual award that goes to a first year participant, "who really came out and let her femme personality blossom as the week went on." After an enthusiastic round of applause, Alycia said: "Thank you. When I came here I didn't want to live, and now I do."

She sent me a card last week. In it she said I had helped her. I wrote her back that she had helped me; that I had discovered that a major reason why I joked around and tried to get other people happier was because I was selfish— instead of feeling other people's pain, I wanted to feel their joy.

That's a little taste of what Fantasia Fair is about. Like I said: it's like Disneyland— only different.



Alycia (center) receiving the Cinderella Award.

Special Thanks

Special Thanks to Brian D. for the Gender Chains letter.

Special Thanks to Joanne H. of ETVC for the five bucks and nice note. And Evelyn, another five bucks! Zowie! Thank You. A Really Big Thank You to Amanda L., the first SGA donor—\$2!

A Special Thanks to Cindy Martin for the compliment and mention of **TV Guide** in ETVC's newsletter. And another Special Thank You to JoAnn Roberts for the flattering comments and plug for **TV Guide** in *Renaissance News*. And, to the staff of *Tapestry*: Thanks for keeping the dialogue going; and Thank You for including the voice of **TV Guide** (the mouth that roars) in *Tapestry*.

To all the participants of Fantasia Fair '91: Thank You for sharing, caring and daring to love.

Upcoming (Mostly) Local Events

Dec. 3— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

Dec. 3— CGNIE Court Imperial Meeting, 7:30pm at Faces. Open to all, no charge.

Dec. 6— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

Dec. 8— CGNIE Christmas party and show at Faces, 6pm (great food at their Thanksgiving party). Free.

Dec. 13— Miss Gay Sacramento (Chelsea) Show & Birthday Party at JTC, 8pm. Celebrate Chelsea's 21st birthday!

Dec. 13— PAARC presents a Christmas Revue at the Senior Citizen Center, 27th & J, Sac. &pm, \$5 donation.

Dec 14— ETVC sponsors "An afternoon with Bill Jones," a make up artist at SF State. This will be a "hands on" workshop. Starts 10am at Calif. Theatrical Supply, 132 9th St., SF, \$3 donation.

Dec. 14— SGA Executive Committee Meeting, 7:30pm at JTC. Open to all, no charge.

Dec. 15— Faces annual Christmas party at Faces, 6pm.

(The events listed here may be attended in drag [Dressed As a Girl] or drab [Dressed As a Boy].)

Dec. 16— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

Dec. 20— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

Dec 21— SGA holiday party at JTC, 8pm (7pm if you want dinner). \$2 members, \$4 guests.

Dec 21— The Sacramento Do-Cats Christmas show at JTC, 9pm. Free, donations accepted.

Dec. 26— ETVC presents "An evening at the Chez" at 8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. \$3 members, \$5 guests (wear your holiday outfit).

January 11, 1992 Special Note— ETVC presents "Cotillion '92," with a promise that this will be the best Cotillion ever. Tickets \$18 in advance, \$25 at the door. Advance sales at Lily's #4 Valencia St., SF; Chez Mollet, SF; and from certain officers of ETVC. California Club, 1750 Clay St., SF, 7pm. Call or write for additional details.

Every Friday Night— Café Lambda, 1931 L Street, Sac. Smoke-free, alcohol-free— no door charge.