



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 11, No 10 • October 1997

Renaissance

New Dues Structure For Ren Members

At their September meeting the Renaissance National Board of Directors acted to insure the future of the organization and the continued publication of *Renaissance News & Views*. The Board voted for a dues increase for the 1998 membership year. This increase will provide a greater cash flow from Membership/Subscriptions, thereby allowing the National organization to continue to meet its financial obligations.

The basic National Membership/Subscription for non-chapter members has been \$24. The newsletter has been available at a cover price of \$3. Nineteen ninety-seven members who signed up for the year received 12 issues at a savings of \$12. Chapter members received the 12 issues for \$20, a savings of \$16 off the cover price.

The 1998 cover price of *News & Views* will increase to \$5 a copy. That means if you bought it in a store the 12 issues would cost you \$60. The non-chapter member rate will be \$36, giving the subscriber a savings of \$24 for the year. Chapter members will pay \$24 per year for their National Dues/Subscription.

The Board also discussed a Student/Senior rate and decided that the extension of that rate will be left to the Executive Director's discretion. Renaissance Executive Director Angela Gardner stated, "If they can show me a student ID or proof of Senior status I will be happy to work with them to determine an amount which will pay our costs of pub-

lication and distribution and be affordable." Those interested in the special rates should contact Ms. Gardner at the Renaissance National Office.

Yes, We Take Plastic!

To make dues payment and donating easier, the Board instructed Ms. Gardner to set up a merchant account. This will allow the organization to accept credit card payments. This option is available for renewals starting this month. Check the renewal form included with this newsletter and you will see the spaces made available for your credit card number and expiration date. As always the security of its members is of primary concern to Renaissance, so rest assured that all information provided for the processing of memberships and renewals will be kept under lock and key at the National Office. To that end the Board authorized the installation of a lock on the office door. Of course, all information contained in computer files is password protected, and the main database is not even connected to a phone line via modem.

It is expected that the changes outlined above will result in an increased cash flow that will allow Renaissance to continue it's service to the transgendered community for many years to come. If you have any questions or comments you may contact the National Office at 610-975-9119 or by email: <renaissance@ren.org>.



National Transgender Leader Dies

From Houston comes word that Dee Skene McKellar, a nationally known transgender community leader, died on Saturday, September 6, 1997.

In 1991 Ms. McKellar was one of the founding committee members for what has become the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP), now in its seventh year. She served as a Director and as its Secretary for several years. With Dee's assistance and push, ICTLEP has been in the foreground of transgender re-intergration within the lesbian/gay/bisexual community. Dee assisted in organizing, and attended,

both the 2nd National Transgender Event in Washington DC in October 1995 and the 3rd National Transgender Event in Washington DC in February 1997. She spoke to countless people in need of help who called, wrote or e-mailed the ICTLEP office.

While serving as a Director of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, Dee served on the NLGLA committee responsible for the unanimous NLGLA Board vote in August 1997 that brought bisexuals and transgenders fully within the bylaws of that organization.



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: 302-376-1990 or email to: [redacted]@aol.com

Pennsylvania

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

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Renaissance Lehigh Valley, PO Box 3624, Allentown, PA 18106. Meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) or send email to: <lsv@ezonline.com>.

Affiliates

California

Orange County: Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <ppoc@aol.com>

Connecticut

Bridgeport/New Haven: connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701. Call 908-219-9094. Email: [redacted]@aol.com

Western Central New Jersey: New Jersey Support, Call Susan at 973-334-0416 or Dorothy at 215-744-4746 (weekends only). Write PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 for information. Email: [redacted]@aol.com Meetings are the first Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing.

New York

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

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 1311, Water Mill, NY 11976-1311. Phone 516-283-1333. email to [redacted]@aol.com

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Vanessa Kaye, Oklahoma City: COTA, 6957 N.W. Expressway, #121 Oklahoma City, OK 73132. email to [redacted]@ionet.net>.

Electronic Subscriptions

You can get *Ren. News&Views* by email every month delivered automatically right to your email box for only \$10 a year. That's half off the regular paper subscription rate. Send your \$10 plus your email address to the Ren national office.

Renaissance News & Views

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Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to the National Office marked Attention: Editor. Or use email to <hmdm@voicenet.com>. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

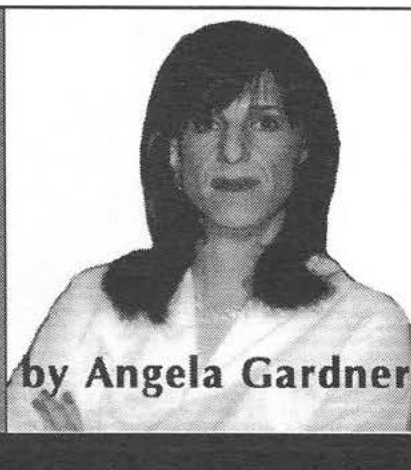
Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, make your check or M.O., payable to Renaissance and send it to our National office. Your contributions will help us continue our efforts to provide education about transgender issues. Donations can also be made through your local United Way agency.

Local Calendar

October

- 4 Ren. LSV
- 4 NJ Support
- 11 Ren. Lehigh Valley
- 11 Ren. Delaware
- 18 Ren. GPC — Dr. Carol Cobb-Nettleton on the Leslie Neslon Case
- 25 MOTG

News Beat & Reminder



This month I have, in the words of Lyndon B. Johnson, a heavy heart. An era has ended. **Red Skelton** has died.

As big an event as the passing of Princess Diana was, the death of Red Skelton brought me to tears sooner. Diana's death is a tragedy because she was so young and seemed to be finally finding her piece of the pie after years of problems and pain. Red lived a long and very full life. The sad part is the world will never see his like again.

I grew up with that man. When I was just a child I'd jump into my jammies and sit right in front of the big floor model television to watch *The Red Skelton Show*. Just as I'd take a sip of my evening beverage Red would do something hilarious and the beverage would exit my mouth and nose to coat the screen of the television set. Princess Diana never got that reaction out of me. (Well, one or two of her earlier outfits almost did it.)

Red did his share of comedic drag, too. Not quite the glamour bunny as Milton Berle, Red used his gigantic comedic skills to suggest feminine charms, and his combination of pathos and humor was always good for a smile... or blowing a beverage all over the TV. (Mmmm... TV messes up TV?)

Up until just a few months ago Red did shows in Atlantic City pretty regularly. Every time I saw the billboards I'd said, hey, I oughta go see Red, but I didn't. I guess deep down I always wanted to remember the Red of my youth. As soon as I finish this column I'm gonna run out and rent all his old movies from the '40s. They say you can't go home again but thanks to the

wonders of modern technology you can visit for an hour or two.

Thanks for all the laughs, Red, and in your own words, "May God bless."

Ya know kids, I get serious every now and then. Usually it clears up as soon as I adjust my medication. Before I do that, however, I have one more serious item.

Hair Today

I have had a newspaper cutting about a thrift shop that donates reconditioned wigs to cancer patients hanging around the house for so long that the paper has gone yellow. I had been meaning to take several wigs in for months and guess what? I finally got around to doing it. It took the fact that I'm moving and don't want to carry a giant bag of old hair to my new place. (I'm moving closer to the Renaissance office so I can work my manicure to the bone more easily.)

I did my good deed at the **Full Circle Thrift Shop** in New Britain, Pennsylvania. If you want to donate I'm sure you could mail the hair to them if you're not in the neighborhood. Give them a call at 215-340-0120 to get the address. Check with the cancer treatment programs at your local hospital to see if they have a similar program. It's the perfect way for members of the transgender community to help others. So many cross-dressers have gigantic wig collections that they never get around to wearing, it's a good idea if they pass along a few wigs to those who could really use some hair.

OK, that's it for the serious stuff.

Let's move on to the bubbly, frothy, fun stuff. Oooo!

One Transgendered Life To Live

The Club Indigo on the ABC soap *One Life To Live* has acquired a new bartender. Her name is Wendy Mercury (Mercury? Any relation to Freddie?) and she's romantically interested in the town's District Attorney. The catch? It seems that if you ask the club's co-owner he'll tell you the new bartender is a man. ABC has not said how the character identifies but they admit that she's played by "gender illusionist" **Shequida**, who, according to published reports, "performs at Manhattan's Lucky Chang's" (could they mean Lucky Cheng's, or maybe Good Luck Chang's?) restaurant and club. So soap addicts, now there's a show for us. I checked the past few weeks of plot synopsis at the ABC website but I didn't find a mention of the sexy new bartender. Keep your eye on the show. Let me know if Wendy get's the D.A. in the sack.

They'll Whip More Than Your Butter

Those of you who are into domination and submission (that's right, you, you pitiful tramp) will appreciate this charming little eatery in NYC where the waitresses are dominantes and at least one of them is a TG dominatrix. (Her name's Bianca, and don't make the mistake of taking her for a submissive... unless you enjoy being disciplined, that is.)

The place is called **La Nouvelle Justine** and it's named for the Marquis de Sade novel. The cuisine? French, of course my little boot heels. It's located on 23rd Street and in addition to the food you can get a birthday paddling, a boot-cleaning, or the chance to eat from a dog bowl at the feet of a whip-wielding mistress. It's bargain priced domination at \$20 per special.

It's not too hard core, though. **Joan Rivers**, who dines there when she's in the mood says, "It's like Disney meets S&M. Our busboy didn't bring the

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News Beat...

bread fast enough, so the maitre d' spanked him."

So kittens, get out the leather and vinyl dresses and I'll meet you in their bar. We'll have a Martini and see if the maitre d' will lend us a whip. Or at least a wire whisk.

Strange Bedfellows

The man who brought us *LaVerne & Shirley* is the same man who wrote jokes for **Christine Jorgensen**. We tend to forget that transsexual pioneer Jorgensen supported herself after the operation by putting together a night-club act. Back then famous producer and writer **Gary Marshall** was a young, not so famous writer. Christine needed jokes and Gary had them. All you can say is, who'd a thunk it?

I found this out on the *Late Late Show* back in August, right after my deadline so I couldn't get it into last month's column. Tom Snyder did a couple of the jokes that were around at the time Miss Jorgensen made headlines. The most tasteful of them was, "He went to Europe and came back a broad." Tom tries, but I just don't think he has this politically correct thing down.

Speaking of Politically Incorrect...

Did you notice the Bud Light drag babes are back? They appear in a spot with the king of political incorrectness (Bill Mahr jump back) **Don Rickles**. Oh, shut up dummy!

In this spot a couple of guys are checking out the scene at a hot night-club. They see the alluring back of a blonde in a sequin gown as she stands at the bar. They are trying to decide which one has the best chance of making time with her when Don steps in and tells them to watch a master at work. He approaches the blonde bombshell... and she turns and explodes into a Bud Light drag guy. (Did I mention Milton Berle?) The rest of the "girls" appear in the background and Don looks suitably appalled. Just

when you thought it was safe....

New York, New York

I went into the city a couple of weeks ago to review the film *Different For Girls*, and as far as I know New York's one of the few towns in this great land of ours where you can see this film. It is set for a broader distribution this month, I'm told. While I was in town I was swept up with the energy of the city (I mugged a tourist) and I recommend that you get all dolled up and visit the Apple whenever you can. I actually saw a man in a dress at a restaurant in the Village. Can you *imagine* a thing like that?

Some of the shows now playing in NYC are just for us. Check out:

- New York drag legend **Varla Jean Merman** at the Village club Eighty Eights with a reprise of her last show. The new run starts on October 16th and runs every Thursday night for six weeks. Show time, according to her wig designer (Mr. W. Wesley Cagle) will be 10:30 p.m. and tickets will run you \$15 with a two drink minimum. Go on and tell her there's no biz like show biz.

- Don Your *Regalia* is a 50 minute show of non-stop mirth. *Regalia* was written by a guy named Michael Ogborn, but the important thing is my pal Ricky (Mr. Richard Paul) is one of the stars. Song titles in the show include: "An Evening Without Margaret Whiting," "Sophisticated Twinkie," "Cologne Clone," and "How To Be a Drag Queen For Fun and Profit." Check it out at The Duplex in Greenwich Village, four Fridays in November at 10 p.m., on the 7th, 14th, 21st, and the 28th. Say hi to Ricky if you go. If the rest of the cast are half as good (and funny) as him then you are really set for a night of fun. \$10 cover; two-drink minimum. Call 212-255-5438 for reservations. The Duplex is located at 61 Christopher Street.

At The Copa, Copacabana

Babs [redacted] tells us that on Monday, October 13th it's the Bartender's Ball at the Copacabana. This is a very tran friendly event with large participation from the Imperial Court of New

York. Tickets are a bit on the pricey side at \$100 each and seating is limited to 350. It's probably worth it though since this is a strictly formal affair: black tie for manly types and fabulous gowns for the ladies.

Cocktail hour is an open bar from 7 to 8 p.m. and the French service dinner starts at 8. (Hope they can find enough French waiters.) Dance all night to a 12 piece big band and be prepared for surprise entertainment. Contact the Imperial Court for more information, 212-627-1969.

Stuff For Local Yokels

✓ Philadelphia area yokels, that is. Oct. 21 to Jan. 4, the Philadelphia Museum of Art presents a comprehensive exhibit of fashions spanning a 250-year period. It's called "Best Dressed: 250 Years of Style," and features women's fashion from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, including original creations from Charles Frederick Worth, the English designer who is held responsible for beginning the French haute couture trade. Designers such as Paul Poiret, Emilio Pucci, Bill Blass and Christian Lacroix (Lacroix, sweetie!) are featured in the show. There will also be ceremonial clothes from cultures around the world and the 1956 wedding gown of Philadelphia native **Grace Kelly**, more famous as Princess Grace of Monaco. For more information, call 215-763-8100.

✓ Diversity of Pride is having a high heel race fund-raiser for Outfest, the National Coming Out Day block party. DOP is looking for donations of high heels to properly outfit the racers. If you have a few spare pair hanging around, and who doesn't, drop off those pumps and stilettos at Franny's Place coffeehouse, 203 S. 13th Street.

Outfest happens on the 12th of October in downtown Philadelphia, so it might be a good idea to call Franny's and make sure they're still collecting pumps before you take a truckload on down.

✓ The William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center will turn into a haunted house

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News Beat...

over Halloween weekend. They called on the talents of local special effects artist John Stewart to turn the old Engineers Club (now the Center) into a scary haunted house. I hear the Jesse Helms room alone is enough to make your wig stand on end.

✓ Saturday, Nov. 1, the Center will take us all back to yesteryear, after scaring the bejesus out of us, and recreate the drag parades of the city's past. A large quantity of queens will stroll from 13th and Locust Streets, over Locust and down to 12th Street, then over to Spruce Street and up to the Spooky Community Center. **Henri David** (who else?) will be the grand marshal. (Doesn't he have a little party happening on Halloween night?)

✓ The last drag parade happened in the late 1960s and at that event the late **Frank Rizzo** (then in the police department) was dubbed the "Cisco Kid" after he saved the life of a black drag queen who was getting beaten by a homophobic mob. Rizzo drew his two guns and fired them into the air to disperse the crowd. What a bambino. The parade organizers this year want to honor that drag queen, whoever she is. If you're old enough to remember drag in the Sixties you're probably too blind to read this, but if you know the identity of the girl saved by Frank Rizzo at the last drag parade, please call Fran [redacted] at (215) [redacted].

Another Serious Bit

The Renaissance National Benefit auction is still attracting donated items for the big sell-a-thon at the November GPC meeting, but we need more! More! More! Just last GPC meeting we took in an antique train and a model Ferrarri. If you have something of some value that you would like to donate contact the National Office. (610-975-9119.)

On related financial news we can report that things are looking up a little. We're still not up to the amounts that we should be attracting, but many folks have come forward to offer much needed cash. On the assessment front the news is not too encouraging. Out of three hundred plus Renaissance members only about fifty paid the assessment. The assessment wasn't just a frivolous idea that the National Board thought would be cute. We seriously needed the money. Fortunately some of the members not only sent their assessment, they sent much more cash to cover more of their sisters. That's what Renaissance is about. Those of us who can give the time and skills to help transgendered people get information and find others like themselves need the help of those who can give some money to cover the costs of the work.

Your local dues go to your local chapter. Only twenty dollars of your \$40 dues goes to National to produce the newsletter and run other programs. Your Chapter portion helps your local group run the monthly meeting. Many times people will attend local meeting and not become

members of Renaissance. They may give the five dollar meeting donation and that helps to keep that meeting going, but it doesn't send anything in National's direction. If you know folks who are not members (and therefore not getting this publication, so they won't be able to read this themselves) ask them why they haven't joined. If we have five thousand members reading *News & Views* then we won't have to worry about how to pay the bills.

To make it easier to pay your dues, and to make donations to National, we are now set up to accept plastic. Not donations of Tupperware. We can now take your Visa or Mastercard. Check the Membership Renewal form in this issue. Of course we still take old fashioned checks and money orders, (even cash wrapped up in paper, but we discourgae that) but this will offer members another, easier, option. Thanks again to everyone who made a donation. Let's keep pulling together and establish Renaissance chapters in every state.

And... That's All Folks!

Anyone catch **RuPaul** on *Regis and Kathy Lee* back in September? A seven foot queen on national TV at 9:40 in the morning? What's the world coming to? She sang "I Can't Get Enough of You." It seems the country just can't get enough of her. *Regis and Kathy Lee* looked minuscule next to Miss Charles. They almost needed a ladder to shake her hand. As Bob Dylan once sang... ah, you know the tune. See ya next month honey bunnies.



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APA Condemns “Reparative” Therapy

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has affirmed its 1973 resolution that homosexuality is not a mental disorder and that the APA opposes all portrayals of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people as mentally ill or in need of treatment due to their sexual orientation. The resolution was a response to the recent growth of ‘reparative’ therapies intended to ‘cure’ homosexuals of their homosexuality.

Said Doug Haldeman, President of APA’s society for the study of lesbian, gay, and bisexual issues, “In the past 10 years, Christian fundamentalists have enlisted a coalition of old-style psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers who have... a mission to cure homosexuals. Our aim is not to try to stop them per se or interfere with anyone’s right to practice [therapy], but we want to expose the social context that creates this market.”

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) criticized the new resolution for not going far enough, that is, for not calling for a complete

end to such therapies. Declared Kerry Lobel, Executive Director of NGLTF, “Attempts to change an individual’s sexual orientation through conversion therapy is morally and ethically wrong. Such practices are a therapeutic perpetration of the homophobia that exists in society today.”

Charles Socarides, a NYC psychiatrist and President of the National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), is a proponent and practitioner of reparative therapy. He states, “Homosexuality is a psychological and psychiatric disorder, there is no question about it. It’s a purple menace that is threatening the proper design of gender distinction in society.”

There are no official figures on the number of people who have tried reparative therapy. A Seattle-based Christian organization reports that more than 500 people a month call for information about the therapy and that more than 6,000 people are in therapy at its 90 ministries across the country.

In the meantime, the diagnosis of

Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is still very much on the books. GID is routinely used as an accepted back door to inflict reparative therapies on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender teens and children as young as three, as well as on gender-variant adults seeking hormones or surgery.

In the past, gender-variant children have not only been subjected to involuntary behavioral therapy, but some have been confined in locked wards or given psychoactive drugs as part of their “treatment.”

Notes GenderPAC Executive Director Riki Anne Wilchins, “Queer activists had better wake up; we are still at risk. By ignoring gender, this resolution means gender-variant kids are still totally unprotected. And since getting hormones or surgery means presenting yourself as ‘sick’ and needing a ‘cure,’ gender-variant adults are still going to be diagnosed as mentally disordered with GID, effectively ending their chances of getting private medical, life, or disability insurance.”



ICTLEP Office Moves to New York

The new office of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP) is moving to Cooperstown, New York. According to Phyllis Frye, Executive Director of ICTLEP, the old office shut down in August so that the organization could go through personnel changes, move to a new location, and have a little vacation. The new (and paid) ICTLEP office secretary is Sharon Stuart from Cooperstown.

Ms. Stuart is the only remaining original ICTLEP Director other than Ms. Frye. Ms. Stuart is a past Director of IFGE and has been a long-time leader in Tri-Ess. During the early years of ICTLEP, Sharon began what became the Military Law Project. She edited and amended JoAnn Robert’s

original Bill of Gender Rights to form the International Bill of Gender Rights. She also authored the Declaration of Gender Liberty. In May of 1994 she participated in a lay-down protest of the Stonewall 25’s non-inclusion of “transgender” in the event’s name. Unfortunately, in 1995 she was fired from her regular job for being too “out” as a crossdresser.

During the ICTLEP office move, many undeposited checks and several unfilled orders were found. Following the announcement of the personnel change, several people reported that they had quit contributing because their checks to ICTLEP had not cleared. There was absolutely no dishonesty and no theft involved. Ms Frye apologizes for the confusion and asks

that if anyone’s check to ICTLEP has not cleared, cancel it or try again.

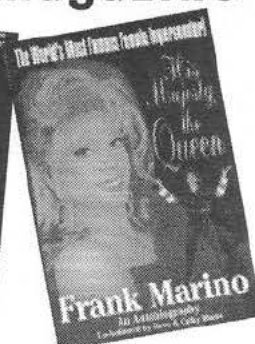
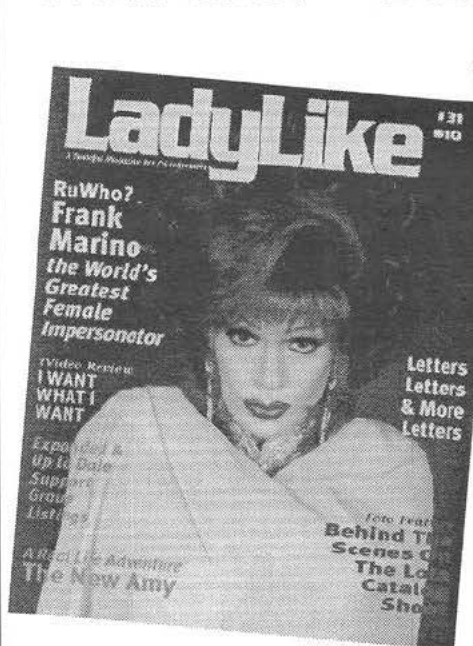
The new office secretary, Sharon Stuart, has the highest and most impeccable record with many years of responsible community service. If something was previously ordered, paid for, and not received, ICTLEP will fill the order. Contact the ICTLEP office.

The new ICTLEP address is: P.O. Drawer 1010, Cooperstown, New York 13326. The new telephone number, with answering machine, is 607-547-4118. The new email address is <ictlephdq@aol.com>. Meanwhile, ICTLEP can be found on the web at <www.abmall.com/ictlep> and on AOL with the keyword ICTLEP.



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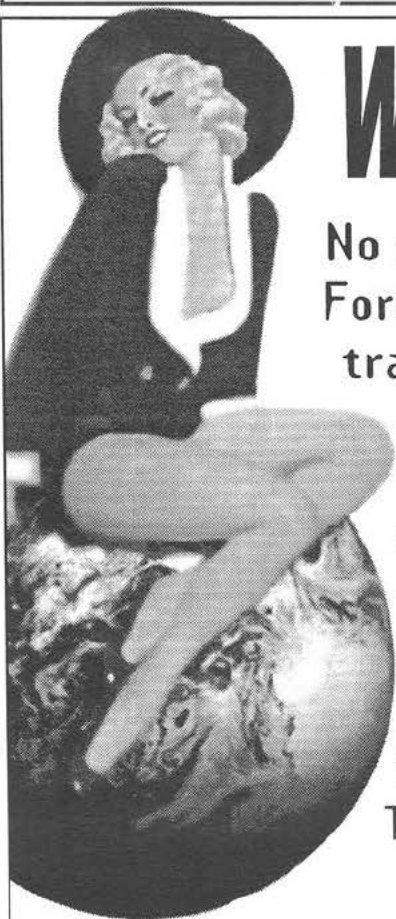
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Like many of my fellow celebrities, I have recently decided to hate the paparazzi. I have no use for them—except when I am making one of my numerous personal appearances to open another “Planet Dina” restaurant, or flack my new movie, “Men in Drag,” with my co-stars Tommie Lee Jones and Will Smith.

I am sick and tired of seeing my photos appearing in sleazy adult bookstore tabloids like “Trans-Action”, “Dominated in Drag” and “She-Male Personals.” Some celebrity photographers have claimed that I leaked those photos to the press myself. I ask you: do I look like the type of girl who needs that kind of publicity? Okay, okay... maybe it was somebody on my staff of personal assistants who anonymously mailed in those incriminating photos.

Just once, I would like to be able to go out for a quiet evening in my limousine, wearing a \$5,000 designer gown, with supermodels on both arms, sit in the VIP section of the trendiest nightclub, and get obnoxiously drunk and abusive to other members of my party without having everyone snapping photos of me. Is that so much to ask?

Uh-oh. I hear the thunder of motor scooters closing in on me. Hit the gas, Henri. I’m outta here. Enjoy another installment of *Vis a Vis* soon to be a major motion picture, premiering at a Planet Dina near you.

AMERICA ONLINE... AND IN DRAG

If you’re on AOL, you’ve probably played around with the Members Directory search feature to find other crossdressers. I thought it would be

fun to do a very unscientific survey of crossdressers on AOL by using the directory to search for key words in the members’ profiles to see what floats our collective boat. Based on my brief experience with other crossdressers on AOL, my results were not surprising.

My methodology was to use the term “Crossdresser” as the delimiting search word and then pair it with other words to see who the hell is out there in AOL-ville. I recognize this type of survey is fraught with logic and statistical irregularities but what do I look like? A computer geek? Don’t answer that.

The combination of “Crossdresser, married” yielded over 250 respondents, which is the maximum number a search will return to you. There might be 251 or there might be 250,000. Only the AOL billing department knows for sure.

Then I got serious. “Crossdresser, lingerie” yielded 192 respondents. “CD, high heels” returned 134 names. “CD, corsets” gave me 41 wasp-waisted would-be ladies. “CD, hosiery” sent back 68 community members. You can see the drift here, can’t you? Just out of curiosity, I tried this combination: “Crossdresser, flats” and got... no responses. No one would even admit to wearing flat soled shoes as a crossdresser.

So I took an even more deviant turn in my survey. “Crossdresser, submissive” came back with 142 slavegirls-in-waiting. “CD, bondage” gave me 39 girls who know the ropes. So I went the other direction with “CD, dominant” and found 89 of our sisters. But a quick check of some profiles informed me that they weren’t dominant themselves but were interested in being

dominated by someone else.

I was determined to find some crossdressers who were not into some form of clothing fetish or S/M scene. I typed in “Crossdresser, femininity” thinking that anyone using that word might be seriously trying to get in touch with their woman within. For my trouble I got back 11 names, or about 5-10% of the number of crossdressers who expressed an interest in lingerie, high heels, or submissiveness. The combination of “Crossdresser, passable” yielded 95 names but some of those girls were using the word in a pairing of “not passable”, which is probably the more likely scenario anyway. Another attempt at finding serious-minded sisters by using the word “support” or “support group” turned up only two souls. Not even enough to field a team against the crossdressers who mentioned “garter belts” (22), “spandex” (21), or listed their occupation as “model” (14).

I tried one last experiment. I entered “Crossdresser, Tri-Ess” and found 7 (count ‘em) heterosexual crossdressers who belong to the oldest and largest national crossdressing support group known to civilization and who would admit it to the online universe. Hang your head, Virginia, this ain’t your crowd.

As I said at the outset, the results of this survey did not surprise me one tiny bit. The online crowd of crossdressers are into a whole different bag than what our community has been preaching for nigh on thirty years. Which is not to say that the online crossdressers aren’t some of the same folk who populate our groups and read our newsletters. But the anonymity of the environment and the promise of short-term gratification (chat rooms and browsing) online is such as to bring out the fantasy first, with seriousness a distant second.

And if you’re looking for advice or support on AOL or the Internet in general, bear in mind that the “passable, submissive, lingerie model” you’re chatting with is probably sitting in front of his terminal in a plaid flannel shirt.

DO THE RIGHT THING

The June 1997 issue of *Northwest Passages* newsletter of the NWGA group in Portland, Oregon carried a column by regular contributor Carolyn; titled "Sluts and Exhibitionists" and dealt with the conflict between fetish crossdressing and public acceptance for all crossdressers. Carolyn notes that some crossdressers have been emboldened by the beginning of public acceptance for "mainstream" crossdressing to begin crossdressing in public in what she refers to as "fetish" dressing. This includes micro minis, very high heels, exaggerated bosoms, or latex/vinyl type clothing items. Carolyn points out an instance when some fetish dressers from a Canadian group appeared at the Esprit convention and shocked the more normally dressed attendees with what they felt to be inappropriate attire.

The conflict arises when the mainstream girls feel that the presence of the fetish girls will harm the public perception of all crossdressers. It's very easy for some segments of the public — or nightclub owners, hotel managers, etc. — to point to the inappropriately dressed crossdressers and use that as a club against all of us.

Carolyn rightly points out that everyone should have the right to express themselves as they see fit. Nevertheless, in a society where perception of a minority group can be tainted by the image of a sub-minority, this can cause problems for all members of our community. In addition, Carolyn points out that the fetish dressing crowd (not limited only to fetish crossdressers) is becoming organized in small segments. The fetish crossdressers may break away from the mainstream crossdressing organizations and she concludes with this insightful question, "How NWGA [and other groups as well] responds to these changes may have a real bearing on the club's future."

TWO ROOMS... NO WAITING?

The *Femme Forum* newsletter of the Tau Chi chapter of Tri-Ess in Houston, Texas reprinted a column by Marlyn Schwartz that appeared in the

mainstream *Dallas Morning News*. Ms. Schwartz just returned from a trip to New York City and reported on a new cultural phenomenon.

During intermission of the Broadway show *Master Class*, Marlyn noticed that the line outside the Men's restroom was almost as long as the line outside the Ladies'. When she remarked that she had never seen anything like it, a man in the Men's room line said, "It's because the women are in there." Apparently, some women got impatient with the glacial movement of the women's line and took advantage of the available Men's facilities. The idea caught on to such a degree that the women were now slowing down both lavatory lines, which is one of the defining characteristics of the fair sex.

The point of Ms. Schwartz' column was that it was a step in the right direction for women's rights. The same phenomenon was noticed at another Broadway play on a following night. A quick survey of some women in the theater revealed a nascent uprising for restroom equality. Meaning that the guys are now going to have to wait for the ladies to dillydally in their own Men's rooms. Some of the men said they were too embarrassed to share a restroom with the women and left empty-handed (so to speak).

Of course, restroom usage has been a controversial topic for crossdressers ever since Mr. Crapper invented the indoor toilet. Moral indignation from women catching crossdressers in the ladies' room has gotten more than a few of us in trouble. One wonders how many of the women darting into the Men's room in those theaters would be outraged at seeing a crossdresser in "their" restroom at some other time. What's that old expression: "Good for the goose...?"

Ms. Schwartz' column also mentioned that there is a law in Texas (and presumably other states) which mandates installation of more Women's restroom facilities than Men's in public buildings. The obvious reason for which is that women take far longer to use the conveniences than do men. Apparently there was a quiet revolu-

tion taking place in the women's movement all these years. But it wasn't so much of an uprising as a sit-down strike. Equal rights, indeed!

THERE SHE GOES...

I usually enjoy the annual Miss America pageant but this year everything about it just seemed to be "off." Even in the week leading up to the pageant when preliminary competitions are held, there seemed to be no anticipatory build-up for the Saturday evening show. The new hosts for the show were a husband and wife soap opera duo and—at least to me—complete unknowns. And halfway through the introduction of all 51 contestants, I began to lose interest.

The Miss America pageant has been going through some growing pains in the past few years. It is caught betwixt and between a tradition that is simply not holding up to the new age and an entertainment culture where beautiful women—even beautiful smart women—are everywhere to be found. Unfortunately for the Miss America franchise, they are tied to their concept of it being something other than just a beauty pageant, when all anyone really cares about is watching a beauty pageant.

They seemed to be succeeding with the "new" Miss Americas of the past few years. We had the hearing impaired Miss America, the Afro-American veterinarian Miss America, I think we even had a sex-abused Miss America. And all the Misses take up worthy causes for which they seem to do good work during their reigning year.

The pageant tried to get away from its *raison d'être* by banning high heels during the swimsuit competition, a shot through the heart for all red-blooded male Miss America watchers. This year, they allowed two piece swimsuits and we all thought it was a step in the right (that is, backward) direction. But we found that the antiseptic two-piece swimsuits that the girls chose were so sexless that the one piece tanksuits looked better by far. And did you notice that the shoes were

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Gender Reflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**
M.S.W., Ph.D.

Crossdressers I Wish I'd Known

FRANCOIS DE CHOISY was born in 1644, the son of a mother who befriended the transvestic Duc d'Orleans. Perhaps he was dressed as a girl to please the Duc, but it is known that he never wore men's clothing until age 18 when he left home to attend the Sorbonne.

One year later, at age 19 he obtained an abbacy and the same year appeared as an actress, thoroughly deceiving his audience for 5 months.

As an adult he performed in the theater, always playing female roles and is known to have crossdressed continually for a 9 yr period, appearing as a woman in many public venues. He embarked upon a "marriage of conscience" with a Mademoiselle de Charlotte who enjoyed crossdressing as well and called herself "Monsieur de Maulny." With the end of this marriage, de Choisy moved to Bourges and lived with the Comtesse des Barres.

In 1676, at 32 yrs of age, he was sent by his religious superiors to Rome to attend the election of Pope Innocent XI and following the Pope's coronation, dressed as a woman at the ball. He then moved to Italy where he crossdressed full-time. In 1683 he suffered a mysterious illness marked by nightmares, the nature of which suggested that his apparent comfort with crossdressing was marked by social and religious ambivalence. Upon his recovery he renounced his flamboyant behaviors and began a work on the immortality of the soul.

In 1685, as part of Louis XIV's entourage, he visited Siam where he dressed in an evening gown, make-up and jewelry. The Siamese were very impressed, thinking this was an acceptable European custom.

In his later years he resumed cross-

ressing full-time while maintaining a literary career in which he published his memoirs as well as his reknown "History of the Church." He died in 1724 at the age of 80.

CHRISTINA DAVIS, HANNAH SNELL and MARY ANNE TALBOT

Born in 1667, CHRISTINA DAVIS always enjoyed boyish pursuits and later, manly activities. She was married and the mother of 2 sons. When her husband left her without a word, she went in search of him, wearing his clothing. She continued to dress in male garb for many years, even enlisting in the Army under a male name.

HANNAH SNELL, born in 1723 also first dressed as a man in search of her missing husband and later went on to to enlist in the Army. In her later years she opened a pub and appeared in the theater in the role of a sailor.

MARY ANNE TALBOT, born in 1778, was better known as James Taylor, a sailor. She worked as a drummer, cabin-boy and steward, courted the Captain's niece and proposed marriage to her. Throughout her life she was interested in male activities and despite the threat of legal action, could not discontinue her crossdressing for long. Even when dressed as a woman, she wrote that she could not forget her sea-faring life and periodically dressed and resumed sailing.

CHARLES D'EON: Born in France in 1728, the Chevalier D'Eon is the most famous transvestite in European history. His name was co-opted by the psychologist Havelock Ellis who described the phenomenon of crossdressing as "Eonism." D'Eon was dressed in female attire in his youngest years but from childhood, through his youth and young manhood, resumed male attire.

In 1755, at age 27 he was engaged by France as a spy and sent to the court of Empress Elizabeth at St. Petersburg. He was dressed as a woman and given the name of Madame Lia de Beaumont. His success in this venture is said to have influenced him for the rest of his life.

Upon his return from Russia he began a military career marked by controversy and paranoia. His extravagant and impulsive behavior in addition to his insecurity and aggression, led him to be recalled from his post in England but he refused to comply. Having become a security risk, he was bribed not to expose state secrets. He then became fearful that he was the object of a conspiracy to kidnap or assassinate him. Finally, in 1777, Louis XVI sent an emissary, Beaumarchais, to lure him back to France. D'Eon persuaded the envoy that he was indeed a woman, trapped in male clothing and forced to serve the state. Beaumarchais negotiated an agreement that in return for financial and social compensation, D'Eon would return to France, declare herself to be a woman and cause the Chevalier D'Eon to disappear forever.

As agreed, he returned to France and attempted to honor his end of the bargain; but he was awkward and unconvincing in his role as a woman. He returned to England in 1785, still dressing as a woman, and became an accepted, if eccentric figure in London society. To earn a living he promoted himself as a female fencer and received invitations to perform throughout the country. With increasing age, he was unable to continue this occupation and eventually died a lonely and melancholy individual. Upon his death he was revealed to his public to be the man he always knew himself to be.

JAMES BARRY was a woman who passed as a man for all of her life. She was born in 1799 and by 10 years of age was enrolled as a male medical student at Edinburgh University. She enlisted in the Army at age 14 and was stationed in Cape Town, So. Africa where she was assigned as physician to the Governor. Three years later she

continued on next page

Benefit Auction Items Continue To Grow

The Renaissance National Benefit Auction has been attracting more donations. At the last Greater Philadelphia meeting the auction acquired an antique model train, the type that folks used to set up around the Christmas tree, and a model Ferrarri. While you won't be able to drive your Ferrarri with your long blonde hair blowing in the breeze, having a neat model Ferrarri could be pretty cool.

The Benefit Auction will take place at the November GPC meeting in the large meeting room, which will be

setup to display the donated treasures. Among other items to be auctioned are: a Grid laptop computer with carrying case; a Uniden cellular phone; a limited edition Renaissance mug; a 1998 Renaissance Christmas Party album filled with photos; a 1948 PRR calendar top; a Macintosh IIsi computer (less monitor); a radio controlled model Corvette; a theater card from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*; two Axford's corsets (we're not talking cheap lingerie here); and the original artwork by LeVaughn for the cover of

Speaking As A Woman 2nd Edition.

You only have the month of October and a couple of weeks in November to get your donated treasures in to the National Office. Call 610-975-9119 and leave a message for Angela Gardner or send her email: <angela@ren.org> letting her know what you have to give. Remember, no clothing will be accepted unless it is an upscale beaded gown or a fur. Jewelry is limited to high quality costume and real diamond, pearls, etc.

Dig thorough your attics, basements and storage cubicles for the perfect item whose sale will benefit your organization.



Reflections...

gained acclaim for the practice of preventive medicine, years ahead of her time. She became Colonial Medical Officer but her impulsive and domineering personality prevented her from working compatibly with others and she was shifted from one British colony to another — engaging contentiously with whomever she encoun-

tered. While her crossdressing allowed her to overcome the sexism of the times and pursue her chosen career, it was thought to be at great cost. She died in 1865 at 66 years of age.

LORD EDWARD CORNBURY:

Edward Hyde, later Lord Cornbury, was the Colonial Governor of New York and New Jersey from 1702-1708. He wore gowns to many public events including formal dances, the opening of a session of the legislature and his

wife's funeral. He bore a natural resemblance to his cousin, Queen Anne, and often explained his crossdressing as serving to show the colonists what Her Majesty looked like. He was exceedingly unpopular in his political role, not because of his transvestism but because he ignored his constituents' rights, dissolved the legislatures whenever they disagreed with him, took bribes and embezzled public money.



Vis A Vis...

back for the swimsuit competition? Unfortunately, the contestants all sported those god-awful clunky heeled sandals that do not flatter even the shapeliest leg.

It may be time for the Miss America pageant to finally give up the ghost. Better to quit while they still have a semblance of dignity and a television share, than to peter out year by year until they are simply cancelled like a bad sitcom. Or perhaps this modest proposal: take pride in the fact that it is a beauty pageant with a seventy-five year history of choosing beautiful women who look good in swimwear and anything beyond that simple quality is gravy.

IS THAT A PACKY IN YOUR PANTS OR ARE YOU JUST GLAD TO SEE ME?

Our editor Angela and I both saw

an ad that ran in the FtM International newsletter for a new product especially designed for female-to-male transsexuals. It is a fake penis and scrotal sac made of silicone that will provide a manly bulge in the pants where before there was none.

The ad shows two models of this revolutionary product. The "Packy" is designed to simulate the penis in a flaccid state, perfect for those casual moments in a bar or alongside the water cooler at work. "The Pack-n-Play" is (and I quote direct from the ad) "a larger, working model which hangs down, but can be held straight out or turned balls up for a belly-hugging hard-on."

According to the ad, "they look very natural in jockey-style underwear" and they further urge their target audience to "wear it swimming!" Both models are designed to be believable in both size and girth. The Pack-n-Play model is 6.5" long at full power which is about

the national average, I guess. And if they help the purchasers to score, they can rest assured that is "easy to keep clean — you can even boil them." That's something even the original equipment manufacturer does not recommend. Sometimes art is better than life.

But here is the thing that kind of burned up Angela and I when we perused the ad for the "Packy" product line: each model is only \$51, your choice of either. A good set of silicone breast forms favored by male crossdressers can run over \$200. And while a nice set of breasts may be exciting for us to wear, it doesn't guarantee a "belly hugging hard-on" as does the Pack-n-Play. It doesn't seem fair!

This may be definitive proof that it truly IS a man's world after all.



Hot•Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason why so few engage in it." — Henry Ford

The transgender political scene seems calm at the moment but there are things stewing in the pot that bear watching. For example, **Sharon Franklin** is an African-American transsexual running for city council (mostly white and straight) in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Good Luck Sharon! Meanwhile the Attorneys General of 15 states have endorsed the tg-exclusive version of the **Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)**. Where was **GenderPAC** during this activity? They were participating in the demonstrations against New York City police after the cops sexually brutalized a Haitian immigrant. That's very supportive, but wouldn't their attention have been better focused on our transgendered issues and ENDA?

Queers are normal. So says the **American Psychiatric Association (APA)** 20 years after declaring that homosexuality was not a mental disorder. The APA is trying to clean up the acts of some therapists who believe they can "cure" homosexuality with so-called reparative therapy. Under a resolution recently adopted by the organization, therapists are required to read patients a statement stating that homosexuality is normal and healthy. Now if we could just get them

to consider transgendered behavior in the same light...

The "alternative" networks are loading up on crossdressing and tg characters. The season premiere of **Head Over Heels**, a comedy about a dating service, featured a small role for ex-porn drag queen **Karen Dior**. Dior is trying to go straight (yes, it's a pun) with an appearance on **Xena, Warrior Princess** last year and it's rumored her transsexual character may return this season. Meanwhile, over at Fox, someone got the bright idea to turn **Tootsie** into a sitcom. **Ask Harriett** stars **Anthony Tyler Quinn** as a newspaper writer cum Romeo who gets fired and comes back to the paper as a female advice columnist. Look for its premiere mid-season.

I'm not ignoring it. It's just that Angela Gardner went to the NYC premiere of **Different for Girls** and I'm going to let her do the talking about it.

You may have noticed that I've had little to nothing to say about the transgendered **Usenet** groups (alt.transgendered, soc.support.transgendered and others). That's because these days it's mostly hot air that fills the cyberscape. If someone isn't flaming someone else, then it's sleazy porn spam scrolling through my newsreader. I've pretty much tuned out that part of the net as useless. However, I do check **alt.fashion** every day since it has about 400 to 500 new posts daily. And, right now, one of the hottest topics on a.f is **Scarlett**, a small cosmetics boutique located at 129 S Main St in New Hope, Penna. I stopped by there a week ago and spoke with **Mary** one of the cosmetologists. Unlike so many companies that say they've custom blended their cosmetics, **Scarlett** really has and the colors are kewl. Transgendered people are welcomed at **Scarlett** and they will even do after hours makeovers. **Scarlett** is having an open-house reception for the alt.fashion crowd on Octo-

ber 18th at 7:00 PM. So, if you're in the area, stop by and say Hi, or give them a call at 800-862-2311.

Congratulations are in order for **Dr. Sheila Kirk** on her election to the board of directors of the **Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association**. Joining her in the board is **Jude Patton**, CMHC and a FtM. Both Kirk and Patton will serve for 4 years. Serving two years terms are **Dr. Richard Green** as President, **Alice Webb** as President-Elect, and **Dr. Connie Christine Wheeler** as Secretary-Treasurer.

For those of you waiting for the **Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues**, don't hold your breath because it is not going to be published. We received only 14 papers out of the 60+ presentations made and that ain't enough to make a proceedings book. Everyone who ordered a prepaid copy should have received a refund by now. If not, contact the Renaissance office..

Similarly, if you've been wondering where your Fall issue of **LadyLike** magazine is, it's still in the computer as I write this (early September). I'm having problems with my distributor again and they now owe me for two issues of the magazine. I haven't seen a penny since last March and that makes it difficult to print the next issue. I'm working the problem and hopefully I'll have the magazine on the street in late October or early November. Pass the word. But fear not, **LadyLike** will **not** go under.

Time for some Fashion News. As we head into Fall its time to think about **Winter** clothing. Do you have a suitable winter coat? If not, October is the perfect time to find one because most stores are having a **Winter Coat Sale** right now. In November, stores will start clearing out their **Fall dresses, suits** and sweaters, as well as Fall shoes and boots.

Hot•Buzz

Then, in December, **Evening wear** and winter sportswear go on sale, followed by generally huge clearance sales in January for outerwear and accessories. February is usually resort wear and March will find sales on **Spring Rain Coats**. In May, Spring suits, hand bags and pre-season swimwear go on sale. Then, June and July yield sales on Summer dresses, suits, more swimwear, and Summer shoes. Coming full circle, August and September usually have pre-season sales of Fall clothing. So be prepared to shop.

The **handbag** of the moment is fashionably useless. Remember those teeny-tiny purses with barely enough room for a condom? The Fall "must-have" purse is designed along those lines. It's a shoulder strap version about the size of a large manila envelope and about as thick. Extremely impractical for everyday use. Unless you are only carrying letter size papers, skip this item. Instead look for cloned copies that are thicker and cheaper. **Leather** is the material of choice and **Camel** is the color.

I've mentioned many times how important it is to have a basic wardrobe from which to mix and match outfits. For those of use who wear Plus sizes (and these days that's size 14 and up), those basic pieces have been difficult to find. Well, not anymore. **Elisabeth**, the Plus-size line from Liz Claiborne offers many of the basic pieces in sizes **14 to 22**. Look for pieces marked with a tag marked with an **E** for "essentials." The first offerings are a sleeveless **sheath dress** in charcoal wool for \$150, a fitted **white shirt** in cotton/spandex for \$60, slimming **flat-front pants** in black rayon/wool for \$90 and a **black leather jacket** for \$350. They'll be adding more items to the line later in the year.

The latest in nail polish technology is shiny polish that **dries in 90 seconds**. Some of you will remember Avon's ill-fated attempt at a quick dry and peelable polish. However, reports are in saying these new polishes really do dry in 90 seconds and while a bit more difficult to

apply (they run thick), a single coat should last three days, which is the length of your average transgender convention. While I'm in the nail department, Revlon has introduced a new line of artificial nails called **Revlon Nail Enhancers**. What's cool about the product is the built-in size guide. Stick your thumb in the slot and see if they fit. The nails are available in 3 sizes, Petite, Average and **Wide**. Oh, yeah!

Cool weather is always good reason to wear **boots** and this season the boots are tres chic and very sexy. With few exceptions, the boots are perched on sky-high heels. Here's the scoop on what's in style... **Lace Up** boots: spectator style in suede and leather, sporty outdoorsy trail boots and city-slick pointy toed... **Low**: good old Beatle boots, or loaferish ankle high... **High**: side zips to knee, heavy-duty biker style or stretch velvet... **Evening**: Velvet ankle boot or patent leather with stainless steel spike heel.

Okay, I can understand the whole licensing thing when your name equals money, but I think **Donna Karan** has just stepped over the line of smart marketing into greed. LaDonna has launched DKNY coffee **beans** in cooperation with Timothy's World Coffee. Why do I think she's given into the greed factor? Ms. Karan doesn't drink coffee.

Guess who's back on the literary scene in the October *marie claire* with an article on *The Return of Glamour*. None other than **Tama Janowitz**. When last we saw Ms. Janowitz, she was shilling for Apple Powerbooks in the early 1990's. Then she disappeared right after it was disclosed that Ms. Janowitz's mother, a well-known author and poet herself, never had any *daughters*. However, the mother's bio in a Who's Who for writers does mention a son. Aha! Eventually Tama's publicist admitted the young Ms. Janowitz is, indeed, a transsexual. What is ironic is the fact that Janowitz came to be recognized for her 80's novel *The Male Cross Dresser Support Group* in which a woman crossdresses as a man. We need to get Janowitz plugged into this community. She could be helpful.

Also in the greed arena are imports coming from countries with "Most Favored Nation" status and no quotas. You'll soon start seeing clothes with "Made In Laos" and "Made In Mongolia" rather than China and Taiwan since those countries are falling out of favor with our State Department.

Remember those "I dreamed I was on the 7:00 AM train in my Maidenform" ads. Some of those situations were pretty silly. But it's no joke that **Maidenform** filed for bankruptcy this summer. The 75-year-old company is hung over with huge debt. The company is still owned by the same family that started it and **Elizabeth J. Coleman**, chairman and CEO, is third generation at the helm and hoping she'll not be the last.

Could **Nebraska** become the plastic surgery center of the world? How about the Net? It will if **Dr. Stephen Denenberg** has anything to do with it. The good doctor has built what is considered the most comprehensive web site on facial plastic surgery information at <www.facial.surgery.com>. There is a rhinoplasty (nose job) tutorial that takes the user through each painful step in detail. Do not have lunch before browsing this site. The site includes both Q&A pages as well as cost information and pre-op interview question to ask your doc. As you can see from the URL, this site only deals with facial surgery. A more complete plastic surgery site can be found at <www.phudson.com>

The strange-product-name-of-the-month award goes to **fetish scent**, a new line of perfumes from the Dana Perfume corporation of New York. You can check out their other "fetishes" at <www.whatsyourfetish.com> Now, there's some smart marketing at work. Imagine how disappointed a whole bunch of fetish folk are going to be when they find this site is about perfume.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? Don't confuse me with facts. My mind is made up. Comments? Write me care of this publication or send me email at [redacted]@cdspub.com>. © 1997 by Creative Design Services.

"I Dreamed There Was An Emperor, Anthony..."

By Niela Miller

So begins a musing by Shakespeare's Cleopatra who is describing to a male servant within her hearing her larger-than-life vision of a man. "His face was as the heavens. And therein stuck a sun and moon which lighted up the little O, the earth." She has not yet seen his human face which can be joyful, miserable, treacherous....

Dear partners of crossdressers, what is your internal dream or myth of a husband which you have valiantly tried to fit onto the real man who turns out to be so much more complex than that dream? And when you discover that he has aspects you never dreamed of, does your dream become larger to absorb these discoveries so that dream and reality are in harmony, or is there a terrible discordance so that the real man can never be your dream?

The work of being the wife/partner of a crossdresser is not to try to change him but to try to address that internal myth which has given rise to beliefs, feelings, body sensations, and imagery in relation to that person. The question is: are you capable of embracing a new dream, becoming larger, letting him be larger than you ever imagined? If you don't want to do this work, so be it. This may not be the arena to which you are committed. Perhaps you will both have to move on and apart. But what a lost opportunity!

I believe that every experience and person with whom we come into con-

tact in our lives holds valuable lessons for our own growth, both personal and spiritual. What might some of the lessons be for you in this kind of partnership? Consider the following:

- Learning how to love another human being despite his fem appearance, his mistakes in judgment, his unintentional hurting of you, his intense feelings about something else besides you, his desire to bring experiences into your marriage which you never asked for, his vulnerability which sometimes takes the form of not being able to tell even you his deepest feelings.

- Learning what your limits are, what you believe and value, what you really want from life and a partnership, what you are capable of, what about you is rigid and what is flexible.

- Learning what your feelings are about your own sexuality, your femininity, your womanhood, your women friends, your mother, your daughter, your sister. What is your unfinished business with each female in your life?

- Having a passion for something in your life which is at least as great as his passion for crossdressing but is not connected with him.

- Having a community of friends and a support system which are made up of men and women who are not involved with transgender, in addition to those who are.

- Getting clear about any of *your* secret feelings, fantasies, white lies, pretenses, unexplored past experiences which foster some of the behavior and the reactions you now have with and to your partner.

- Taking risks in talking with him about all of it, about everything, without requiring that he do the same and without complaining about him to him. Is this possible? Can you do it as a spiritual challenge

to yourself?

If you are willing to take complete responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, reactions, dreams, beliefs, values, limits, desires, experiences, and behaviour and work with the plethora of material presented to you by being with this particular partner, you will be amazed at the amount of positive change and growth in you and in your relationship.

If you don't want to do this work, you are still a good and worthwhile person. You still have the right to want something, someone different. But don't fool yourself into thinking that you have escaped from the work to be done. The Creative Intelligence which is Totally Conscious knows what we need to learn. It will manage to set us up with those conditions, maybe in the next relationship, maybe in the next life....

About the Author

Niela Miller has been working with the transgender community for fifteen of her thirty years as a counselor/therapist and is particularly known for her personal development workshops at Fantasia Fair. In her first year there and for many subsequent years, she worked with a group of wives of crossdressers, the first time such a group had been convened. Her book, *Counseling In Genderland*, (Different Path Press, Boston, 1996) is the only available guide of it's type. Niela uses her background in Gestalt and other humanistic therapies, education, group work and the arts in many venues. She is an amateur musician, a new grandma, and lives and works in Acton, Massachusetts.



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Dallas, Texas Makes PROGRESS '97

PROGRESS, the nation's largest coalition of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employee resource groups, held its third annual PROGRESS Summit for Workplace Leaders in Dallas, Texas on September 19th through 21st. Openly-gay Texas State Representative Glenn Maxey was the Summit's key-note speaker. Official sponsors of this year's Summit included The United Way, Visa International, Pacific Bell, Human Rights Campaign, Kaiser Permanente, American Airlines, Genentech, and the Los Angeles Gay & lesbian Center.

"Hosting the Summit outside of California this year demonstrates PROGRESS' growth as a national coalition," said Sarah Fairchild of Kaiser Permanente, event co-chair.

"PROGRESS is now educating employers nationwide about inclusive workplace policies and showing them how employee groups play an integral role in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and

transgender civil rights movement."

San Francisco Bay Area human resources and diversity expert Paula Jones developed the leadership program in conjunction with the PROGRESS Event Committee. The committee is made up of workplace activists and professionals from national and multinational corporations.

This year's Summit was the largest ever, with participants from dozens of corporate, governmental, non-profit and educational workplaces nationwide. Founded in 1995, PROGRESS provides programs and services to employee groups, employers and individuals addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workplace concerns. Its programs and services include The PROGRESS Report, the "PROGRESS Page" website (<http://www.bayscenes.com/np/progress>), the Leadership Training Program, education manuals, and the Sample Document Library.

Leadership Lambda was established in 1993 to strengthen skills for existing and new leaders in the gay, lesbian and bisexual community of Dallas. Leadership Lambda offers a six-month intensive skills-building Seminar Series, as well as customized technical assistance to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender organizations across the United States. For further information about PROGRESS, contact Garrett Hicks at 888-PRO-LGBT.



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Ms. Lynda

Highlights of HBIGDA XV Conference

by Dallas Denny

The 15th meeting of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association (HBIGDA) was held September 10 – 12, 1997 in Vancouver, British Columbia. The host organization was the Gender Identity Program at Vancouver General Hospital. HBIGDA is a worldwide organization for professionals who work with transsexuals. Named after the pioneering endocrinologist Harry Benjamin, M.D., it was founded in the late 1970s. HBIGDA is perhaps best known for its Standards of Care, a document which establishes minimal guidelines for the provision of hormones and surgery to transsexual people.

Attendance for the conference, which was held at the rather expensive Sutton Place Hotel (\$269/night, Canadian), was more than 200 people, which included both professionals and transsexuals. In fact, the local population of transsexuals and transgendered people was represented. Some registered for the conference, and some staged a protest during the Thursday morning plenary, complaining of the high cost of the conference and demanding access to the seminars. HBIGDA decided to allow protestors to attend sessions without charge, and several did so. Unfortunately, those protestors who did attend helped themselves not only to the free knowledge but chowed down liberally at the buffets intended for paid members, and some even attended the Saturday night banquet. This was an expense borne by the registered members, many of whom had sacrificed in order to attend the conference. Meals were expensive; each of those who ate without registering cost the money-losing conference at least \$100 in food costs. (Note: I found the protest admirable — my concern is not with the protestors in general or with those protestors who were invited by HBIGDA members to eat, but with those who ate without invitation. Had their protest included a demand for meals, or had the HBIGDA membership decided to feed them, my

opinion would be different.)

At the 1993 HBIGDA conference, which was held in New York City, trans members of HBIGDA were very low key, wearing their “We’re all Professionals Here” hats. The unspoken presumption at the conference was that transsexuals are marginal individuals; this atmosphere was also reportedly present at the 1995 conference in Bavaria, which I did not attend. This year was different, however. Transsexuals and transgendered folk were out and proud and very much a part of the proceedings. Valerie Harvey, Dr. Becky Allison, Dr. Sheila Kirk and myself had the opportunity to address the entire assembly at a plenary on Saturday; many transpeople, including Jamison Green, Marsha Botzer, Dr. Tarryn Whitten, Christine Burnham, Stephanie Castle, Dr. Rebecca Auge, Jude Patton, Rosalynne Blumenstein, Tracie O’Keefe, and Dr. Anne Lawrence presented papers or posters. Non-trans presenters included a roster of surgeons, including Dr. Eugene Schrang, Dr. Donald Laub, Sr., Dr. J. Joris Hage, Dr. Toby Meltzer, Dr. Stan Monstrey, and Dr. Refaat B. Karim; other physicians (including Drs. Rosemary Basson, Stacy Elliott, Louis Gooren, and Bengt Lundstrom; attorneys (Dr. Louis Schwartz and Dr. Richard Green, who is also a psychiatrist) and social scientists of all sorts (Drs. George Brown, Sandra Cole, Walter Bockting, Eli Coleman, Lee Emory, Collier Cole, George Meyer, Randi Ettner, Leah Schaefer, Milton Diamond, and Bonnie Saks). I’m stopping right here; I realize I left out about 90% of the presenters, but if I continue with the listing, there will be no article.

The conference was kicked off by a talk on sexual differentiation of the brain by Dr. Roger Gorski. Following was a plenary. Dr. Marilyn Wilchesky of the gender program in Ottawa led with a paper about psychoanalytic theories of transsexualism (the same old stuff— separation and individuation, weak fathers, narcissistic mothers). Dr. Wilchesky was followed by

Dr. Holly Devor, who set the tone for the conference by presenting a multifactorial model of female-to-male gender variance and pointing out that gender variance is not *prima facie* evidence for psychopathology, but can be a healthy adjustment to restrictive gender roles. Dr. Devor brought many attendees to their feet when she called for HBIGDA to acknowledge and serve the many kinds of gender-variant people rather than dividing the world into transsexuals and nontranssexuals.

Dr. Devor was followed by Dr. Walter Williams, who spoke about models of pathology, and how they vary with the cultural zeitgeist. He gave an example of a Native American culture in which twins and the mother who bore them were exiled to a “Twin Town,” and an example from Western culture, pointing out that at one time women who pursued an education were considered deviant. He hammered home Dr. Devor’s point that it is time for us to stop looking at gender variance as an illness and celebrate it as a natural form of human difference.

After this plenary, the talk was all about continua and variability; the transgender revolution had finally come home to roost at HBIGDA. There were a few dour faces, which was only to be expected; HBIGDA’s world had just turned upside down. One member suggested that if there is nothing wrong with transsexuals, then the organization should simply disband. In my talk on Saturday, I noted that the change of viewpoint means the organization is more needed than ever before. If HBIGDA concerns itself with the use of medical technology to transform human bodies rather than the perhaps artificial notion of transsexualism, it will reach people, like “heterosexual crossdressers,” some of whom do the same things to their bodies as transsexuals but have heretofore escaped the safety web cast by HBIGDA because they are not “transsexual.” This new way of thinking was

continued on next page

HBIGDA...

apparent at a plenary on intersexuality on Friday; it was clear that the HBIGDA membership has concerns about the surgical reassignment of infants with unusual genitalia. Previously, there is little doubt that most members would have endorsed the prevailing practice of operating on infants to make their genitals "normal."

A logical consequence of the ideological rollover was a realization that data are needed, especially to justify the Standards of Care. Valerie Harvey and Dr. Becky Allison made this explicit at a Saturday plenary in which they noted that those who access medical technology will not tolerate gatekeeping from the professional community unless data exist to justify that gatekeeping. As part of the same plenary, Dr. Sheila Kirk spoke about how she had come to realize that hormonal therapy can be appropriate for those who are not inclined toward genital

surgery. I followed Dr. Kirk, stating baldly that the classical model of transsexualism propels people to a surgery they may neither want nor need; the transgender community has come to realize that while surgery is necessary for many, it is not for all, that there are all degrees of gender variance, and that a one-size-fits-all approach is not only unhelpful but can be damaging.

In contrast to all this talk of variability, Saturday afternoon saw Dr. Stephen Levine presenting the proposed Standards of Care to the assembled members. The Standards do away with the number format of previous versions in favor of a much more understandable descriptive prose style. Unfortunately, they also call for a period of either psychotherapy or real-life test before initiation of hormonal therapy; this is in addition to the 90-day evaluation period now in effect.

Discussion of the proposed Standards was heated. While it was obvious that the Standards Committee had put a lot of work into the document, mem-

bers took exception to various provisions and to the deletion of material from previous versions.

The Standards of Care will now go back to committee, and, after one more revision, will then be taken to the membership for vote.

The conference ended with the installation of Dr. Richard Green as President and the announcement of the results of the recent election. Alice Webb, who was fired from her job last year by then-president Friedemann Pfafflin, was installed as President-Elect, and new Board members were announced; this included two out transfolk, Sheila Kirk and Jude Patton.

The next HBIGDA meeting will be held in two years in London.



GPC October Meeting Program
Dr. Carol Cobb-Nettleton, the therapist who evaluated Leslie Ann Nelson on behalf of her defense team, will discuss the Nelson case.



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Making Sense of It All

Gremlins and Grace

The more I face my gender confusion, the more I begin to understand what gremlins and grace are all about. It seems that all human beings have gremlins of one kind or another, even if they are not fully aware of them, which is often the case, and all human beings, whether consciously or unconsciously, desire grace. Unfortunately, the road to grace is usually paved with gremlins, and road repair is not always easy. But it is not impossible either. In fact, the gremlins themselves may actually become the road.

Gremlins go by various names, such as demons, dark forces, and shadows, but they all point to the same thing: bothersome, intrusive, and even destructive feelings, attitudes, and habits. Gremlins are what I had in mind when I wrote the following poem, called, in this instance, "Demons:"

Demons,
earthquakes of my soul,
throw me off balance
and tumble me into a chasm
of longing and fear,
where falling from pressure
of present and past,
I lunge for release,
till twisted and torn
beyond recognition,
I grasp the living ledge
of hope
and climb upward
once again.

I have had several demons, or what I am now calling "gremlins," in my life. They have all made difficult my search for grace and thus for a life of enjoyment and happiness based on rewarding human relationships and a meaningful and fruitful existence. But I have never given up hope for that happiness and fulfillment, for that state of grace in which I can simply live and more freely give.

Undoubtedly the biggest gremlin in

my life has been my gender gremlin, that intruder who has persistently tried to hide from me the truth about my gender identity. My gender gremlin, like all gremlins, has made me feel bad about myself, lowering my self-esteem and eroding my personal and interpersonal effectiveness. Worst of all, for most of my life I never realized that I even had a gender gremlin. I just thought that the way I felt, with all the confusion and self-deprecation, was simply the way I was meant to be. If nothing else, I simply had secret feelings. The norm seemed to be that my gender gremlin should live and I should die, if not physically, then at least emotionally and spiritually.

What has been so tricky about my gender gremlin has been its ability to hide the truth, even though I have felt its effects. Being confused about my gender identity, I did not always know where I belonged. I lived one way but felt another way and did not even know what was taking place. In my particular case, in order to resolve my gender confusion, I finally had to make a complete change of gender identity (much to my own surprise, I must admit, but especially with great relief). But regardless of the resolution one does finally make, whether as a transvestite who enjoys the identity of the other gender from time to time and thus sees crossdressing as an acceptable part, but not as the totality, of one's personhood, or as in my case, a transsexual who feels enormously compelled to make a permanent change of gender identity, the point is that, if the gender gremlin can instead keep the individual split and confused, the gremlin remains in command through the strategy of divide and conquer.

When the gender gremlin can be recognized and accepted by the person it inhabits, then the inner battle, at least along gender lines, is essentially over. What starts out as a gremlin simply becomes part of one's personal his-

tory. Gremlins fear the truth and the open air of self-awareness. If they can keep us from the truth, keep us in the dark, they can continue to live. But why should a gender gremlin, or any gremlin, for that matter, live at our expense? Are we not entitled to live, too? Is not one's very being — one's true self — the life and grace we each seek?

Recognizing and then accepting one's gender gremlin is basic to making the gremlin visible to oneself. An invisible gremlin is a dangerous, dark force in one's life. Ironically, at least in my case, out of the darkness has come a light which has begun to illuminate my whole existence. Such illumination is, for me, the beginning of the grace I have always been seeking. It is as if the exposed gremlin has become part of the road to my happiness. I am beginning to treasure my gender gremlin for the insight it has afforded me, so long as I am willing to face it and stand up to it.

However, none of this gremlin-facing necessarily makes family, social, and work life any easier. The inner gremlin may be exposed, but now the world begins to project its own fears and inadequacies onto us. The gremlins begin to inhabit family members, people at work, and even friends. The strategy for dealing with those gremlins involves patience, compassion, courage, and all the qualities of grace which our own struggle has bestowed upon us. Maybe grace can grow from grace. A graceful existence may not be recognized by some of the people around us, but does that mean we should usher back into our lives the inner gremlins, those demons and forces of darkness, which can dwarf and even destroy all that we might finally construct in our lives?

I am not saying that outer pain, often in the form of financial difficulty and social rejection, is what I want, but I, for one, can not go back to my former existence of what was in reality

continued next page

Hate Crimes Advocacy Heats Up

by Dana Priesing

The August recess is over, and things are heating up again. Members of the Washinton, D.C., hate crimes coalition (the coalition of civil rights organizations working to enact hate crimes legislation) met today with Dept. of Justice attorneys. The topic of the meeting was the coalition's draft legislation that would broaden the Department of Justice's (DOJ) hate crimes investigatory and prosecutorial jurisdiction. The coalition seeks to broaden DOJ's jurisdiction to reach hate crimes based on bias against actual or perceived gender (construed broadly enough to cover gender variance), sexual orientation and disability, and to remove the current requirement that a victim be engaged in a federally-protected activity. (If you want to understand the current state of the provision at issue, take a look at Title 18, Section 245 of the U.S. Code.)

The participants at today's meeting spent much time discussing the Constitutional bases for expanding DOJ's jurisdiction in the manner described above. We also discussed how recent Supreme Court decisions (particularly *City of Boerne v. Flores*) affect how, in order for the law to be sustained should it be challenged in court, Congress must make its case that (1) there is a problem requiring federal legislation, and (2) the particular federal legislation at issue addresses that problem. Generally, as to the first requirement, the coalition has been making the case that federal legislation is needed because local officials

often can't or won't act when hate crimes occur.

At this point in the discussion the DOJ attorneys noted that they have no information about whether or not local law enforcement officials have failed to act when hate crimes against gender different folk occur. (That's hardly surprising, since the government doesn't monitor such crimes.) I noted, as a quick example, that when Brandon Teena was raped and reported that hate crime to the local Sheriff, the Sheriff called Brandon "it" & refused to help, & Brandon was murdered soon afterward. A perfect example of the need for DOJ jurisdiction, but we need some more.

I promised to supply the DOJ attorneys with more examples — and I feel confident that you folks know of such examples, or know other folk who know of them. ***I need your help.***

Let me restate what I'm looking for:

1. A hate crime based on gender bias occurs, and the victim is gender-different. (Remember: A hate crime is more than an assault or battery. It isn't necessarily a hate crime every time you get attacked. A hate crime is a criminal act in which the victim is "selected" not because he looks like he might have money on him, or looks like he won't fight back, but because the perpetrator has a bias against some group with which he believes the victim is associated.) I'm looking for criminal acts (assault, battery, murder, etc.) where there is evidence of *gender bias* (use of anti-TG epithets: "Are you a man or a

woman?" "What are you?" "Stupid queen!" etc.), *not* sexual orientation bias ("faggot" "dyke"). You get the idea.

2. The gender different victim goes to local law enforcement for help.

3. They refuse to help, because they lack jurisdiction, or resources, or because they are equally biased.

If you know of incidents like this, and you want to help DOJ & the hate crimes coalition help you, write up the incident briefly and send the writeup to me at DPriesing@waonline.com. If you have questions about this, please let me know. (It isn't necessary to use the victim's name if that's a sensitive point. We can just say "John Doe" or "Jane Doe.")

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Making Sense...

a living death, even if the world gives me a difficult time. To persist in the face of financial and social difficulties requires all the inner strength and grace I can develop and maintain. The point is that the gender gremlin, once

seen and faced for what it is, does not usually regain its original position of power and control.

What is at stake in all of this is the true sense of self, that personal grace, without which all else eventually loses value. Not to have oneself is, in my way of looking at things, to have nothing. If a gender gremlin thinks it can

ruin my life, then it had better watch out. Perhaps the gender gremlin will never fully disappear from my life; I will always wonder about it. But I believe I can tame it and make it obey me, make it mine, make it part of my life, make it a source for the grace we all seek on the road to happiness.



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Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Greetings, ghoulfriends! If it's October, that means it's time to look out for things that go bump in the night, or, if you just happen to have a sweet tooth, then climb into your favorite dime store costume and canvas the neighborhood in search of free candy! Yes, girls, it's Halloween (or soon will be by the time you read this!), the unofficial holiday for crossdressers worldwide, and I can't wait to attend a few costume parties in my neck of the woods!

This month I bring you a hodgepodge of stuff that I've uncovered in my travels. In my column from October of last year, I mentioned a catalog of catalogs I got in the mail, consisting of catalogs you can purchase for small amounts of money and which contain everything you could want to fully outfit yourself from head to toe. Well, this year, I got copies of both *World Famous Catalogs* and *Best Catalogs in the World*. If you enjoy mail order shopping, these books are a godsend.

For those of you who didn't read my October 1996 column, these books contain lots of resources in terms of women's clothing, shoes and accessories. To give you a small sampling, new additions to *World Famous* since last year include *Just My Size*, *Just Right* and *J.W. Ramage* for girls size 14 and up, *Calendar Girl* (exotic dancewear, club wear and evening wear), *Ulla Popken* (fashions from Europe), along with familiar names like *Lane Bryant*, *Newport News* and *Frederick's of Hollywood*.

In the lingerie department, new

companies include *Christel's Passion*, *Pleasure Wear*, *Canyon Wear Cottons*, *Xandria's* (specializing in leather) and even *Après Noir*, the company I mentioned in a past column that features lingerie for men. For shoes, there's *Forplay*, *Cinderella of Boston* (for any petites out there, pardon me while I chuckle!) plus *Sexy Shoes*. You'll also find catalogs for jewelry, hosiery, cosmetics and wigs, although that goes against my seventh Commandment of Shopping (Thou shalt not buy wigs thru mail order).

Best Catalogs in the World is quite literally the clone of *World Famous*, offering almost the same sort of catalogs. Most of the catalogs in these books, usually around 300 or so, cost around \$3.00 apiece, none are more than \$5.00 and a few are actually free! Now, how can you beat that? You can pay for these books by either cash, check, money order or credit (Visa or Mastercard) and order by mail, phone or fax. If you wish to get these books, call 561-997-1221. It's a must if you love to shop by mail.

I remember when bust enhancers, like Accents, first came out on the market. They were fairly expensive, with some sets costing around \$125, depending on the size you needed. Now, they've come down in price to more reasonable levels. A company called A-Target Direct offers bust enhancers for a breakthrough price of only \$29.95 plus \$9.95 shipping and handling. Like similar products, they offer a fuller bust size and slip right

into your bra. If you're interested, call A-Target at 1-800-944-3774.

If you're in the market for talons and don't want the usual press-on variety, the good folks at Revlon have something that'll interest you. The company, famous for their excellent line of ColorStay cosmetics now offer for the discriminating woman (or crossdresser), Nail Enhancers. These are nail tips that come in a package with a built in size guide to help you get the proper size for your hands. Revlon pairs this with an odorless acrylic kit so you can get salon type nails at home for a fraction of the cost.

Once you've applied your Revlon nails, you'll want something to put on them for meetings and the like. Well, here's where I go off the beaten path and recommend Jane nail polish by Sassaby. If you've seen Hard Candy, Jane is based on that, featuring 32 colors in four groups: party hearty, knock-out neutrals, wild things, and power pales, with funky names like Hot Blooded, Up All Night, Smashing Pumpkin, Chocoholic, Rhythm and Blue, Grape Expectations, Snowball's Chance and Sugar Binge.

Always willing to experiment with just about anything once, I tried a magenta-like color called Undercurrent and found that it goes on smoothly and wears surprisingly well, better than I expected. While designed primarily for a hip and happening younger crowd, some of these colors, I think, would appeal quite nicely to us, and they cost under three dollars. Well worth a try. Call 1-800-820-JANE to find out where you can find these products.

Well, girls, it's time to call it a day. I hear the siren call of the local five and dime. Time to buy that cheap costume so I can score on some sweets! As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments at

██████████@voicenet.com.

Until next month, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Happy shopping, Sisters!



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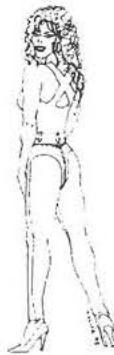
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Tri-Ess Sponsors Holiday At Sea

As most of you know by now, the 1997 HOLIDAY EN FEMME was cancelled due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. In its place we will sponsor the first HOLIDAY AT SEA. The event will be a cooperative effort of the Tri-Ess International Board of Directors and Dignity Cruises.

Those who have saved money and vacation time in anticipation of the Holiday will not be disappointed, for the Holiday at Sea will be in the same affordable price range, and fill about the same amount of time as the Holiday En Femme. The base price is \$329 plus port charges and taxes of \$78.50. Thus \$407.50 is the total cost, since you will have no additional room, entertainment or food charges. We believe you will be experiencing the best of both worlds: The Holiday, known for quality, education and pleasure, plus the Dignity Cruise which represents a dream come true for cross-dressers around the world, the ultimate in femme expression.

The traditional activities of the

Holiday will be scheduled - including the Awards Ceremony which recognizes the Leader Servant, the Chapter of the Year, and Commended Chapters. The Tri-Ess National Board will have its official meeting Saturday morning while the ship is in port at Nassau. When the brief meeting is over, there will be ample time to explore Nassau and Paradise Island, since the ship remains in port until 3:00 A.M. While there will be some serious programming, the emphasis of this Holiday will be on fun.

There will be a few noticeable differences between the Holiday En Femme and the Holiday at Sea. The vending area will be replaced by a spectacular five-story Centrum Lobby lined with boutiques featuring clothing and jewelry. The entertainment will be on a grand scale with beautiful Las Vegas or Broadway stars. Traditional convention food will be replaced with gourmet meals, featuring more options than you can imagine! You can even stay with your diet if you choose to do

so, since the menu offers "heart-smart" and vegetarian selections. The added touch is the waiter who helps each lady with her chair and napkin and addresses her, "Madam."

Other features will include a beauty salon, a casino for those who want to spend a bit more on the cruise, two cinemas if you want to catch up on the latest films, a health club with classes in aerobics, a sky walk for joggers, and a fun-filled excursion to our own private island, CoCoCay, where there will be a delightful picnic. The Conference Center has been reserved for special programs and activities. If you want to start the fun sooner we will have a hotel reserved near the pier for Thursday night. The cost will be \$59 per person which will include the transfer to the ship on Friday.

Cruise lines tend to sell all available space, so IT IS VITAL THAT WE RESPOND QUICKLY. Call Brenda at 800- [REDACTED] for details about your deposit which will guarantee space. Final payment will be due near the time you had planned to pay for the Holiday En Femme. Hurry! We are saving a deck chair for you!



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. Understanding Transsexualism

All of the Background Papers and Community Outreach Bulletins are available for free at the Renaissance web site <www.ren.org>.

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FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

Dr. Lee Etscovitz, Renaissance National Librarian, has scheduled the next meeting of the Library Discussion Group for Wednesday evening, November 5, from 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM at the Woods. Anyone and everyone is welcome. For more information contact Dr. Etscovitz at the office.

New Editor Takes Reigns

Dr. Lee Etscovitz, the Renaissance National Librarian, has been appointed Managing Editor of this publication. Dr. Etscovitz edited the *Renaissance 10th Anniversary History* and has been a Contributing Editor for *News & Views* since February of 1996.

"Since I am also the Executive Director of Renaissance National it made sense to find someone else who could do the day to day writing and editing needed to keep *News & Views* the best newsletter in the community," said Editor-in-Chief Angela Gardner. She continued, "More of my time will be taken up with fund raising, grant application writing, and outreach work

aimed at increasing membership. Lee has the necessary talents to step into the Editor-in-Chief position at some point in the future, and as Managing Editor she will have an opportunity to learn the ropes. I'll be able to devote more time to my Executive Director job and I'm satisfied that she'll do a fine job with *News & Views*."

The first change made necessary by the appointment of Dr. Etscovitz will be the closing of the editorial P.O. Box at the Bensalem Post Office. All letters to the Editor and article ideas should be sent to the National Office (address on page 2) and marked to the attention of the Managing Editor. Dr. Etscovitz

can be reached by email at:

██████████@voicenet.com>.

"I'm sure my editorial style will now be quite the same as Angela's, but I think that I can handle the job and I am happy for this opportunity to do something more to help the community," said Dr. Etscovitz.

Angela Gardner will continue to write her *News & Reminder Beat* column as well as other articles from time to time.

In January, JoAnn Roberts will retire from doing the newsletter layout and that task will be taken on by 1997 Greater Philadelphia Chapter Leader Jessica Brandon.



King Family Disses Gays & Lesbians

Adding to the recent controversies surrounding the Martin Luther King, Jr. family, Alveda Celeste King, niece of Dr. King Jr., today said that her uncle would not support legislation benefiting gay men and lesbians.

"People can legally do what they want in their bedrooms," she said, "but don't expect us and our children to approve of, promote, or elevate sexual preference to civil rights status. What's next, civil rights on the basis of prostitution

and pedophilia?" She went on to compare gay and lesbian civil rights to equal rights for "liars, thieves, and murderers."

The *Washington Blade* reports that Ms. King's comments were made at a rally sponsored by an African American alliance that is working to oppose gay civil rights legislation. Fundamentalist groups such as the Christian Coalition and the Promise Keepers have been building ties to the black community, and heavily promoting their

anti-gay agendas.

Civil rights leaders from the NAACP and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) were quick to denounce the remarks. Members of Martin Luther King's immediate family declined to comment on the controversy. However, in 1994, Coretta Scott King spoke in favor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA).

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Where did *Renaissance* come from?

If you would like to know the history of
The *Renaissance* Education Association, Inc.,
the whole story is in the

Renaissance *10th Anniversary History*

Dr. Lee Etscovitz went through ten years of Renaissance newsletters and extracted a selection of articles which tell the Renaissance story. Dr. Etscovitz added commentary and historical information resulting in a publication that will make you feel you've been a member of Renaissance since the beginning.

On October 19 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
you are invited to attend a book release party for our 10th Anniversary History, at
Giovanni's Room in Center City Philadelphia.

Giovanni's Room is a bookstore located at 12th and Pine Streets. Dr. Etscovitz and founding members of Renaissance will be on hand. If you can't attend and would like to purchase a copy of the *10th Anniversary History* contact the National Office at 610-975-9119. By email: renaissance@ren.org.

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