

THE TRANSSEXUAL VOICE

APRIL 1994

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SURGERY IN BRUXELLES A Practical Guide By Renee H.

Having recently returned from my own trip to Bruxelles, I was struck by how little I was prepared for the "nitty-gritty" of daily life in Belgium. I therefore resolved on the way home to write a complete guide for women going to Bruxelles for SRS. With apologies here is "everything your counselor should have been telling you about Bruxelles in those mind numbing sessions, but didn't".

It is my purpose in this article to catalogue what I perceived as significant and perhaps surprising differences between the US in general and Belgium. In doing this, I fear that it will sound rather \negative. That is not my purpose. Different does emphatically not equal bad, indeed many of the changes noted, while surprising to many, represent rather a large improvement to typical American life, (mass transit comes to mind), the Belgium people were quite friendly and they have a beautiful country, one in which they are justifiably proud.

BACKGROUND

First, a bit about my own perspective. I shall assume throughout this document that you wish to know the least expensive way to do anything. Few of us are well healed enough for cash not to be a concern. All prices given depend upon current exchange rate. My comparison rate is around 30 to 1 (30 Belgian francs [bf] to the dollar). Actual exchange varied from 29.55 to 31.6 to the dollar. You are advised to minimize the amount of currency exchanged at, (or in the immediate vicinity of) airport/train terminals, the rate is usually unfavorable. Remember that some exchanges, including banks, charge a commission on the exchange. Never exchange your money at a place (even banks) where the exchange rate is not displayed, there is probably a good reason why they don't. You will, however, need some local currency just to get to the hotel.

Although I have lived in many parts of the Eastern US, (from Boston to Western N.Y.), I am currently a 14 year resident of the southeastern US and bring that perspective.

I have traveled to and in Europe several times and have a passing familiarity with European ways. I also have a smattering of high school French, sort of "Pidgin French". This helped me in many ways and should you not have any French at all, you can expect a slightly more difficult time.

Before you go, you should know Belgium is a country located between the North Sea and France, (a county once described by "Murphy Brown" as being so rude, she was considered polite). Well it's not quite that bad. If you are from the Northeast US, you will probably

not notice any difference. If you are from the West or South, you will probably think the people a little abrupt. It is no more than the regional difference which exist in the US.

Belgium is officially a bi-lingual country, Flemish and French. Unlike most of the rest of Europe, I found few people who were able to also speak English. (A word about English - Those people who do speak OUR language in THEIR country, speak a much more proper English than is commonly used in America. If one of them helps you, give them and yourself a break, use only English words, not slang and slow down, remember they are translating to their language as you speak. For heaven sake, try to speak in ENGLISH, not some incomprehensible regional accent. If you don't do these things, you will probably find that the person will quickly give up and leave you to your own devices.)

The travel literature always describes Bruxelles as a city "designed for shopping". This is unquestionably true. There are many small to medium shops, each with its' own specialty. What the travel brochures don't say is that virtually everything is about twice the price you would expect to pay in the US. If you can afford to shop in Bruxelles, why are you reading this?

Winter Weather COLD. This should not be a big surprise, given that Belgium is on the North Sea. Again, from the perspective of the subtropic southeastern US, the climate in late November/early December is quite cold. Not that the temperature is that cold, but the humidity is sky high and the wind seldom seems to stop. You should also expect rain for some portion, (or all day) for any given day in any month. If you are from the Southern part of the US, you should feel safe in assuming that you don't own a warm enough coat and bring lots of layers. (The buildings are, however, well heated and you will not be cold in the hospital.)

I was somewhat surprised to learn that the pharmacies in Belgium operate quite differently. I never did determine whether it was just my own lack of language skills or whether ALL DRUGS are prescription only! In any event, you will not find any drug stores in Belgium in which you may browse for what we refer to as "over the counter" medicine (Tylenol isn't even available with a prescription). If you are in the habit of taking a Tylenol or sinus medication, bring a sufficient supply with you. Remember, after you return to your hotel room, pain management is largely in your own hands. (You will probably not be in pain per se, but you will have quite a bit of discomfort and may wish for some simple pain medication at bed time.)

Getting There If you plan on additional traveling in Europe (and it's a good idea, if you have the time and money). Do so before hand, you won't feel like traveling after surgery. (For reference, I was one of the faster people to return to a routine after surgery). Have the good sense to fly into Bruxelles, so that your round trip ticket will allow you to leave from Bruxelles; rather than haven to travel to say Paris first after surgery. Traveling around Europe by rail is fast; reliable and inexpensive. It is generally easy to make reservations, and the trains are always punctual. The usual sign for information in Belgium (and for that matter Europe), is a circle with a lower case "i" in the center. You will usually find an English speaking person at these counters.

Virtually all flights to Europe are overnight. You arrive around seven a.m., having lost six hours to time zones. Your body thinks that it is around one a.m., but the sun is up. In other words, expect to be tired and a bit disoriented. Clearing customs is usually not a problem, (indeed, with the exception of some cold-war Eastern bloc borders, I have never had the same level of difficulty crossing a border as I usually have getting back into the US).

There is an information counter at the baggage claim area (at least American Airlines baggage claim and I believe that all airlines use the same general area). You can procure rail or Channel-crossing tickets there. They can also direct you to the rail terminal located near the baggage area. The train into Bruxelles is fast and inexpensive. If your budget is tight, remember you will likely need a cab to return to the airport. If you choose to take a cab to your hotel, expect to pay around 1500 bf (around \$50.00) to the center of Bruxelles and closes to 1000 bf to the Hotel Derby.

The mass transit in Bruxelles is, (as in most of Europe), fast, clean, economical and efficient. In short, the exact opposite of most American systems. The subway is really the only way to get around Bruxelles. The system sells a variety of entrance tickets, from single trip, all day, 5 trip or 10 trip passes. All 'trips' are considered to last for one hour. This means that when you place your trip ticket into the stamping device, (located at the entrance to the Subway or in the buses/trams), a time is stamped on it; you are now free to travel on any combination of bus, tram or subway for one hour without additional re-stamping. Subway system entrances usually have one manned ticket booth where these tickets are sold. As has been discussed, these people seldom speak English, but with a bit of gesturing, you can usually obtain a ticket (billet), (get a 5 or 10 trip pass, you will probably want to return to downtown later and they don't expire), and a free transportation system map. You most probably can't navigate the system without some maps. You can usually find city maps at a magazine stand within the air/rail terminals. If you plan on exploring Bruxelles, (and you should), you will need both a city map and a transportation map.

* * * * WARNING * * * The system is a known refuge for pick pockets, this writer was victimized and I can report that they are very good at what they do. These are, fortunately, non-violent crimes.

TAKE PRECAUTIONS. DO NOT carry any more items in your billfold/purse that absolutely necessary. If you are not going to drive, leave your drivers license at home; you won't need that social security care in Europe, minimize (eliminate if at all possible), the number of credit cards you bring with you. Don't carry your travelers checks in your billfold. If you value the pictures in your billfold, leave them home for a few weeks. In heavens name, keep your passport separate and secure at all times. Wear a 'fanny pack' for a purse or place your purse inside your coat. You are an immediate target, as you walk or stand in the subway entrances puzzling over your maps!!!

To get to the Hotel Derby from downtown via subway, take any \$1 train (headed to Stockel or Debroux) and get off at the Merode station. There are about four possible exits from which you can leave the Merode station, so directions from there are a bit dicey. Look for a large monument which would go completely across the road, (Avenue de Terveures), if the road were not underground at that point and head

the opposite way. On the left side of the street now, about 3 doors down from Rue des Tongres, you will find the entrance to the Hotel Derby. If you walk down the Avenue de Terveures in the same direction, (away from the monuments) till you get to the Montgomery traffic circle, (or take the 18 train, headed toward Stockel, to the Montgomery stop), and then turn left on Avenue de Broqueville, you will find Dr. Seghers home/office in the second block. (If you are taking the Metro from downtown, you may find it less confusing to take the 18 train to the Charlotte stop and come back about one half block.)

Lets talk about hotels . . . The Europeans have quite a different view of the function of a hotel. They generally consider it a place to sleep and carry out a few necessary functions while you travel. They do not consider a hotel to be a destination in itself, as many Americans have come to expect. It is therefore no surprise that the level of comfort and amenities offered is quite different. Many hotel rooms in Europe do not offer a shower in the room, more don't offer a toilet in the room. There are American chain hotels available in Bruxelles, at over \$100.00 per night! (If you have that kind of budget, I am available for hire as a travel companion/adviser!)

I, (my budget) elected to stay at the Hotel Derby. It is clean, comfortable and by European standards, very nice. That means that it has a toilet, sink and (small) shower in your room. It is within walking distance to Dr. Seghers' office and the hospital. It is also around \$45.00 per night. By American standards, you may find it small, dark and spartan, there is no television, (there is a telephone). The heat (in the winter) is more than adequate, (and adjustable); air conditioning in European hotels is all but unheard of. I did not have occasion to go to any of the alternate hotels on Dr. Seghers' list and can only assume that they are comparable. Dr. Seghers' office is about 7/20 (pre/post) minutes walk away. Furthermore the Clinique Lambert (hospital) is about 13/25 minutes away. It is very convenient to a Metro entrance (subway) and has many stores and restaurants nearby. Michael, the day desk clerk could not be a nicer person, he speaks excellent English and acts as though it were his personal responsibility to look after us. (Indeed, he literally ran out to the street to collect my bags when, upon returning from the hospital, a thoughtless cab driver did not offer assistance.) The Hotel Derby will be happy to store your luggage while you are in the hospital, just ask Michael.

Just up the street from the Derby there is a good selection of 'necessary' stores. A supermarket for bottled water and other foods you wish to procure. (The water is safe in Bruxelles, but being different, there is the odd chance of it giving you diarrhea, at a very inopportune time.) There are also several Patisseries, there are bread, croissants and cake shops.

CLINIQUE LAMBERT . . . We must all consider the fact that the entire price for SRS in Belgium is considerably less than a week's stay in any hospital anywhere in the US. That price would not include any surgery. Given that constraint, the Lambert Hospital is very nice.

Upon entering the hospital (around 2:30 on the day before surgery), you will fill out some paperwork, be given the opportunity to place your valuables in the hospital safe, receive an EKG, a chest X-Ray, have blood drawn and for that ultimate thrill, an enema. The enema can be self administered. The nurses will also drop off some razors. These are for you to 'prep' yourself. This means shave all, the operative word here is 'all', of the area of the surgery site. A wise person will do this in the privacy of their hotel that morning. The facilities for managing this at the hospital are limited. There is no shower available to the patients. You will have access to a sink and toilet in a small room. Plan sponge baths, (if you wish a washcloth, soap and towel, bring them with you). I found that it was possible to shampoo my hair in the small sink; not easy but possible.

The supplies which you were requested to carry with you, (gauze sponges, maxi-pads, hydrogen peroxide), are for your care after leaving the hospital. You may leave them at the hotel while you are in the hospital. (On those maxi-pads, you are strongly advised to procure the new ultra thin maxi-pads, they are much more comfortable.)

I found the food quite edible and occasionally (Sunday) quite good. The first three days post surgery, Dr. Seghers does place you on a very restrictive diet and you will always remember the three giant croutons for breakfast and dinner. This cannot be held against the hospital, they are only carrying out orders. If you are accustomed to eating rather large meals, plan on a three day diet and then bring something to supplement your diet. Breakfast is a very European Continental breakfast, namely a few rolls, butter, jam and tea. Lunch is the main meal each day with supper being a light meal. Whether this is sufficient for your own personal needs is a matter of individual taste. I found it quite sufficient, (after the third day), while I have heard others bitterly complain that the quantity was just too small. You know your own eating habits, plan accordingly.

In as much as the official languages of Belgium do not include English, you may, (or may not) find it spoken in the hospital. There are some nurses who can speak quite good English, but on any given shift there may not be any nurse who speaks English. It would be most helpful to obtain a good English - French dictionary before you leave. This small investment can save you a great deal of difficulty, or a long wait for Dr. Seghers to translate your wishes to the nursing staff. (Sometimes even the translation has difficulties; I managed to get milk with my breakfast after two days, but I still got two sugars with it.)

There is no television in the hospital room. You should therefore plan on bringing your own form of entertainment for the week in the hospital. You can receive a limited selection of AM and FM radio in the hospital and a better selection from the hotel, (at least the Derby). There are a few English language news programs available. If you wish a particular type of music, you may consider tape players. There is a better selection of English language programming on Short Wave. If you are considering the purchase of a radio for this trip then I recommend including Short Wave in your selection criteria.

Remember, you may not draw an English speaking roommate in the hospital and you will have quite a bit of time to kill after you return to your hotel. You could be surprised at just how long a week is to occupy. Cheap 'throw-away' paper-back novels and magazines are

good. (N.B. when throwing them away, please throw them in the direction of Michael at the Derby, he likes English language books and he really turns himself inside out to help us.) There is an English language book store in downtown Bruxelles (W.H. Smith on Avenue Adolph Max Lann; between the De Brouckere and Rogier Metro stations and one block removed from the main shopping district at Rue Reuve). A wide variety of English language books and some magazines can be procured there --- AT MUCH HIGHER PRICES ---. Remember these need not be articles you plan to carry home, indeed plan to eject as much of your load as possible for the trip home. The trip home will be one of the longest days you have ever had and thanks to US customs, you will have to handle your own luggage upon entering the US.

There is no telephone in the hospital room. This seems to be non-negotiable with Dr. Seghers. Apparently he has been stuck with some large long distance bills in the past, so no phone. There is a pay phone in the hallway just outside room 1-3. This will allow you to use your long distance credit card to call home and let everyone know that you are well. No credit card and you can only make collect calls. This phone has no number on it, so no incoming calls are allowed. REMEMBER you cannot get this phone before the morning of the fourth day post-op!!!! If you are a Tuesday operation, you cannot call out until Friday, (Friday operations can call on Monday) NOT BEFORE!! You may happen to hit a roommate who has had her operation a few days earlier and happens to speak English. If you do, she can probably make a call for you, but don't plan on it. Advise the folks back home of the communications black out before you leave. This will help keep their anxiety down for a few days.

About telephone credit cards; as far as I can determine only AT&T and Sprint offer the ability to use it from Europe. MCI is working on it and it is available in some parts of Europe but (as of 12/92) not Belgium. Most other telephone credit cards are quite useless from Europe. If you plan to call home from Europe, check this out rather a long time before you leave. You may encounter quite a delay in switching long distance companies and getting a new card.

The hospital will only supply you with a paper gown for your surgery, after that you will wear whatever you brought (or did not bring) from home. On the fourth day, you will start walking the halls in same. Somewhere in the process of dressing changes and follow up examinations, one of your nightgowns will become soiled and require soaking. This is why you will bring two nightgowns.

Plan on taking a cab back to the hotel. If it is the Derby, it will cost around seven dollars. (If you are staying at the Sheraton, you have so much money, it doesn't matter.) You are not released until around two P.M. If you had a Trachael have, it was probably done that morning. You will be weak and tired just from the effort of getting dressed and packed. Sitting at this point is not a pleasant task, but grin and bear it. At this point, Dr. Seghers will usually clear you to resume your hormones, if you remember to bring them with you.

While we are talking about getting dressed . . . Bruxelles women (not girls) seldom wear slacks of any description. In December 1992, the standard was skirts with hemlines just above the knees. I mention this so that you will know that you won't be in fashion.

Clothes can be tolerated or rather painful. Anything that fits close or restricts the surgery site is very painful to wear, (and remember the maxi-pads and gauze sponges). In other words, it will be next month before pantyhose or tight pants will be a good idea. (They will also be painful and difficult to get on, bending over is difficult.) Wear loose fitting slacks and loose fitting panties. Remember, that whole area, aside from being traumatized, will also be very irritated (from being prepped). You will be able to feel any jarring from walking all the way to your teeth. You will appreciate cushioned jogging shoes for a few days at least. Remember, the irregularities of the great outdoors, (cobblestone sidewalks and driveway entrances) will very firmly remind you that you just had major surgery. Give up on high fashion and go for comfort, you will be leaving this country in a few days, most likely never to see these people again. You will be contending with enough problems, pain and fatigue, without adding to the list.

On the third day after release from the hospital, you finally get your last packing removed. Now it no longer feels like you are trying to sit on an oversized bar-b-que skewer and sitting becomes tolerable. If you wish to improve your sitting ability, and trust me, you do, then invest in a donut. You will probably need to get one of these before you leave the US. The track record of the inflatable donuts does not seem to good, they lead. A foam rubber donut is cumbersome, but will significantly help your long flight home.

About Leaving . . . Most, but not all, flights to the US from Europe are morning flights. This means that you will have to get to the airport fairly early on the day of your departure. When should that day be? This is a very subjective question. It varies by your own physical condition before surgery, how much blood you lost during surgery and your own personal rate of recovery. You would find it exceedingly uncomfortable to try to leave before the third day out of the hospital. You still have packing to place and sitting is very painful. Each day after that you will gain more strength and stamina. I fear that I will not be able to answer the question as it is such an individual answer. Remember, your trip home will require you to be out of bed for at least 10 continuous hours, probably for the first time since surgery; and that's if you live in New York or Boston. People traveling to other locations will have to add to that time. When making your flight reservations, check carefully the lay-over in NY. I got stuck with a six hour one. When sitting is uncomfortable at best and you are too fatigued to stand, a six hour lay-over in Kennedy is excruciating.

Airline regulations, (to say nothing of common sense), dictate that any items brought to the US for others be subjected to scrutiny. You will also find a detailed interest in anything electronic. Anything electronic which you are carrying home should be kept separate or at least available, the airline security personnel will want to inspect it very carefully. The concern is well placed and genuine, this is how the bomb got aboard the Pan AM flight which exploded over Lockerby Scotland.

I sincerely hope that I did not leave anything too important out and that this will minimize your difficulties in Bruxelles. If you discover any omission or simply wish to add to this catalogue, please write me via TS VOICE.

Wishing you the very best of luck and with love;

Hotel Derby
Ave. de Tervueren 24
1040 Bruxelles, Belgium
Phone: 733-7581

Foundation Lambert
Rue Baron Lambert 38
1040 Bruxelles, Belgium
Phone: 739-8585

Reservations at the Derby Hotel are to be made in writing, phone calls to make reservations are not accepted. The will not acknowledge the request for reservations, but it always seems to work. Phone calls made to residents of the hotel seem to generally work well.

Dr. Michel Seghers
Avenue de Broqueville 60
1200 Bruxelles, Belgium
Phone: 770-0108

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
February 28, 1994

Contact: Bet Power
(413) 584-7616

SEXUAL MINORITIES ARCHIVES FORMS, INCLUDES NEW ALEXANDRIA LESBIAN LIBRARY AS A CORE COLLECTION

Northampton, MA. A national Sexual Minorities Archives (SMA) has formed in Northampton, Massachusetts to document and preserve the histories of all sexual minorities including Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gay men, Transsexuals, Transvestites, S/M-Leatherfolk and Fetishists. The archives is housed in the residence of Bet Power, a female-to-male nonoperative transsexual, and has expanded from the holdings of the New Alexandria Lesbian Library (NALL). NALL, a national collection of Lesbian herstory, was founded in Chicago, Illinois on July 12, 1974 and has been housed by Bet Power in Northampton since September, 1979. The Sexual Minorities Archives began to develop in January, 1992, and over the past two years, has expanded in scope as historical materials have been increasingly donated by members of diverse sexual minority communities.

The Sexual Minorities Archives is a living testament to the diverse and interwoven nature of the queer communities and a beacon of hope for the inclusion and unity of all who struggle against discrimination based on sexual identity.

SMA is seeking donations of books, periodicals, subject files, unpublished papers, photographs and all media from all sexual minority communities. NALL will remain a distinct core collection within SMA and continues to actively seek Lesbian contributions. The combined archives includes over 3,000 books, 700 periodical sets and thousands of subject files, art, music, memorabilia and multi-media.

Researchers and community members may visit the Sexual Minorities Archives and NALL by calling or writing for an appointment about a week in advance of a planned visit. For more information or to donate materials, call (413) 584-7616 or write to: Sexual Minorities Archives, PO Box 402, Florence Station, Northampton, MA 01060.

Dear Phoebe;

I am doing some research on transsexuals and I would like it if the readers of the TRANSEXUAL VOICE could tell me about their experiences. Those I would like to hear from are from male-to-female transsexuals who after living as a female, for at least two years, went back to living as a male.

It would be nice if they could answer the following questions:

1. Why did you go back (to living as a male)?
2. How long did you live as a female and at what age did you start?
3. Do you plan to live as a female again?
4. How did you adjust to living as a male again?
5. When you lived as a female did you have a relationship and do you have one now?
6. Did you take hormones and do you take them now?
7. What do you miss about living as a female?
8. How did your relationships with friends change?

It would be helpful if they could write to you and you forward their letters to me. Thank you. Lisa H.

Dear Phoebe;

I suppose you remember me; I am a subscriber of your magazine "TRANSEXUAL VOICE"; until a few days ago under the name of "Renata", and now under the more suitable name "Maria".

Some years ago you published a brief case story I sent you about myself. I want to tell you what I have done in the last two years.

I am now 48 years old; I am married with two children. I have two Degrees, in Architecture and in Psychology. I am the President of the Publishing Firm CASTALIA. And, most of all, I am a genetic male, but I am a female inside. My core gender identity is female; since how many years? A big number! I am a female, or more exactly a male-to-female pre-op person, since more than twenty years now.

In my case story I explained to you how the consciousness of being a female grew up inside myself; after then, such consciousness grew more and more until a point in which I usually consider me a woman most of the time.

I made a typical mistake in 1991. I guessed that becoming a female, I had to change my whole life; but I am linked to

this life by too many bondages - my children, my friends, my professional practice as a Psychoanalyst, my Firm.

After some months of deep depression - a very deep, probably psychotic depression - I realized that I AM THE PERSON THAT I AM; the woman that I am going to be is the same person that I am now. So, I am trying to bring the most of my current life of today into my future life, in which I will be a female; if I will afford SRS.

To do that, I started using my female name MARTA in all and every situation, except the very official ones. At present, 90% of the letters I receive are addressed to my female name. I use this name also in all working situations related to my Firm; Indexes, catalogues, Book Fairs, etc. The Firm CASTALIA is operated now by me as a female.

I can not practice as a Psychoanalyst at present as a female; I have to practice as a male.

In this way, I have reached the goal of spending most of my working day in my true identity.

This is a good path towards femininity in my opinion, considering the many obstacles I have; i.e. if I wasn't married, I would have had SRS at least seven years ago.

I would like to help anyone who might need or want my help. I am a fully registered Psychologist, a member of the Italian Institute of Psychologist, and I am a Psychoanalyst. I have been in practice ten years

If any sister going through this same transition and suffering the big psychological pains comes with such a transition - distress, deep depression, depersonalization, splitting of the unity of the personality - would like to write me, I would be pleased and honored to write her and try to help her.

I send you my best regards.

Dr. Maria Miglietti
Via Principi d'Acaja n. 20
I - 10138 Torino, Italia

FTM
5337 College Ave. #142
Oakland, CA 94618

March 7, 1994

Phoebe Smith
P.O. Box 16314
Atlanta, GA 30321

Dear Phoebe,

In your December, 1993 issue, Dr. Wollman responded to a letter from an FTM named Steve H. Steve's questions were admittedly comprehensive, but Dr. Wollman's reply was less than helpful. All he did was say, in effect, that he would need more space to answer the questions Steve asked. It would have been more useful to Steve and other FTM readers if Dr. Wollman could have cited some reference material that Steve could look up himself, or pointed him in some other direction for information, such as FTM. FTM is a peer support group for female-to-male transvestites and transsexuals. We offer information and networking for women who are exploring their gender identity issues, or who need a safe "place" to explore their male personae, as well as for men who are in the process of transition, or who have completed the change.

FTM was founded by author, activist, public speaker and prolific letter writer Louis G. Sullivan, who worked until his death in March, 1991, to promote greater understanding of female-to-male issues, options, and potentials.

Since December 1986, FTM has been holding get-togethers every three months, and publishing a quarterly newsletter for members. We have an international mailing list of over 500 persons, 130 of whom live within commuting distance of San Francisco. Membership has been steadily growing, and in 1992 we expanded our format to encompass monthly meetings.

The suggested subscription donation for the FTM Newsletter is \$15.00 annually. A full set of back issues is available for 15.00. Professional subscribers are requested to pay \$20.00. International subscriptions in either category are \$5.00 additional to cover higher postage. We also have available for \$10.00 (post-paid) copies of Lou Sullivan's book *Information for the Female-to-Male Cross Dresser and Transsexual*. This book has 123 pages of historical and practical information, with a substantial bibliography.

In addition, we have recently prepared the *FTM Resource Guide*, a 26 page booklet which lists all the resources known to us at press time which would be of interest to FTM-identified individuals. This Guide is available at the nominal cost of \$3.00 and contains a listing of professionals and clinics for gender dysphoria, as well as other groups and publications that you may find helpful or informative. This Guide will be revised and updated each June. The

CALL FOR PAPERS

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

ON

CROSS-DRESSING, SEX, AND GENDER

This is the first call for papers to an International Congress on Cross-Dressing, Gender, and Sex being organized by the Center for Sex Research at California State University, Northridge, California.

The Congress will be held in the San Fernando Valley section of Los Angeles on February 23-26, 1995, and is being sponsored by a number of different organizations in the scholarly and cross-dressing community. Papers are invited on transvestism, transsexualism, and all aspects of non-conforming gender expression. We are soliciting and anticipate wide-ranging viewpoints summarizing and criticizing current research in biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, and historical aspects of gender crossing. Organized sessions are particularly encouraged which will allow widespread discussion of where we have been, where we are going, and what we need to do to come to terms with a variety of gender behaviors.

Interested participants should submit four copies of an abstract of the proposed paper or session. The abstract should be no longer than 500 words. Personal identification of submitter should be on a separate sheet attached to the first copy.

Deadline for abstracts is October 1, 1994.

Send abstracts or requests for information to my private mailing address. Alternative numbers and mailing address will be available when California State University, Northridge reopens after earthquake repairs.

Professor Vern L. Bullough
17434 Mayall Street
Northridge, California 91325
Telephone: 818-885-0869
Facsimile: 818-885-5561


James Green
Director, FTM Group
Editor, *FTM Newsletter*

Best Regards,

second edition will be available in July 1994, and the cost will go up then to \$5.00. I don't anticipate further cost increases until 1997. Readers who wish to obtain any of these materials from us should make checks or money orders payable to FTM at the address above.

I would appreciate it if you could publish this information as a service to your FTM readers and professionals who treat them but who are unaware of the plethora of resources available.

Also, I encourage your readers to watch for the June (Summer) issue of *Chrysalis Quarterly*, published by AEGIS. That issue will be completely by, for, and about FTMs, and guest-edited by Jason Cromwell. It promises be a necessary addition to any gender library.

Dear Doctor Wollman:

After my male-to-female sex reassignment surgery, the surgeon gave me a #21/22 metal double dialator with instructions to eventually switch to one approximately 4 cm. in diameter and 7 inches long. He suggested obtaining it at an adult bookstore. However, there are no such stores in my area and the medical supply houses don't carry anything like that. Would you happen to know of a reliable mail order store which carries such a thing? Also, where can I obtain a vibrator-- the drugstores here only carry massage units. Thanks V. L.

Dear V. L.

I know of no stores or mail order catalogs that have what you require.

(If anyone has any information that will help V.L., please write to her & TSV.)

Dear Donna:

Thank you for your comments on "Gender Unique" published in a recent issue of Transsexual Voice. I have also received your video, a letter, and some photographs. I thank you for these, as they have been very helpful in allowing me to understand you better.

Due to time constraints, I am unable to reply to articles on a personal basis i.e. outside the "Transsexual Voice: . I did note a telex from Dr. Wollman which says that, although this is an interesting subject, there are few if any funds available to subsidize this type of work.

At this point in time, all I can do is to wish you continuing success as you dialogue with others across the country. If you wish to communicate with me, please feel free to do so through the "Transsexual Voice: and I will respond as expeditiously as possible.

Janice B. Dorn, M.D., Ph.D.

If you have any questions you would like answered by Dr. Wollman or Dr. Dorn, please address your letter to them & TSV.

I AM A ULTRA-FEMININE WHITE PRE-OP TRANSSEXUAL WOMAN, AGE 28, 135 LBS, 5'7" (38-29-39) LIVE FULL-TIME, ON HORMONES SINCE JULY 92. I SMOKE AND DRINK; LOOKING FOR SUBMISSIVE, SENSITIVE, MASCULINE, AND CONFIDENT SINGLE, WHITE MALE THAT'S AN ASSERTIVE WOMAN FOR A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP - NO STRINGS ATTACHED.

I'M SINCERE, LOVING, UNINHIBITED, OPEN-MINDED, GOAL ORIENTED, EDUCATED AND FIT - YOU BE TOO.

FINANCIALLY SECURED A PLUS TO HELP WITH MY MEDICAL CONDITION GENEROUSLY. SERIOUS ONLY. PHONE AND PHOTO. NO FATS, FEMININE MALES, TV'S, AGGRESSIVE MALES - NO GAMES. JIORANNA ALEXIS TOWERS, P. O. BOX 285, ROSELLE, N. J. 07203.

HI; I'M JOYCE. I'M INTERESTED IN BEING MARRIED AND SETTLING DOWN FOR FAMILY LIFE. I'M 5'10", WITH BROWN EYES, LONG BROWN HAIR, AGE 30. I'M VERY ATTRACTIVE AND I HAVE A PRETTY FIGURE. MY PROFESSION IS ACCOUNTING. I LIKE NATURE, MOUNTAINS, FLOWERS, MOVIES, ARTS, QUIET TIMES, TRAVEL AND OTHER THINGS. I'M INTERESTED IN A SINCERE GENTLEMAN. MY SURGICAL PROCEDURES ARE ALL COMPLETE. IF YOU THINK YOU MAY BE THE ONE, PLEASE WRITE ME WITH YOUR PHONE NUMBER (IF YOU WISH). ALL SINCERE REPLIES ANSWERS. I'M FOR REAL. JOYCE K., 125 WEST MEADOW RD., WEST TOWNSEND, MA. 01474.

MALE-TO-FEMALE PRE-OP TRANSSEXUAL WOULD LIKE TO MEET FEMALE-TO-MALE POST-OP TRANSSEXUAL FOR A NICE ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP. I'M 5'7", 140 LBS, AND YOUNG LOOKING FOR MY AGE OF 41 WITH BEAUTIFUL BROWN HAIR. MAIL TO KAREN, P. O. BOX 9084, PENSACOLA, FLA. 32513-9084.

BEAUTIFUL, FULL-FIGURED CROSSDRESSER/TV (BLOND HAIR, BLUE EYES, VERY TALL) DESIRES A HANDSOME, ROMANTIC, DEEPLY CARING AND HONEST MAN TO GIVE MY QUESTIONS ANSWERS AND TO FILL MY HEART WITH UNDYING LOVE! I NEED SOMEONE UNAFRAID TO TRY NEW EXPERIENCES AND BELIEVES LOVE CAN CONQUER ALL AND IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SEX. ANY REPLIES ANSWERED. S.C., 2930 YOSEMITE DRIVE, OWENSBORO, KY. 42301.

PERSONAL ADS FOR TRANSSEXUALS ARE FREE. IF YOU WANT YOUR AD DELETED, YOU MUST NOTIFY IN WRITING THE EDITOR OF TS VOICE. PLEASE USE CAUTION WHEN RESPONDING TO PERSONALS ADDS. THE EDITOR/PUBLISHER (PHOEBE SMITH) OF THE TS VOICE ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY ACTS OR OCCURRENCES THAT RESULTS FROM ANY AD THAT APPEARS IN THE TS VOICE. YOU ARE TRAVELING AT YOUR OWN RISK!

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When Problems

Are Ignored,

They Only

Get

Larger.

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