



News & views

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A Bad Day For Everyone

by Angela Gardner

Imagine my horror when I learned that a transgendered person was barricaded in her home with automatic weapons, and under siege by police. It happened in the sleepy suburban community of Haddon Heights, New Jersey.

Leslie Nelson, a post-operative transsexual, had been served with a warrant on a charge of sexually abusing a three year old child. When the officers serving the warrant entered her home they saw automatic weapons. They went for another warrant and when they returned to search the house, Leslie opened fire. She killed one officer and wounded another. Then she ran upstairs and fired at the wounded man's brother (and fellow officer) who was trying to get neighbors undercover. She killed him with a single shot to the head.

After the initial shooting, there was a fourteen hour standoff during which the police tried to negotiate Leslie's surrender. At one point, she used the body of the dead officer, who had fallen inside her house, as a shield while she walked from room to room. She had a gas mask and it took multiple tear gas grenades to finally make her surrender in the early hours of the next morning.

What was the root of this violent outburst? Neighbors said that Leslie had always been a loner. In the days when her name was Glenn, he never had any friends. Glenn would be seen walking, always alone. Then, he was arrested for carrying a handgun without a permit. He said he needed it for protection. Would it have been better if Glenn had

reached out to others and not built a wall around himself? Possibly.

Leslie seems to have appeared suddenly around two years ago. Did she follow the Benjamin Standards of Care in her transition? We don't know. Would it have helped? That's another good question. Two police officers are dead and one is recovering with the knowledge that his brother is gone forever. Leslie's life is effectively over.

We can't say that a good transgender support group would have helped Leslie Nelson. She may not have been able to accept help from others. That seems to be indicated by the descriptions of her given by neighbors and former schoolmates. Ideally, navigating the many pitfalls of gender reassignment should go smoothly if you take your time, get as much information as possible and learn to communicate with family, friends, co-workers, and even your neighbors. Leslie seems to have built a wall and then hid behind it, incommunicado, with the weapons she felt she needed to protect herself from the world. By hiding, she didn't make her position any easier. By hiding she became the person who "lost it" and ruined several lives.

I'm sorry for Leslie Nelson and I'm sorry for the families of the dead and wounded officers. I'm also sorry for the transgender community. How many thousands of post-op and pre-op transsexuals live their lives in peace? How many live without killing anyone? All of those people now have to worry someone will think they are dangerous. All in all, that day in April was not a good day for anyone.

The Transsexual Hotline

by Kelly Harris

In 1988 or thereabouts, when I first heard the word transsexual and had feelings this had something to do with me, I wanted to be able to talk with somebody who understood my confusion and could point me in the proper direction. I was lost! The more I looked, the more disheartened I became. I couldn't find anybody. So I said, "If I can't find anybody then there must be other people looking."

I called the phone company and had them install

a "teenager line" into my home (It was cheaper than anything else). This became the Transsexual Hotline. I never have paid to have the number listed in any publication, but I do ask people to give the number out. I first started using it as the number for the South Jersey Chapter of Renaissance (It still is.) and let it go from there.

Now for my disclaimer! I am **not** a mental health

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Renaissance

Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808 or call 302-995-1396.

Maryland

A chapter is forming in Baltimore. Write P.O. Box 39189, Baltimore, MD, 21212 or call 410-243-4250 24hr Hotline/Info.

New Jersey

South Jersey/Shore Area: Write Renaissance South Jersey, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ, 08330. Meets first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open 7PM. Call 609-641-3782 for details.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (1578) for location and times.

Affiliates

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244. Information resources.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 404-939-2128.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332. Local support group.

Long Island: New York GIRL & Partners, PO Box 456, Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-8219 for info.

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooners Belles, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Rachel [REDACTED], P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

Renaissance News & Views

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public.

Local Calendar

June

- 3 Ren. South Jersey
- 3 Ren. LSV meeting
- 10 Ren. Delaware
- 17 Ren. GPC
- 24 Balto. Affiliate

July

- 1 Ren. South Jersey
- 1 Ren. LSV meeting
- 8 Ren. Delaware
- 15 Ren. GPC
- 22 Balto. Affiliate

Resources

Background Papers:

- Background Papers are \$1.25 each:
1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
 2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
 3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
 4. The Matter of Children
 5. Annotated Bibliography
 6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
 7. AIDS/ HIV Safety and Ethics.
 8. Understanding Transsexualism

Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

News Beat & Reminder



Anybody see **The Girls** in the Hollywood issue of *Vanity Fair*? It's old news by now but for the April issue they thought it would be cute to dress **Tony Curtis** and **Jack Lemmon** in their old *Some Like It Hot* costumes. They got their makeup on and then photog **Annie Liebovitz** had an inspiration. She decided to shoot the pair in underwear and makeup. "Wardrobe! Send back the dresses and furs." Tony wore a pair of low rise Calvin Klein undies (ladies, I think but it's so hard to tell with bikini underwear) and Jack ended up in an old lady slip. They're holding hands and they make a lovely couple even though Jack looks a little bemused by it all.

They captioned the photo with a quote from the script. Jack's character said, "I'm engaged." "What?" Tony replied. "Osgood proposed to me," said Lemmon. The Curtis character then asked, "But why would a guy want to marry a guy?" "Security," said Jack.

On that note, let's stay secure in the knowledge that the rest of my scintillating column is right on the other side of this headline—

THE WILD SIDE, AGAIN!

Production is underway in New York on a film called *I Shot Andy Warhol*. It's based on the incident from 1968 when Andy was wounded by playwright, feminist essayist, Valerie Solanas. According to a report in *The Hollywood Reporter* TV actress **Candy Darling** (and I don't mean she did a lot of sitcoms in the '60s) will be portrayed by **Stephen Dorff**, best know

for his appearance in the movie about **The Beatles** early days, *Backbeat*, where he played the Fab Four's first bass player Stuart Sutcliffe. Jared Harris plays Andy, Tahnee Welch is Viva and a person known to those who read this column, **Donovan Leitch**, is slated to portray a character called Gerard. Let's hope Donovan gets a chance to pose in pumps. It looks like they're not including **Holly Woodlawn** in the story. At least no one is listed in the credits as portraying her. No word about the movie based on Holly's autobiography, either.

In a July 1994 interview with *Cosmopolitan*, Dorff said he was a just "a teddy bear who needed to be cuddled." If he does a good job as Candy there'll no doubt be many people who want to cuddle him. (I've met a few at NY's TG nightclub, Edelweiss.) Maybe even his girl friend, **Robert Wagner's** daughter, may think it's kinky fun. In any event, playing Candy Darling will certainly be a far cry from his work in the quickly defunct 1990 sitcom, *What A Dummy*. Lasted about a day, didn't it?

This intrepid reporter actually spent some money and spoke to a member of the production company, who didn't wish to be identified. He said Dorff does a damn good job as Candy. I quote, "He looks fabulous."

BIRDS OF A FEATHER TAKE FLIGHT

Last month I revealed that **Robin Williams** would don festive feminine finery for a remake of the comedy

farce *La Cage aux Folles*. I'm sure we all know the story about an older gay couple playing it straight when a son brings home his fiancée.

Of course Robin will be the flamboyant, femme FI who tries to be a conservative, matronly mom — with hilarious results. It looks like **Gene Hackman** will be "husband" Renato, in the role first portrayed on film by the late Ugo Tognazzi. Also appearing in this edition are **Dianne Wiest** and Calista Flockhart. Could it be that Diane will portray the real mother and Ms. Flockhart will be the son's fiancée? The son will be that famous Broadway actor, Nathan Lane. (Who?)

Rounding out the talent associated with the film are the famous team of **Mike Nichols** and **Elaine May** in the director and writer spots. As Stuart on *Murphy Brown* says, "All's I know," is it looks like it should be a funny flick. Let's hope it's not a case of too many cooks. Start checking your local listings for feature times in six months to a year for the United Artists release of *Birds Of A Feather*. What ever happened to Mindy?

BOY, GEORGE, WHAT A PARTY

Whilst cruising on the Net, late one night, my eyes beheld a scary sight. Actually, I just felt like paraphrasing an old novelty song. It really wasn't scary, it was a bit of information from a bird in jolly old England about the release party for **Boy George's** book. That's right, the man who made androgyny hip in the eighties, the man who appeared in a guest spot on **The A Team**, has written a book called *Take It Like A Man*. According to the young lady who filed the report (Her name is Rachel) the party was held at a school and all the guests had to wear school uniforms. The assembly hall was very "atmospheric" with choral music playing. Wonder if there was any caning? Those British public school boys love their caning. There were masters (teachers to us Yanks) all decked out in mortar boards and gowns and of course sweet little school girls (including Rachel). According to Rachel, Boy

continued next page

News Beat...

George never turned up in his well known media persona. The Boy took advantage of the special ability he shares with Ru Paul or Dolly Parton, to "disappear" when not dressed like their usual image. It seemed he was there all along, in disguise as a bearded, gray suited teacher. Please Mister Boy George, come over here and have a fab party. I long to be a saucy little schoolgirl. I've got a kilt. I won't wear Mary Jane though. I hear that patent leather reflects up.

FRANKEN MUPPET

The master of Transylvania, **Frankenfurter** himself, is not only available as a porcelain statue, he's working on the next Muppet movie. What a career! From fishnets and eye makeup to acting with hand puppets. **Tim Curry** will play Long John Silver in *Muppet Treasure Island*, now shooting in London. All the regular Muppet suspects will be on board the ship as it sails in search of box office treasure. I wonder how they plan to work **Miss Piggy** into the script? I don't recall any major female characters in Robert Louis Stevenson's original story.

I'm sure Tim will enjoy his pirate outfit but, will he ever be able to wear pumps again? I mean, Long John Silver had a prosthetic peg. I wonder if you can get a peg leg with a pump attached? Could be a whole new fad. Maybe not.

THERMOLASE?

The Internet has been abuzz about the FDA approval for the hair removal process called Thermolase. At least the two transgender newsgroups are stirred up, and I don't blame them — a way to get rid of all this unwanted body and facial hair in a fraction of the time and possibly at a lower expense. I heard about this process last year from Caroline [REDACTED], the newsletter editor of the Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Renaissance. I mentioned it in my column then and like the rest of you have been patiently waiting for more news, and a place to call for my first appointment.

According to a report from the Reuters News Service, the "Thermolase system is a laser-based process designed to quickly and painlessly remove unwanted hair for the long-term." Valerie [REDACTED], a member of the Net's TG newsgroup, says that she dug around a little and found that while the announcement caused the company's stock to soar in value, the FDA approval only says Thermolase won't hurt you. (Seriously.)

To quote Valerie from her April 27th post to the Internet newsgroup, "I obtained the Thermolase financial info packet yesterday. It contained almost no technical explanation, other than the fact that the system employs a scanned infrared laser on skin treated with a magic oil-based cream.

In 1992 & 1993, the system was tested on six animals, with no apparent ill effects. The company then switched

to a dermatology laser already approved by the FDA, and performed a pre-clinical trial in 1993 and 1994 on the legs of 26 volunteers. This study showed the system was probably not harmful; no efficacy figures were released. Human clinical trials began in 1994 on the faces of 61 volunteers. Again, the system was shown to be safe; again, no news was released about the actual hair removal.

I heard today that the FDA approval only acknowledges that Thermolase does not seem to cause any immediate harm. However, the FDA also said that Thermolase may not advertise the system as 'permanent' or 'painless.'

In other words, there have been no published, controlled studies on the efficacy of the system."

Well girls, I hope it works. I'll be in line with you. Keep in mind though, back in the twenties when Radium was a miracle cure for everything it was used as a way to kill hair follicles. Unfortunately, it also gave people skin cancer. Not a good trade off. As the news comes in, I'll pass it along. In the meantime I wonder how razor company's stock is doing. I know I've been responsible for many of the Gillette company's dividend checks for many years.

PRIMITIVE HAIR REMOVAL

A lad in Cambridge, England was helping a friend with an art project by letting the friend make a plaster cast of his torso. They were both young so I guess that's an excuse. The so called

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friend spread the plaster all over the willing model and then they both found out you don't use wall plaster for that kind of thing.

The encapsulated model was taken to hospital where the doctors had to chip him out with chisels. Therein lies the primitive hair removal. Ouch! The recipient of this unwanted plaster wax job said, after he stopped screaming, that his friend was reading a book on the process and "I don't think she had got farther than the Preface. When it set, the idea was I should break out of it, but it had set on every single hair of my body — it was extremely painful."

I do hope the poor boy took advantage of his smooth epidermis and wore low cut, off the shoulder dresses for a week or so.

SHE'S LIKE BUTTER

If you don't watch *Saturday Night Live* anymore then skip this bit. CBS has taken **Barbra Streisand's** 1994 concert and turned it into a three hour special by adding a half hour of new material. Part of that new material was godd old **Mike Myers** doing his **Linda Richman** character, "Barbra, she's like butter!" The show aired May 21st... and it was inspirational. Oh — I've gotta go. I'm getting the decorated sweater out of storage. I'm sorry, I'm a little vaklemtpt. Talk among yourselves. Here's a topic.....

SECRET'S REVEALED? I KNEW THAT

ABC had a show on April 29th called *More Secrets Revealed*. Some of

the exciting secrets were how pro wrestlers fake those holds and how the government spent 10 million dollars to build a flying saucer in the fifties. I call it a hover craft, but they managed to make it into a flying saucer. Right after the saucer bit they told us the **Beauty Secrets of Super Models**. Big whoop! I think the girls got their tips from us. Their big secrets were: How to hide a pimple — make it into a beauty mark. I've been doing that to those razor nicks that just won't stop bleeding for years. How to fix those bags under your eyes— Preparation H. Don't do it all the time or you'll damage your skin, but once in a while when the bags under your eyes have turned into Louis Vitton luggage try it for a quick fix. Need rounder hips? A couple of shoulder pad slipped into each hip between you and your pantyhose and you've got those child bearing hips you've always wanted. A female impersonator taught me that one about eight years ago. If you really need beauty tricks, don't go to a super-model, talk to your local drag queen.

Later in *More Secrets Revealed*, after we learned how the guy on the bed of nails doesn't end up with a terrible skin condition, they delved into the world of film sound effects. If you know anything about movies you know that everything you hear in the theater has been re-recorded in a special studio called a Foley stage. On the Foley stage, sound effect specialists called Foley Artists make John Claude VanDamme's karate chop sound impressive and beef up every sound to

greater than real proportions. Of note to the transgender film fan was how they get those high heels to sound so sexy. When you see a hot pair of heels strolling down the sidewalk, it may actually be a guy with a beard in white socks and pumps walking in place on a piece of concrete on the Foley stage. I found it interesting that the Foley artists profiled on the show were a male/female team and the artist who did the high heel sounds was the guy. Do you suppose it was his idea? "Oh, I'll do the actresses' high heel sounds. I just happen to have a pair of red pumps. You do the dog paw noises?"

NOT ONLY UNCLE MILTIE

OK, I'll give a little hint about my age. I remember Uncle Miltie's television show. The camera would show us the back of this gorgeous creature in sequins and furs. Her long hair would drape enticingly over the soft feminine skin revealed by the low cut back of her gown. One gloved hand would rest in an alluring manner on her hip. The other might, in the earlier programs, hold a long cigarette holder. Then this vision would turn to the camera revealing a smile with a blacked out tooth and the country would see that "she" was Uncle Miltie. Of course we already knew that and that's why it was so funny. I laughed, since it was funny, but I always got a little more out of it.

I don't have any memory of seeing this live at the time and maybe it happened before my time, but on the Burns & Allen show one night Jack Benny did drag. Not just any drag,

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DONNA'S HAIR STUDIO 1 AND BOUTIQUE

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TG Alamo In Texas

by Sarah DePalma

On April 2, the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas held "A March on Austin" in support of their hate crimes legislation pending in the the Texas Senate. As promised, It's Time, Texas! was there, waiting for the marchers to arrive, with *our* protest because transgendered people were intentionally left out of the legislation.

For more than three months we had been attempting to get the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby (LGRL) to include us in the legislation, and we were given all sorts of excuses but no action. Then, on March 18, a transgendered person and her female companion developed a flat tire around 1:45 AM in the Southwest part of Houston. While the transgendered individual got out to change the tire, a car with three men pulled up and began harassing what they thought were two women. At some point they figured out they were dealing with a crossdresser and a female and promptly beat the crossdresser badly enough to put her in the hospital. The female was not injured.

This incident was clearly not covered in the hate crimes bill. The person was not gay nor was she perceived as gay. Comments made as the beating took place made it clear the assault happened strictly because the person was transgendered. From that point forward It's Time, Texas! (ITT) made

it clear that nothing less than inclusion in the hate crimes legislation would be sufficient to cancel our protest. The LGRL refused on the grounds that we were already covered (an obvious lie) and we made good on our promise.

On the morning of the march, we staked out an area directly in the path of the marchers on a little knoll which gave us high visibility. (One of the people directly behind the LGRL director said we could be seen at the half way point of the march.) We had one banner that was ten feet long and four feet high, another that was at least fifteen feet long and four feet high, still another that was five feet long and four feet high, and numerous hand held posters, not to mention the Texas and American flags.

I must say, it is incredibly intimidating to look downhill at 5,000 to 7,000 people coming straight at you. Now I know how the people at the Alamo must have felt. Still, we were there as friends and the people coming toward us were friends, so the analogy has its limits.

As the first contingent of marchers came by we smiled and talked to them. I can't even count the number of people who told us they were glad we were protesting and how many more said they agreed with our position on inclusion. Before the march started we

distributed 2,500 flyers for them to hold up as a sign they believed in inclusion and many people did exactly that. Others peeled off from the march and stood with us, their flyers held high in the air. Even more made it a point to shake our hands and state their support. It was a genuinely moving experience.

Let me tell you about our band of protesters. There was Phyllis Frye and Dee McKellar from the Transgender Law Conference; Tere Fredrickson, chair of It's Time, San Antonio!; three or four crossdressers (in heels no less); the wife of a crossdresser; and several folks who had seen our press releases and showed up to help because they believed we were right. I'm not sure we even know their names. In total, I guess we might have numbered twenty at the most. Let there be no mistake however, our numbers may have been small but our impact was huge.

The night before the march took place, the LGRL had a board meeting at which we were apparently the main, if not the only, topic of discussion. I can't divulge everything we know about that meeting but it's truthful to say it was quite heated. This makes a point many people overlook. If you do your homework and prepare the atmosphere for your protest in the media

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TS Hotline

professional. I am **not** a counselor. I **am** a person who has been through the process and I'm a person who cares. I am **not** an expert on the subject of gender dysphoria and I don't know it all. But, over the course of the six or seven years I've been talking on the hotline I have talked to a lot of others, who, like myself suffer from gender dysphoria. I tell people my advice is worth exactly what you pay for it; nothing. If it feels comfortable and you want to use it, be my guest. If it feels

uncomfortable and you don't like what I say, then don't use it.

I am the only person who answers the hotline number. (I plan to keep it that way until "My Honey" gets up here and then he can take over talking to the TV side of the gender community.) I have had calls from all over the world. I've had calls from many confused people, including family members, loved ones, friends, co-workers, professionals, talk shows, radio shows, newspapers, magazines, and even one irate person claiming he hadn't received the books he ordered. I gave

him the number for IFGE.

I do what I do because I feel if I work hard enough and long enough, maybe I can make life better for somebody else. If all my time and effort make a transition easier for just one person, then it's all worth it. I don't charge anything for my time or advice. I don't want a 900 number. It's just nice to receive that "Thank you!" I will continue to do whatever I can for the gender community as long as it makes a difference.

The TS Hotline can be reached at 609-641-3782.



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When I started this month's column I thought I didn't have enough material to fill my space but it turned into one of my longest columns ever. It's long and hard, girls, long and hard. Remember that as you read it.

TAKIN' OUT THE TRASH

The redoubtable Jane Ellen Fairfax wrote an essay, "Talking Trash," that appeared in *The Femme Forum* and was reprinted in many Tri-Ess group newsletters. Jane Ellen is the Chair of the Tri-Ess Board, the national group for heterosexual crossdressers.

The title of the essay referred to the type of comments and criticisms leveled at Tri-Ess by those who take exception to that group's sole focus as a meeting place for heterosexual crossdressers. As reported in this column and elsewhere, there has been a fair amount of controversy stirred up as a result of that focus and those who wish to destroy it altogether or change it on the margins. The main point of the essay was, the gender community should not be caught up in "trash talk" where one group criticizes another group with whom they disagree. Rather, we should be working together on those points upon which we all agree and leave the differences stand without criticizing each other for holding varying points of view.

Jane Ellen is smart enough to pick out the criticism even when it comes disguised as something less than that. "You can always whiff the presumption, condescension, and divisiveness of catch words like 'discriminatory,' 'exclusive,' or 'homophobic,' she writes, and closes her thought with this: "I see nothing of mutual respect

in this and nothing of femininity."

That particular section of her essay hit very close to home because I have been critical of the Tri-Ess heterosexual-only-policy in past columns. Because I respect Jane Ellen's opinion, it caused me to rethinking this issue of criticizing the Tri-Ess policy.

As a concept, there is nothing offensive about a support group whose sole mission is to give heterosexual crossdressers a common meeting ground. There are some transsexual-only support groups whose mission is clearly defined and not geared for non-TS crossdressers. And, because crossdressing still creates (in some minds) a question as to sexual orientation, a heterosexual-only group works against old stereotypes and creates a comfort zone for those who need one.

My criticisms of the Tri-Ess policy have usually been brought about by the practice of the policy — not the theory of it. Two years ago there was a major wrangle about allowing continued membership to one of their members, a sorority officer, who decided she was transsexual. And many Tri-Ess sororities have a screening policy for new members that can be off-putting at best, paranoid at worst.

But even ignoring those isolated problems, there is something that bothers me about a group that restricts its potential membership. One very real problem is, in many smaller metropolitan areas there may only be enough resources for one transgender support group. If that group decides to restrict its membership to heterosexual-only crossdressers, some sincere transgendered folk may be left out — or forced to lie about their true feel-

ings in order to gain admittance. And, as a member of an open-enrollment group, Renaissance, I can honestly say the subject of sexual orientation never comes up. Most of us are heterosexual but we don't wear that on our sleeve or expect others to divulge their orientation to gain admittance.

Transsexuals in our group are welcome to mix with the majority but choose to discuss their more serious issues with each other in a tight knit support group setting.

As I mentioned in my column last month, many heterosexual crossdressers — many Tri-Ess members, in fact — avail themselves of the easy acceptance of gay nightclubs while practicing a form of discrimination against gay or bisexual crossdressers. That is hypocrisy that should shame anyone who practices it.

When I started writing this item, I had no idea it would turn into a strong rebuttal to Jane Ellen's essay. I do not condemn any Tri-Ess member for belonging to that organization. And I can respect a healthy difference of opinion on the subject. In fact, I am open to any persuasive arguments against my own feelings. But, I believe at this point in our development as a "community," there is no real need for a transgender support group to exclude anyone from membership — provided the candidate is sincere in his or her feelings about transgenderism.

I do agree with Jane Ellen on this point: we should work together no matter what our policy differences might be. And the disagreements in inter-group policy should take place only if it adds something to the debate but should never take the form of sniping or cattiness at each other's expense.

A BLUNDER FROM DOWN UNDER

Nu Scene International is a booklet published by the Elaine Barrie Project in Victoria, Australia. The August/September '94 issue (it takes awhile for transvestite-class mail to span the hemispheres) carried an uncredited short article called "The Invasion of the T.F.s."

The author strikes out with this

train of thought: that the number of transgendered folk living "full time" has never been higher. The reason why is that it has never been so easy for a transgenderist to blend in because so much of modern female attire is casual or unisex in style. The author believes that this cultural shift to dressing down has cheapened the concept of "passing" and living "full time" as women.

Thus, the author tells us, discount all those proud boasts about how well someone else is "passing" and how easy it has been to make the transition to "full time" status. These sisters are nothing but TFs — Trans-Frauds, because they do not spend their every waking moment in high drag such as dresses and high heels, but rather they take the easy way out by wearing slacks and flats.

This article had to be written by a WWII-generation crossdresser because it smacks of the same type of nostalgia for the bad-old-days that characterizes much of the backward looking sourpusses who will tell you nothing really good happened after the 1950s. Imagine calling someone a fraud because they choose to live in the present day. I wonder if a crossdresser from the late 19th century would have called the writer a "fraud" because she didn't dress every day in a hoop skirt, lace-up corset and ill-designed high-top shoes?

I also discount most "passing" stories and believe it to be self-illusory much of the time, but it has nothing to do with how "easy" it is to pass by dressing down in modern, casual attire. Crossdressing — whether passably or not — isn't a contest where the most points go to the person who wears the highest heels or the dressiest clothing.

The whole short, sorry essay about Trans-Frauds is incredibly stupid and its only redeeming quality was that it was there for me to dump on.

A LAW THAT HELPS, OR HURTS

Linda Buten wrote an interesting article from a different perspective in *CrossTalk* magazine titled "Human Rights, Equal Rights, Special Rights?" In it, she raised questions about the

unquestioned wisdom of pursuing equal rights protection for transgendered and other minority groups.

Linda points out that much of the resistance against these measures is that they are perceived to offer the minority group not just equal rights but "special rights." Linda also points out there are some minorities who secretly feel they are entitled to "special rights" when these laws are passed.

Her perspective is different from many in our community because she is a small business owner and employer. When a minority group is offered specific equal rights in new legislation, it raises a red flag for employers because if a "protected" minority is hired and then fired, the minority person can sue for discrimination under the legislation that now "protects" them. Thus, an employer can sidestep this potential problem by simply not hiring the minority person in the first place. That is discriminatory but tough to prove if other non-minority applicants have equal or greater qualifications.

Linda's article is troubling because it represents the practical ramifications of idealistic legislation. She asks us whether we should automatically support the calls for "equal rights" legislation if it may in fact work against us in ways that aren't easily visible.

BETWEEN THE CLEAVAGE OF THE ULTRAVIXENS

Independent filmmaker Russ Meyer is re-releasing one of his low budget 60's flicks, *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* Apparently, it's doing quite well in limited run showings around the country. Russ Meyer is one of my heroes because he combined his two great loves in life to make a small fortune and a self-image that is synonymous with those two loves, namely film making and large breasted women.

He will be forever linked with the image of stupendously proportioned females captured on film (in glorious Eastman color) having their way with men who only thought they were man enough to handle them. But wait: there was more to these films than mere soft-core pornography. Meyer had a point of view — both in camera

angle and thematic content. And that is why *Faster, Pussycat...* is getting some critical attention on its thirtieth anniversary of original release.

Meyer's women weren't merely double-D cup bombshells. They were "chicks with an attitude" and the men, as rock-jawed as they might appear in still frame, were the real bimbos. In a long line of beautifully photographed films (often shot by Meyer himself) it was the women who were the suns around which all else revolved.

But even that too-brief synopsis doesn't do justice to what Meyer was saying through his films. In addition to the simple themes of "women in charge of their own destiny and sexuality," he managed to subtly interject commentary on class struggle, and used simple symbols to satirize the American dream as put forth by Madison Avenue of the swingin' 60s. In one brilliant pastiche, he used quick cuts to turn the automobile "V-8" insignia, a car radio, and a broadcast antenna into sexual symbols during a romp featuring one of his over-endowed ultravixens and a hapless stud.

Russ Meyer was a camera bug as a youngster, turned that into a World War II stint as an Army filmmaker, and came back stateside to photograph Playboy centerfolds, including his first wife, Eve. He shot low budget, girlie flicks with a small crew and hit the big time when the public discovered him as the sexual revolution of the 60s took off. And like all successful pioneers, he was doing all this before there was a built-in market but he stayed true to his vision.

What does any of this have to do with crossdressing? Well, his heroines are all "big girls" and they go about their business unabashedly. Ladies like Alaina Capri, Tura Satana, Erica Gavin, and Kitten Natividad didn't try to blend into the crowd. They strode boldly — and bustily — wherever they went. "Passing" was no more an option for them with their fabulous hooters than it is for most crossdressers. They made the attention work for them. And if it got rough, these broads could dish

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Pushing The Comfort Zone

Finding A True Focus... by Belinda Doree

Gender Mosaic is a not for profit transcommunity support group in Ottawa, Canada. The following article appeared in their newsletter, Notes From The Underground as an editorial. It is reprinted here with permission.

This column centers around TV's. It is about men who wear women's clothes, particularly those who project an arch-typical feminine persona. We are through force of circumstance involved in a relationship. There are fundamental truths about relationships. No relationship can withstand total honesty. Many relationships are at their most enjoyable, when people know very little about their partners.

In direct opposition there is the truth that the higher the level of reality that can be acknowledged, accepted, and celebrated, the stronger the relationship. The process of sharing higher levels of realities, can itself be a life-affirming process. Everyone needs to be appreciated for "who you are."

Is there a fine line? Yes and it depends on each person's criteria of what they want their relationships to be like. More complications. One must acknowledge that the line exists lest one blindly crosses it, hurting yourself or others. Yet think too much about it, and you rob the relationship of spontaneity and humanity. Deconstructing relationships makes great conversation, but it is also the path to madness.

These dynamics can be applied to the individual. Consider TV "A" who is socially and sexually active, and who commits some time to, and believes she can count on support from, the "community". She will respond in a more resilient manner to an external source informing her of the reality that she is a TV, than TV "B" who is buried within the closet. The first says "no shit Bwana" and carries on. The second throws herself on the sword of shame where she remains impaled.

TV A and TV B can be the same

person, separated only by time and experience. TV B can enjoy hours of ecstasy from the act of putting on makeup, but this is at the expense of staying within an enclosed sphere of the imagination. To TV A, putting make-up on has become a drag. Not that she still doesn't enjoy the delicious sensations of perverted decadence, but those are now relegated to the realm of leisure time activity and shared experience. They also require a lot more hardware. Her rewards come from taking risks and overcoming her fears. Life without risk is mere existence. "The secret to happiness?" asked Nietzsche... "live dangerously," he replied. Risk adds zest...to food, to travel, friendships, to sex. "Personal growth" which is a buzz word in the T-community comes from overcoming one's demons. Acknowledging one's fear is a step. It is not growth. Talk is cheap.

The context of the column will be our relationship with society. More and more people are talking of improving that relationship. There is a linkage here. Strengthening our relationship with society is very dependent on our success in strengthening relationships with ourselves and with others in our "community". It means heightening the baseline level of reality with which we accept each other. It means...well, the title says it all.

Many speak of working towards a TV friendly society, a society that accepts the reality of our existence and accepts our relevance; a world where we don't have to hide what we are and what we do. To some it is said in the tone of wishful thinking, a fantasy one has with one's eyes closed. To others it is a real goal to be achieved, even if TV's have to give up everything that makes their crossdressing an enjoyable, if not magical experience. Too many of these people are incomplete humans whose poor self-esteem is compensated for by an inconsistent sense of moral superiority. They

scream for acceptance like pitiful sheep, and then turn around and discriminate against people over such trivial things as skirt lengths and facial hair. To say that they have missed the boat is an understatement. It seems the more "organized" TV's get the more they generate institutionalized hypocrisy, and the more irrelevant they become to society at large.

I put forth to you that the goal of a TV friendly world is impossible in society as it is currently organized. That trying to work towards this goal entirely within the current "system" and its methods and ethos, will reward us with mere tokenism at best. What is required is a revolution in the way society looks at itself. Now the word "revolution" evokes pleasant images of thousands of deserving people hanging by their necks down long rows of telephone poles. This type of revolution, as exciting as they may be, is bad for TV's, as their aftermaths leave people too busy dealing with real events to spare any time for dressing up. The revolution we would require, would in hindsight, amount to nothing more significant than an attitude adjustment — a subtle focusing of the lens through which people look at the world, a deeper understanding of how the golden rule can be applied to every aspect of life and every institution in our society. It means building an ethical society. Now this is something bigger than crossdressing itself.

TV's do not come out of closets to participate in social revolutions. I didn't. I came out because I had some serious itches that desperately needed some scratching. One cannot demand that TV's risk jobs, career status over something no more significant than male fantasy fulfillment.

One can however remind ourselves that TV's, despite themselves, are very uniquely positioned to comment on

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— Robert Heinlein as Lazarus Long

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In one frozen moment of time, we were shown the depths and extremes of human actions – Oklahoma City. I've developed a close friendship with Vanessa Kaye of COTA and the instant I heard of the explosion, I thought of her and her family. Were they okay? I tried to call, but no calls were getting through. I posted email to the net and waited. Finally, a day later, she replied. She and her family were alright, but close friends did not fare as well. She was devastated. She said the entire city was in shock. A few days later, the anger set in. Vanessa's natural sense of humor had vanished as the bodies were being pulled from the rubble of the building. We talked of many things that week. Slowly, she seemed to return to her former self, but she and I both know she'll never be the same. I'm glad I was able to be there for her, to give Vanessa a place to unload.

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Overshadowed by Oklahoma City nationally, the Delaware Valley had its own share of misery. Leslie Nelson, a post-op transsexual, shot and killed a policeman and a county prosecutor, and critically wounded a second policeman in Haddon Heights, New Jersey. Nelson then held police at bay in her parent's home for over 14 hours before surrendering. News reporters were tripping over pronouns left and right. Renaissance faxed the local newsrooms with a press release asking them to pay attention to the use of "he" and "she," "her" and "him." They did. Kelly Harris of Renaissance South Jersey called the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and other papers to offer her assistance in any stories they might be preparing. They took her up on that and did a well-written piece on transsexualism featuring a photo and interview of Susan Crane, former Renaissance Executive Secretary. The *Courier Post* reported that Nelson was turned down by Pennsylvania Hospital for reassignment surgery. The article quoted a local surgeon as saying Nelson was (and is) psychotic and not a transsexual. It is not known exactly where Nelson had her surgery.

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So, let's get on to something that's lighter. I reported late last year on the MC Film Festival Catalog with an impressive assortment of videos, many which feature transgender or cross-dressing themes. Mark & Carrie (the "M" and "C" in "MC") have announced the grand opening of a retail location at 117 So. Hyde Park Ave., in Tampa, Florida. But, you can still get their main catalog with over 1200 titles for just \$5.00 (which is credited toward your first order). Call 800-445-7134 and get the catalog. Tell 'em the CyberQueen of Prussia sent you. Oh, by the way, *Priscilla* is now available on video.

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My WWW site is going like gangbusters. According to my service provider, within two days of "opening",

the www.cdspub.com site was generating the most traffic on their system. If you haven't visited yet, come on over. I've got new links to lots of really great stuff. For example, I found the Clinique Home Page at www.univbkstr.com/clinique, and a supermodel page at www.supermodel.com. One source says the Web is growing at 10% a month.

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The fashion industry has fallen on hard times. Clothing sales that normally zoom up around the Easter holidays were stagnant. Retailers are crying the blues. It's no wonder since the fashion scene is nothing if not chaotic. Hemlines are up, then down, then at the knee, then above the knee, then mid-calf. Here's an example. The May issue of *Bazaar* had a photo of a woman in a 40's retro suit next to a photo of a woman in a man-tailored suit. What is a woman to do? Women have responded by doing literally nothing, i.e., they're not buying. That will mean lots of bargains later in the season as retailers try to clear out unsold stock.

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Summer officially arrives this month and all you beach-babes will want a nice tan, but we now all know the dangers of too much sun. So, every cosmetic company has a "sunless" tanning lotion or spray. Try Neutrogena's Deep Glow.

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If you'd like to be a beach-bunny but wonder if you've got the figure to pull it off, try a Miraclesuit bathing suit. These "supersuits" have additional Lycra or Spandex to hold you in the right places. The Miraclesuit claims to make you look ten pounds lighter in ten seconds.

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Metallic cosmetics are making a comeback. (Hey, do this long enough and *everything* comes back, eventually!) Maybelline has its new Expert Eyes collection of metallic shadows, while Estée lauder is touting their Soft Metals line of sheer summery lipsticks.

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HOT•BUZZ

working one of the Fall shows, chances are you received a 20 pound box of cosmetics, courtesy of Estée Lauder. Cool!

The return to retro-femininity is a boon for crossdressers, but it sure pisses off the neo-feminists. Hobble skirts and stilettoes are repressive they say. Most CDs would reply, "Hell that ain't repressive. That's sexy!" Different strokes for different folks, I say. If a CD wants to dress repressively, let 'em. Help! I've fallen and I can't get up. Tough! On the other hand, it can't be just crossdressers buying the Miracle Bra, so some women *do* buy into the new femininity.

Go figure: according to a recent survey of women ages 12 to 65, the majority wear makeup to alter or hide their natural appearance in order to look natural. And they say transvestites are mixed up!

Despite all claims that the "waif" look is over, fashion models are still painfully thin. Even RuPaul is "thin" compared to most drag queens. When are we ever going to see real people in ads?

Factoids – Women apply lipstick an average of 16 times a week (I know some TVs who do that in one night). Percentage of women who: Use blush - 40... Wear false eyelashes - 3... Apply lipstick at the table - 17... Shave daily in the summer - 29... Read in the bathroom - 67.

Be careful out there girls. I literally just got off the phone with a crossdresser who was recently beaten in what seemed to be a case of fag-bashing. Where? Believe it or not, Southern California. Reports of TVs getting beat up are rare, but it does happen.

Makeovers by mail have been around for a while, but two fancy New York salons have joined the market recently. It works like this: you call a toll-free number and they send you a questionnaire. You fill that out and return it with a recent photo and your credit card number. A few days later, you get a makeup application chart

and other goodies depending on the company. Trish McEvoy (800-431-4306) charges \$200 but you get a complete set of makeup products and brushes along with your personal chart. Laura Geller (800-MAKEUP-4-U), charges \$35 and sends you color swatches that you can take shopping with you to local cosmetic counters.

Let's take an informal poll here. There is a new *Bud Light* beer commercial with those macho guys trying to horn in on a ladies volleyball tournament. The guys look really silly in women's bathing suits and bikinis. At the end of the commercial, one guy gets hit in the lower abdomen with the volleyball and collapses to the sand. The closing shot shows the opposing women standing over the fallen v-baller wondering, "What's wrong with her?" I happen to think it's funny. Some tg activists don't. What do *you* think? Let us know here at RN&V.

Guerilla Girl Pop Quiz: If February is Black History Month and March is Women's History Month, what happens the rest of the year? A: Discrimination.

Wondering what to wear for the summer season? Just like a Blue blazer and grey slacks for the rest of the year, anything that's Navy Blue and White is cool for summer. Polka dots are way cool, too.

And for those hot summer nights, there is nothing better than the little black tank dress in nylon and Lycra. Watch it. Dangerous curves ahead.

I talked about nail color layering before. here's a primer on what your basic nail color kit should look like: a rich gold or silver to give dark colors translucence... a sheer beige or ivory to soften dark colors and make a French manicure more subtle... a bold red as the basis for almost any layering job... a bluish pink if you have olive or yellow-toned skin.

I've often said that *Allure* is my fave magazine, but coming up fast is *marie claire*, a magazine transplanted from Europe to the U.S. It's just a tad more hip than *Allure*. Look for it on the stands.

THE color for the Fall season is Scarlet, not just red but red red. Go head to toe or wear red with black, a classic mix.

Don't forget... the emphasis next season is on the waist, smaller waists, that is. I expect to see a jump in corset and waist cincher sales accordingly.

Need a new coat? You can't go wrong with a classic trench coat. The latest versions are spiffed up with interesting fabrics and patterns. You'll find everything from Glen Plaid in worsted wool to Snakeskin vinyl.

Heavy eyeliner is making a comeback too. For round eyes: elongate the eye by lining only the outer ¾ of the top lid only. Keep line thickness even all the way across... For almond eyes: do the same as for Round eyes, but start the line thin at the inside and thicken as you get to the outer corner... For heavy lidded eyes: apply liner on both top and bottom lids and make the line thick.

Big changes at IFGE: Vivian Allen, editor of *TV-TS Tapestry*, IFGE's "flagship" periodical, resigned in late April. IFGE staff are conducting a search for a new editor as I write this. They better hurry. There's an issue due out this month. There was talk in February at the L.A. congress about another resignation from IFGE's staff, but maybe the gossip mongers were just confused. Not a rumor, but definitely in the well-kept secret category, is a plan by some IFGE board members to get out of the white elephant building it's in now. That just might save IFGE from ruin. Of course, there are those opposed to any move.

Some insiders at IFGE didn't like my quip about their financial problems not being over by a long shot. Since I didn't mention any names, only I know about whom I was speaking. But, if the shoe fits... Perhaps there are some guilt feelings welling up there. Guilt is good.

So, those are my opinions. But, hey, what do I know? I could be filing for bankruptcy next month. Comments? Email them to CyberQueen@cdspub.com. © 1995 by Creative Design Services.

Dining With Babs & Carol

Carol and Babs have been on the road. Here are some dispatches from their dining adventures.

Ft Lauderdale: Garden Bar & Grill

Located in the gay "Club Caribbean Resort" in Fort Lauderdale, this eatery is aptly named. It's an actual greenhouse of glass, wood, and green leaves and vines that reflects a cozy yet cool and comfortable atmosphere.

Upon opening the menu we were struck by the fact that no entree was over \$9.95, and that included soup and salad bar. A selection of sandwiches and burgers was also available. The salad bar, while small, was adequate, and the broccoli/cheese soup was tasty, but too thin. The Delmonico steak was reasonably tender and just the right size portion for a "queen." The steamed veggies were very good. The Veal Parmigian was better portioned, but lacked the authentic flavor of an "ethnic" restaurant. A tart and dry

Sauvignon Blanc from Chile was priced at \$12 a bottle, which represented a good value.

Overall, the food was good, the prices were quite reasonable and the atmosphere was a definite plus. The service was courteous and professional.

Garden Bar & Grill, 2851 North Federal Highway, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306, 305-564-1999. Major credit cards accepted.

New York City: Villa Amalfi

We visited this traditional Italian restaurant in Greenwich village on a Friday evening. An informally dressed doorman ushered us in and offered us a window seat in the non-smoking section. Our waiter was helpful, friendly and professional. Since everything at Villa Amalfi is made to order, we were accommodated with a Veal Parmigian that wasn't on the menu.

We started with a shrimp cocktail that had a mild yet tasty homemade

sauce and a fresh leafy tri color salad. When the veal arrived it was extremely tender, both the Parmigian and a flavorful, yet light Saltimboca, could be cut with a fork. Serving size was adequate.

Complimenting the meal was a luscious, but overpriced Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio. The only complaint was that the wine list offered no apparent values, the low end Chardonnay was thin and without fruit.

We had a little too much of the warm, thick Italian bread, and were unable to sample the desserts.

Since the staff was so accommodating, we asked if a group of "transgendered" individuals would be welcomed and were assured we would be. Except for the wine, the prices represent a good value considering the quality, service, location and ambiance. In addition, we saved 25% using the Transmedia card.

Villa Amalfi, 84-86 7th Ave. South (Bleeker Street), New York, NY, 212-243-9418. **Reservations suggested.**



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News Beat...

though. He dressed as Gracie Allen and appeared with George Burns. Full drag, fur stole, beaded dress and makeup. The duo was introduced as George Burns and Gracie Benny. I always thought Jack's body language would lend itself to drag and the clip I saw bore my theory out. The show I saw this priceless bit of nostalgia on was *Jack Benny: Comedy in Bloom*. It was on my local PBS station. Keep an eye open for it since they tend to rerun stuff on PBS. See what kind of great things we'll lose if Newt and a congress bent on budget cuts succeed in chopping the funding for PBS? Call your congressman and tell him it's your constitutional right to see Jack Benny in a dress.

SPEAKING OF MEN IN DRESSES

Drag diva, **Charles Busch** has written a book. Well, ok, not a book, but an article for *New York* magazine on drag in New York City. He interviewed "every current drag performer in New York." Oddly enough, he found not many of them wanted to discuss their motivation for flouncing in frocks. Charles said one of the poor dears actually said, "If I knew why I did it, maybe I wouldn't want to do it." So, ignorance is bliss.

In a May interview with Philadelphia's *City Paper*, Charles quipped, "We send out such mixed signals. I say that I don't like to be called

a drag queen because I don't want the inference that my profession is my lifestyle. But on the other hand, even though I don't dress up in real life, it is how I choose to express myself — so there's something deep-rooted about that. I don't know... Sam Shepard is interested in the myth of the West, I'm interested in the myth of Mae West."

Keep an eye open for *New York* magazine. It should be a good read for girls like us and it's just another indicator that transgender activities are a hot topic. That doesn't mean **everybody** loves us, so don't attend a state militia meeting in a camouflage frock. Come to think of it, why would you want to attend one of those testosterone fests anyway?

LATE NEWS

What's up with **Delaware Governor Tom Carper**? He met GOP presidential candidate Robert Dornan's train in a wig and a dress. You read it right. Dornan arrived in Wilmington on an unscheduled train stop (arranged by Carper) and was met by Carper in a wig and dress, with a pillow stuffed under it to simulate pregnancy. Can we talk bad taste? I knew we could. Carper held a sign saying "Dornan's the one!" and he screamed, "Hi, Bobby" in a high campy voice. How much do they pay the Governor of Delaware? Seems like he's got a lot of time on his hands.

TG ART ABOUNDS

The Whitney Biennial, and I'm not talking about Whitney Houston, is

chock full of transgender images. One artist has a photo wall of Japanese transvestites on display. Another has snapshots of LA fairys and hormone honeys and a dyke photographer has lots of mixed gender people in her display. There's also doll sculpture by Greer Lankton, a transsexual artist from Chicago.

In Philadelphia, **GALA**, the gay and lesbian artists, are having their eighth annual exhibition of gay, lesbian and transgendered artists. It's called *Family values: Together, Proud and Strong* and it's happening at the High Wire Gallery, 137 North Second Street. It's on for the month of June as part of the Philadelphia Pride Month festivities.

RuPaul and **Lypsinka** are currently working on a film called *Red Ribbon Blues*. They're out of drag for this one. Can you imagine?? They're playing lovers. What a concept.

Check your listings for feature times on *Wigstock: The Movie*. I don't think we'll see Richie Havens or The Who in this one. **Lady Bunny** is on the road promoting it so it should be in a cinema house near you soon.

That's it for this month! Gotta go, and I bring back an old tradition, closing with a quote:

"Public opinion, a vulgar, impertinent, anonymous tyrant who deliberately makes life unpleasant for anyone who is not content to be the average man."

Dean W.R. Inge
Out Spoken Essays.



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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Last night while sitting down to relax and watch the Six O'clock News, a story came on that caught my interest. Three police officers had been shot and the suspect had barricaded himself in the house. They went on to add that the suspect had gone through a sex change operation. The news reporter continued to refer to the suspect as him and any other male pronoun that came to mind.

Why can't the public accept the fact that after a person has a sex change they are the opposite gender? Could the answer be as simple as a lack of education? Of course, it could also be if the press had just referred to her as her nobody would listen to the news cast. I doubt that! Why must the press use us to sell "tickets?"

Leslie gave herself up at 4:30AM the next morning. Her life is forever changed. She is in jail and if she ever tastes freedom again, what's the price? Also, don't forget the police officers and their families and co-workers. Everybody has so much to deal with. Could all this pain and suffering have been avoided? Could public education on the subject of gender dysphoria have stopped this whole situation? I doubt it! But, it may have made it a lot less severe. All of the answers are not out and I may be guessing. The original reason the police went to see Leslie was because of an allegation of sexual endangerment to a child. Now, how true this allegation is, I don't know. I'm not trying to blame anybody. What happened can't be changed and hopefully we can all learn from our mistakes.

I offer my condolences to the families, loved ones and co-workers of the dead and injured. As a person who works with the gender community, I offer my support to Leslie Nelson. I offer my hope to Haddon Heights that they can get past what happened in their town. I also

offer my services to anybody who wants to learn about gender dysphoria. Maybe if we could understand a little more about someone else's affliction we won't judge them too quickly. Remember, if you are going to judge somebody else, judge them by their standards, not yours!

Kelly Marie Harris

Member of the Renaissance National Board, South Jersey TS Hotline

Angela comments: Kelly's reactions were written down right after the news broke. Since the incident most of the news has used the correct pronouns. One of the gay papers did a piece on the nature of the media coverage and the media's emphasis on the "transsexual" nature of the perpetrator. Ms. Nelson is being held in a psychiatric ward at the Camden County jail.

Dear Angela,

In the March issue of News & Views your article "There Is No Transgender Community" is truly on target from a sociological standpoint. When viewing Karl Marx's theory on communalism, he described the necessitation of equality of all social members of the community working together for the common cause. If this common cause is not met, chaos and class conflict will result. According to Marx, class conflict is generally the result of a struggle by those who are not in control of the community overthrowing the ruling exploiters — thus creating a humane classless society. This premise was certainly reiterated upon in Alison Laing's article "The New Beat: A March Toward True Community." As Alison stated in modern Durkheimian theory, in order to attain true community we must first all come together and establish true solidarity— working toward our commonality, and supporting each other. If this is not met we will end up in a state of anomie or normless: thus exacerbating communal chaos and conflict.

As you both so eloquently stated in your respective articles, if we are to attain true community, we must first and foremost attain solidarity by joining the Transgender Alliance for Community; and bring all gender organizations together for the common cause.

Sincerely,

Sharon Lynne Strayline, LMSW

Vis A Vis

it out better than the roughnecks who tried to give them a hard time.

Most of Russ Meyer's films are available on videotape. They are funny and erotic without being explicit and the women — what can you say about those women, except if there was any justice in the world, we would look just like them, and carry ourselves with as much balls as they did.

TWO QUICK THOUGHTS

In last month's column I covered a war of words between Callan [redacted] and a writer using the nom de plume, "Miss Take." JoAnn Roberts made a comment in her column that these two people are one and the same person. I think I was snookered! I took the bait, hook line and sinker. I love it. Callan does come across as being a bit too serious-minded at times, while "Miss Take" is irreverent. But if all that is coming from one fertile mind, then a proper balance has been struck. I only wish more people in our community had an off-the-wall split personality. It's not nice to fool your old aunt Dina. but, well done, Callan!

Also in last month's News & Views, I was referred to as a "recreational and frivolous" crossdresser in a letter from Maryann Kirkland. "Recreational" I can live with but I take exception to the term "frivolous." I do enjoy myself while crossdressed and that in itself is enough for me. But I do take my cross-dressing seriously and the fact that I put in many hours each month thinking about the issues I tackle in this column is evidence that it is something more than mere frivolity.

'Nuff said till next month, gang.



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TG Alamo...

and elsewhere, all you really have to do is show up and you're a success. Based on what several board members have told me about their meeting, it is clear we got and held the attention of the LGRL.

Our first demand was that we be included in the language of the hate crimes legislation. That didn't happen but apparently the board vote was very close. Instead they voted to form a committee (and we all know what a committee is worth) to study transgender inclusion in hate crimes legislation.

Our second demand was that a transgendered person be placed on the LGRL board. Several board members told me this will happen soon.

The final demand was that I be allowed to speak at the post march rally. I was genuinely surprised they agreed to do this but hey... if you never ask, you never get.

The truth is we never expected to get much of what we demanded. The LGRL had never negotiated with us in good faith before, there was no reason to think they would suddenly start doing so at this last moment. We were already pursuing alternative strategies for inclusion and we will certainly continue along this path. But just think about the benefits that resulted from this protest.

Our relationship with the media is excellent. We were front page on the Friday before the march in *The Dallas Voice* and *The Texas Triangle*. Both the *Houston Voice* and *The Marquise* (San Antonio) had provided us with front page coverage previously. (All of these publications are gay & lesbian oriented.) Several editors have made it clear our information is welcome anytime. What do you suppose this kind of good will and visibility would cost if we had to buy it?

We owe a real debt of gratitude to *Austin Second Image*, an independent crossdressing support group located in the capitol city. They understood that people like Phyllis and myself will

probably be covered if the proposed bill passes and that we were angry because they and others like them will not be covered. Our protest was for crossdressers of all kinds, not just some perceived elite few and they "got it."

I mentioned the crossdressers in their heels earlier but as one lady explained, they were the only shoes she owned. Surely we have all been there before. I can't imagine what was going through their minds as those marchers came up the street at them, but not one of them flinched. I haven't the words to tell you how much I respect and admire their courage. And, especially to the lone wife who came out to join us, thank you very much! (After the protest, one of the ladies with her wig slightly twisted around on her head came over with a huge smile and whispered in my ear, "This was fun!" and indeed it was.)

For the first time we actually got a chance to talk with the LGRL board members directly. Although they thought they knew what transgendered people were, they were not prepared for a five foot three inch, overweight, red haired, middle aged lady. (One board member said I resembled her sister.) Several board members said that after meeting me they realized how little they knew about transgendered people and were looking forward to learning more. Stereotypes were blown away, minds were opened, and folks, that is called progress.

This relating of events has been about one protest, in one place, at one moment in time. But it's also about something far more important; that one small group of very determined people can make a difference. The motto for It's Time, Texas! is a quote from the sixties activist Abbie Hoffman, "When decorum becomes repression, the only dignity free people have is to speak out." The sooner we learn to speak out in our own voices on behalf of ourselves, the sooner our repression will end.

Postscript

In the time since this article was written another very exciting develop-

ment has taken place. It's Time, Texas!, with the help of the Transgender Law Conference, has been working with several legislators to bring about the passage of a combination name/gender identification change bill. If passed, this bill would give judges the authority to grant a legal change of gender at the same time a name change is granted.

What makes this so exciting is the legal change of gender would take place during transition instead of waiting until after surgery.

This bill defines a transsexual as, "An individual who is in the process of changing or has changed the individual's sex by either long term irreversible hormone alteration, surgical alteration, or both." In other words, one would no longer be forced into surgery in order to obtain all the legal documentation needed to work and live in society.

On April 26, we were given a public hearing at the state capitol in the House Committee on Juvenile Justice and Family Issues to explain the reasoning behind our proposed legislation. Phyllis Frye, Tere Fredrickson and myself each spoke on the issues facing transsexuals and how those issues would be impacted with the passage of our bill. We were treated with utmost courtesy and respect. Both the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety (the state police agency) testified in favor of the bill.

I am pleased to report that we have been told the committee will pass the bill by a wide margin and send it to the House of Representatives with a recommendation for approval. At the time this is being written, no formal opposition has been noted and prospects for passage of the bill are considered to be very good. As for the hate crimes bill, it remains non-transgender inclusive. The legislation has passed in the Senate, but faces organized opposition in the House where the vote is considered too close to call.



Dear Doctor

Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.

Send questions to PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020

Dear Doctor Bill,

I am a 20-year-old student. When I was little I'd get into my mom's makeup, but when I was 17, I put on complete women's clothing, from nails to nylons. I was pretty disgusted with myself when I looked in the mirror.

Recently, I've been getting the urges again. It used to be that they'd come on the full moon, and that's when I'd pierce my ears, etc. Mom would notice things like bits of nail polish and sore ears, but I always told her that I did these things because I was bored.

Anyway, I've been getting the incredibly strong urge to grow breasts, and very often I want to be female. But, I love being a guy. The most noticeable switch from wanting to be female to wanting to be male comes after I'm done masturbating. Am I a transsexual?

Confused Co-ed.

Dear Co-ed,

I am sure that there are quite a few in the transgender community who identify with your story. From your letter, I would say that you are probably *not* a transsexual. However, you certainly do fit on the transgender spectrum. I am not sure what part the full moon plays in your life. Many people feel more vulnerable, irritable, or moody when there is a full moon, so you are not alone. A common characteristic of a transvestite is the desire to dress and then masturbate which reduces the need to be crossdressed. It seems like an important issue for you is accepting your desire and need to crossdress. It certainly does not help your self-esteem if you look at yourself and feel disgusted. It is important that you develop a sense of appreciation for and learn to value your crossdressing. Crossdressing is likely to have an important place throughout your life span,

so learn to enjoy it. My suggestion is to seek out a gender therapist for a few sessions to help you sort out your need to crossdress and to help you identify yourself on the gender spectrum. Then you can discuss how far you should go with hormones, breast development, etc. You need to know the implications for each decision that you make regarding any gender transformation.

Dear Doctor Bill,

I am in my 40s. My parents are in their 70s and they are the one thing that causes me a problem with my crossdressing. I have not been able to tell them I love to crossdress. I am not ashamed of myself and most of my friends and associates know of my "hobby." Unfortunately, my mother (in particular) has distinct ideas of what a "man" should be. If I revealed my crossdressing I know that it would not agree with her ideas. I am not really sure how it would affect her but I have visions of heart failure or at the least a loss of contact with my parents. Since I worry they will find out about my crossdressing I don't visit them (they live several hours away) and I feel guilty about seeing them only once or twice a year. My mother would notice feminine touches like plucked brows or major hints like shaved arms and chest. Is there any strategy I can use to help me tell them? Should I tell them?

Ms. Guilty.

Dear Ms. Guilty,

The decision to tell or not tell your parents must be your own. Do not let anyone tell you what to do, because you are the one who has to live with each of the options. There are some factors that you need to consider in making your decision. First — do you really want them to know? It sounds like you have

already distanced yourself from them by not telling them. This may be the way you want it; if so, you need to work on your feelings of guilt. Some people need to live their own life totally apart from their family of origin. On the other hand, you may really want your family to know the "real" you. Your parents do not know you now; they only have an image of who they think you are. If you want them to know, then it is important to work out a helpful strategy for telling them. Second — it may not be as big a surprise to them as you think. It is amazing how often parents sense a "difference" in their children, but they do not know how to name it or are fearful of it. This may be the reason your mother has emphasized "distinct ideas of what a 'man' should be." Third — there are no cases in the literature of a parent having a heart attack learning the news that their son is a crossdresser. If anything, the distance that now exists between you, combined with possible worries about who you really are, may be taking a heavier toll on their health. It is much easier living with the truth than it is living with the unknown. Fourth — I think it is interesting that you do not mention being concerned about your father. Either you feel he would be able to handle the information better than your mother or you don't care how he would feel. If the former is true, then he might be helpful to your strategy. You could tell him and together work out a plan for telling your mother. If you don't care how he would feel, then it sounds like you have some important unfinished business to work through with him aside from the crossdressing issue. Finally — regarding strategies for telling them, if that is your choice. One suggestion is to call a local support group and find out how others have told their parents. You might learn some great strategies from those who have been through the experience. Another recommendation is to talk this important matter over with a gender and family therapist, who could help you develop a creative strategy for telling your family in a way that would be reconciling as well as healing of your relationship with them.



Comfort Zone...

and induce change in our society. Consider the demographics of your typical TV club. Most of these TV's are white, conservative hetero males. Income wise we are middle to upper middle class. We are the people that every other group loves to hate. We are the establishment. We participate in this society's institutions, we are plugged into its structures, understand its processes, its ethos, its criteria for success. We represent objective reason, order, logic and scientific management in an increasingly bureaucratic society that rewards efficient workaholic conformists.

At the same time we're TV's, who

inhabit the other extreme of the social scale and prance about the other extreme of the human psyche. We are both in society and out of society. We are the intersection of Order and Chaos and we can navigate in either sea. We are well situated to understand how Order can both liberate and imprison. We are well situated to understand how chaos is required for creativity and how it can also destroy. We are well placed to optimize the two to further our world and society in general. We do that by applying ethical principles to see if they are being used to help people do the things they need to, or are getting in their way.

Something that a lot of TV's haven't yet realized is that we don't have to be fodder for Hollywood comedies, or filler for the continuous demands of

television. We are dangerous people, and our knowledge once verbalized and acted upon, can be very detrimental to the established order of doing things.

Of course there are no guarantees. Everything boils down to personality and circumstance, and we need our share of bald-assed luck to make a TV-friendly world. There is however one more quality inherent to TV's that would stand us in good stead. And that is if we decided to do this, it would not just be because it is right, not just because it is noble, not just because we have to, or not just because we have nothing else to do.

We can do it only when we really want to do it. Because it would be fun. Because it would be our pleasure.



Job Match News

The Renaissance job match has been active for several months now and we have had great success in getting people looking for employment. Finding people with jobs to offer has not been as easy. Barbara Schwarz first proposed the Job Match as a method for people in the transgender commu-

nity who were looking for work to connect with other transgender people who were in a position to offer employment. Wouldn't it be great if your boss knew you were a transvestite? How much easier would it be for a TS to transition on the job if her employer was transgendered too?

Well, great plans only work if you go ahead and give them a try. We've tried and we can't seem to find any TG

employers. We're going to keep the job seekers on file and we'll still run a notice asking for people with jobs to offer to get in touch. If you have a position in your company, if you are a shop owner or small entrepreneur, contact the Renaissance National Office and we'll be able to give you a few good resumes.



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Need a place to dress or store clothing? Call Marilyn, 610-446-0799.

Innovative new transgendered public-relations group looking for models, volunteers, artists, or other interested parties. Call Christy at 215-476-2018.

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Fantasia Fair '94: An Event to Remember

by Dallas Denny

For those unfamiliar with the geography of New England, Cape Cod is a finger of land which curls into the Atlantic Ocean somewhere to the south of Boston. It is a vacation paradise, with miles of unspoiled seashore, rugged dunes, and picturesque towns.

If you think of Cape Cod as a flexed arm with a slightly opened fist, then on the inside of the hand, just opposite the nails, lies Provincetown, once a booming whaling center, then a sleepy Portuguese fishing village, and now a cherished destination of gay and lesbian vacationers. Every summer, the town's population swells, the many bed and breakfasts hang out "No Vacancy" signs, and the shops and restaurants on Commercial Street are packed with visitors and cars with rainbow flags. But by the end of September, the pace begins to slow.

It is at this time, after most of the

tourists have gone home, but before bad weather hits, during that transitional time when half of the leaves are on the trees and half are on the ground, that Provincetown becomes a temporary home for transgendered persons from around the world. They come to participate in Fantasia Fair, a week-long event which just celebrated its twentieth anniversary, making in the longest continuously running event in the community. They come to shop, to eat fine food, to dance at the A House, to attend Fantasia Fair's many luncheons and banquets, and to participate in the FanFair Follies, the Fashion Show, the Fantasy Ball, or the other events. They come for the late night house parties at Chicago House and the Fair's other inns, for the spontaneous wine and cheese receptions. They come to see old friends, and to find new ones. But most of all, they come for the chance to be themselves

for seven glorious days, to stroll down the street without fear of harassment. They come for the freedom which FanFair provides.

Unlike other gender community events, Fantasia Fair is not held in a large convention hotel. Rather, FanFair takes place throughout Provincetown: in the many shops, inns, and restaurants; in the Unitarian Church; at the Provincetown Arts Center; in the bars; and on the streets. FanFair is a group of crossdressers talking earnestly with townies on the street, running into a friend while shopping at Bradford's drug store, joking with the bartender at the Crown and Anchor. It is an impromptu late night jazz trio at Roomers, or an earnest conversation with Virginia Prince over clam chowder at the Lobster Pot. It is Gary M., lugging hundreds of pounds of video gear in order to film a luncheon pre-

continued on back page

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The Fable of the Label by: L. Bruce Stockett, MSW, BCSW, LCSW

I am labelless. The word "different" was in my mind until I was 18 and in the Air Force. Then I was "Gay." Later I was a "Butch Lesbian." Now I'm "Gendered" — not a crossdresser, not a TV, TS, drag queen, drag king, or she/male — and not gender dysphoric. Yet, I am *something*.

All these years I have taken on the labels without a whimper... until now. I recently moved to Central New Jersey from New Orleans, and have been labeled to death. Straight society insists on calling me "he," gay women aren't sure that I am female and the Transgendered Community thinks I should be in the "men's" groups and in general doesn't know what to make of me.

What I am is a biological female, yet I look male. I have always worn attire that is appropriate to my physique, and the very few times I was forced to wear a dress, I looked like a drag queen. I grew up in a small town, played with boys, BB-guns, knives and had a treehouse club, going through all the rights of passage of boyhood. I knew that I was a female, but it just didn't really compute. Later in life, loving femme women, I became a butch lesbian. Straight women didn't appeal to me. I never "came out" as a lesbian; just always was. One can't say that I cross-dress, since that term is used for people who wear clothing deemed to be appropriate to the gender opposite their physical appearance. Morphologically, I have a masculinized body, in that I have straight hips, no behind, and am

flat-chested with a slight male "paunch." (I was once asked where I "obtained the paunch" and if I had been quicker on the uptake I would have answered that it was on sale at K-Mart! And, in truth, I wondered if the person thought it was a graft that Dr. Biber could do!) I look like a male, have a rather deep voice and mostly masculine mannerisms. Even those who have been "in the life" since the year of the flood ask me "What are you?"

The rather interesting part of all of this, is that I never tried to change anything about myself. I grew into it naturally. I have never taken hormones or had surgery of any kind and am not a hermaphrodite (as far as I know).

I was fortunate in growing up "self-congruent," however, that is not how society saw me and, as we all know, society can really give extremely negative signals to those who don't conform. So, in 1971 I went to see Dr. John Money at Johns Hopkins University mostly because there were no support groups and no therapists who knew anything about genderedness and I wanted to know if there were others like me. I also needed to know if there was a place for me, in life, as I was. He told me that I could certainly have SRS if I so desired or I could live, as he put it, "as the unique person you are." To change my sex to "male" meant to me that I would no longer be a lesbian, and I loved femme lesbians! At any rate, I sometimes wonder how many other "bigendered," which is

what I call myself, or "third-gendered" people are out there. I don't meet very many, even in my practice as a psychotherapist.

"Bi-Gendered" seems to fit, really. I am both male and female (about 70% of the former and 40% of the later!), and feel that I was truly given a gift. I can live in the fullness of both genders, with a wonderful, euphoric blend of both. My wife, Miriam, loves me for all that I am, not despite my "gender-challengedness" as one humorist put it. She often tells me that we two have the very best of all possible worlds.

Perhaps the point of all of this, is that there are other options open to all of us. Not everyone is destined, needs, or wants SRS. It's okay not to, if you feel good wherever you are on that long gender continuum. I think that some people are pushed towards SRS within the framework of support groups, believing that one can only be "male" if one is not completely "female," or that a sex change will solve their "gender problems." That sounds very much like what straight society did to me really. I had to be either one or the other... with no middle ground.

We can be whatever we want to be, as long as our inner landscape is at peace. Truly, we are all bi-gendered to some degree. We just have to find that wonderful, individual balance. SRS is the answer for some of us, but there are many other options as well and they are worthy (as are you) of being explored.

I would appreciate comments (pro or con) write to me: P.O. Box 4121: Warren, NJ 07059 or email me at [@prodigy.com](mailto:prodigy.com).

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Shopping With Jackie

Jackie

This month lets talk a little about jewelry. Sometimes jewelry is necessary to highlight the clothing you are wearing, but it should be simple and make a statement. Too much jewelry looks bad and detracts from your overall look. Where is the balance? It changes with the person, the clothing, and the image. I am sure that you have decided on an image to project through your choice of clothing, and you should keep the same image in your jewelry. If you are wearing classic basic clothing, you don't want to trash it up with mod bulky jewelry, but on the other hand if you project a slutty image (by choice) you want bulk and flash in your jewelry selections.

A basic jewelry collection includes a single strand of pearls, a long strand of beads (that you can double or knot), gold chains (white and yellow earrings (button, hoop and dangle), a selection of brooch's (the formal name for pins), a selection of bracelets (all types are ok), rings of choice, and a nice watch (that you can wear with casual or dressy clothing) and if desired, an ankle bracelet.

Since most jewelry is expensive, you want to buy the classic styles that will stay in vogue over the years. It doesn't

make sense to buy "fad" items that you are continually replacing because they went out of style. Make your money go further. You don't have to buy solid gold jewelry to get a good look, but, on the other hand, stay away from cheap plated items that will make you turn green or black from wearing. The happy medium is to look for gold filled items. Plated items just have a "flash" of color on the surface.

Solid gold varies with the karat. Pure Gold is 24K (karat). So if you buy an item that is 14K you have 58% pure gold and 42% other metals (divide 24 by 14); 18K is 75% gold; 10k is 42% gold; etc. The higher karat items have the best color. The other metals in gold are necessary for hardness and also color. All gold is yellow; white gold gets its color from the other metals added to it. So if you are buying solid gold jewelry for yourself (or significant other) you can keep this in mind.

The best alternative is good gold filled jewelry. These items are made from a mixture of metals with gold stirred in (almost like making a cake). The karat of the gold helps with color and weight. I can show you gold fill and solid gold that you can't tell apart. So instead of \$300.00 for a 14K neck-

lace you are spending about \$50.00 for 14K gold filled one. A nice alternative for those of us who are on a budget and trying to keep two wardrobes.

Costume jewelry is available everywhere and varies greatly in price. My advice is to buy carefully and shop for price. Try to stay away from the metals that you wear against your skin. Normal perspiration eats away the surface coating and it can turn black and ugly and also turn your skin color. Stay with plastic beads and glass on nylon elastic cords, or bangle and clip on bracelets of a solid material (also nice choices for summer).

A good source for costume jewelry at a decent price is the Windsor Collection, 6836 Engle Road, P.O. Box 94549, Cleveland, Ohio 44101-4549 (1-800-800-0500). Watches, rings (most to size 10), earrings, necklaces, pins, etc. By the way ladies most of us need a necklace that is at least 20 inches long, and a bracelet at least 8 inches long (except for you lucky size 8's).

If I can help you with anything, or if you want to share your sources experiences, please write me in care of the Editor. Until next time... Happy Shopping from Jackie.



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FanFair...

sensation by JoAnn Roberts, sweating, but grinning from ear to ear. It is folk singing on the patio at the Fairbanks Inn, or a trio of significant others off on a tour of the dunes. It is sharing the street with 7000 lesbians, in town for women's week, on the first day of the fair. It is flying over the ocean at a thousand feet in a rented airplane, or braving the ocean's swells in order to see a whale, or walking quietly along the beach. It is a radiant smile on the face of Andrea Susan, as she is named Miss Fantasia Fair. It is 100 such things happening *at the same time*.

Imagine any gender convention you have ever attended, and then spread the magic out across space and time—across several square miles, and for an entire week. That, my friends, is Fantasia Fair.

Snapshot I

It's Thursday night, the evening of the Follies, and I've just come off stage. In the impossibly small dressing room, there are at least ten acts, all of which are primping, plucking, and teasing themselves into their best approximation of femininity. I wind my way through a forest of arms, legs, and torsos and duck through a secret door into the back bar at the C&A; it is at least twenty degrees cooler, and the temperature drops another twenty degrees as I go outside. It is just starting to rain, and the gentle mist feels good on my skin. But I don't stop to enjoy it. I make my way to the front door, pass Joanne [redacted], who is serving as Warden of Admissions, and mingle in the crowd at the back of the room. I buy a photo of myself from the many which Helen Strong, one of the official photographers of the event, has on display at the back of the room, and turn just in time to find out that the rumor is true: Angela *has* imported a mariachi band to accompany her rendition of **Cielito Lindo**. Here they come down the aisle, five of them, with big hats, trumpets, guitars, and instruments of unknown persuasion, their dark cos-

tumes the perfect foil for her beautiful white beaded gown. Aha! Carumba! The crowd, rowdy under the best of circumstances, goes wild.

Snapshot II

I'm a judge for the costume competition, and I'm puzzled. Why are Mavis and Weslee in street clothes? But wait a minute! Since when did Weslee have blue eyes? There is a wrenching sensation as I begin to realize that they are "doing" each other. It's quite a task, especially when you consider that Weslee is Black and Mavis is not. But not only their clothing and skin color have changed — tonight, Mavis (i.e. Weslee) is "fabulous," and Weslee (i.e. Mavis) is all business and tight-assed walk. They don't break character all night.

The XXth anniversary Fantasia Fair was a complete success, with more than a hundred paid attendees and professionals and invited guests from around the country. Some of the notables present included Virginia Prince, JoAnn and Betty Roberts, Alison and Dottie Laing, "Lady Di" (Vernon of Vernon's Specialties), Wendy Parker, Nancy Nangeroni, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, Ariadne Kane, Betty Ann Lynn, Emily Sheldon, Eve Burchert, Dr. Sandra Cole, Dr. Marilyn Volker, Dr. Richard Doctor, Neila Miller, Dr. Roger Millen, Dr. Moya Andrews, and Mariette Pathy Allen. Every morning and afternoon there were two seminars to choose from, and there were two luncheons daily. Every evening had an event, and often two: the Town and Gown Supper, in which FanFair participants mingled with natives; the Fashion Show, full of costumes both corny and glamorous; the Awards Banquet; The Follies, the Fantasy Ball; the Fantasia Fair Banquet. And every night, the houses rocked with parties which sometimes lasted until dawn.

The accommodations and food were excellent, the speakers knowledgeable, and the camaraderie without equal. There were few complaints, and those were minor and easily remedied. In short, Fan Fair XX was a rousing success.

It was a remarkable turnaround, for the event had been in decline for several years; in 1992, when I was asked to join the Board of Directors of the Outreach Institute, the organization which sponsors the Fair, there were only 58 attendees, the Fair had a "thrown together" feel to it, and there was a lot of bitching from attendees and from vendors upset about the Fair's lack of organization and history of slow payment. This year, everything went off in an organized manner, and we left town with all bills paid.

The rebirth of Fantasia Fair is due to the reorganization of the Board of Directors, which took decisive action to save the Fair, but the bulk of the work was done by four people: Alison and Dottie Laing, Weslee [redacted], and Marsha [redacted]. Alison served as Director of the Fair, and Dottie worked very closely with her— an immense job, and one they should be congratulated for. Marsha is the Fair's Treasurer, and brought order to the financial chaos. Outreach Director Ariadne Kane coordinated the reunion and presided at the Awards Banquet. But it was Weslee who did the down and dirty, and generally thankless work, the people work; she processed registrations and fielded phone calls all year long, and, during the Fair, she worked long and largely thankless hours directing the FanFair office and a staff of volunteers.

The XXth annual Fantasia Fair included the full spectrum of diversity of the transgender community. There were young and old, black and white, gay and straight, transsexual, transgenderist, and crossdresser, newcomer and old-timer, male-to-female and female-to-male. The air in the little harbor village of Provincetown crackled with transgender energy. It was... it was marvelous!

Fantasia Fair XXI will be held in Provincetown October 14-21, 1995. Plan to attend an event that will change your life! For registration information, write P.O. Box 941, Southeastern, PA 19399-0941.

