

Cross-Port InnerView

P.O. Box 12701, Cincinnati, OH 45212

The next meeting is June 21 at 8:00

A New View

by Cathy

We had thirty-two people attend the May Cross-Port meeting. Some old friends were back, Ginger made it in from Lexington for the first time in about six months, and Claudia is back from Florida for the summer.

A lot of new people this month: two Mikes, one from Covington and one from Detroit came to their first meeting. New female faces seen for the first time in public: Sheila, Tina and Jackie. For Sheila and Tina it was also their first meeting. All three said they really enjoyed the experience and that we can expect to see them at future meetings.

We raffled off a make-up kit with make-up as part of our IFGE fund raising, and Jeaninne from Indiana came up the winner in that one. Speaking of the fund raiser, thanks to the generosity of all of our sisters, we managed to raise \$250.00 to contribute to the IFGE trust fund. When compared to the \$150.00 we raised last year, I'm really proud of all of us.

One thing I did hear at the May meeting was that several people said that they had a better time at the May meeting than they had ever had before. I *always* have a good time, so I'm not sure what the exact chemistry was, but let's try to keep it up.

With summer upon us, expect the meetings to be a little smaller. June, July and August are traditionally those months with the lightest attendance, between 22 and 32 people attending.

Last month I wrote that Christopher's has a new policy of charging a two dollar cover charge which

would affect those of us who attended the monthly meetings. When we all arrived this past month we discovered that policy was no longer in force. What we did find, however, was that there was a new policy in it's place. This new policy is that every Thursday night is now Country & Western Music Night. The juke box is unplugged on Thursdays and only C & W music is played over the sound system.

Now, if enough people don't like country music, we do have the option of moving the meeting to a Tuesday or a Wednesday night. I think that for now we should just wait a month or two and see how long this new policy stays in effect before making a decision like that. Since Cross-Port members make up most of Christopher's business the third Thursday of every month, maybe we can get a musical reprieve a part of those nights when we have our meetings.

For those of you who missed the Be All in Pittsburgh, you missed a really great time! Cross-Port was represented by Laurie and myself, Linda and her wife Connie, Claudia, Belinda, Candy Lee, Billie, and Valerie (who seems to finally be back up north from Alabama). Dana was there from IXE, as was Heather from Indianapolis. Total attendance was in the neighborhood of two hundred cross-dressers and significant others. Laurie and I got to see again a lot of friends we had made when in San Francisco last April.

We took a check for IFGE to the convention for Linda to present during the luncheon on Saturday. Much to our consternation, when that luncheon finally rolled around, Laurie and I were unable to locate the check! Linda ended up giving IFGE an IOU for \$250.00. Talk about getting razed, I was ready to shrink up and disappear. The good news, however, was that while driving home Laurie

found the check wrapped up inside of her embroidery instructions.

The other major contribution to the convention from a Cross-Port member was a wonderful song Candy Lee wrote and performed during the "Strut Your Stuff" show on Saturday night. She has generously given the copyright to that song to the Be All convention. With luck we can get her to perform it for the rest of us at the June meeting (it's just a bit country so it should fit right in).

I also listened while one girl (not from Cross-Port) explained to another girl from the Chicago area that Cross-Port meetings are more fun than the meetings of any other group she's ever attended. Maybe it's because our business meetings are almost always less than ten minutes long.

The 1991 Be All will be in Akron next summer, so keep your calendars open.

With calendars in mind, there is a convention in Kansas City in November (will bring copies of the flyer to the next meeting), one in L.A. following that (no flyers yet). It almost seems like there's going to be a cross-dressing convention every week. To that end, Cross-Port has been invited to attend a meeting in August in Atlanta with groups from all over the South to discuss a convention there next year. How do we get included as a Southern group you ask? Because of our member sisters in Kentucky my dear, we have a lot of Mason in our Mason-Dixon Line.

The mails sure have been busy this month. We received ten requests for information about Cross-Port. That is more than we have ever received in one month since I have been editor of the *InnerView*. The funny thing was, half of them said they had been referred to us by the Sacramento Gender Association. The Sacramento Gender Association? Why five referrals from them in one month?

The answer to that was provided me by my step-father (who saves these things for me) in a Dear Abby advice column printed in the May 9th *Cincinnati Enquirer*. Abby was responding to a woman whose new boyfriend told her he was a cross-dresser. Abby told her there were a lot of women who were happily married to cross-dressers and advised her to write (you guessed it) SGA for more information on the subject, and published

their mailing address. Apparently a lot of people wrote that worthy organization, and they seem to have done very well in referring people to the group nearest them. Thanks to both them and Abby for providing the contact information.

Cross-Port Finances

Here is the current status of the Cross-Port Treasury:

Beginning Balance as of the May Newsletter was: \$1637.54

April Expenses:

Phone:	\$32.00
Envelopes & Stamps:	\$34.50
Printing May Newsletter:	\$37.98
Miscellaneous Supplies:	\$16.57
Books for Cross-Port Library:	\$47.70
IFGE Donation:	\$250.00
Bank Charges:	<u>\$ 2.10</u>

Total Expenses: \$440.85

May Incomes:

Meeting Collection:	\$64.00
Sale of Tapestries & Raffle:	\$98.00
Subscriptions, Donations, Etc.:	<u>\$127.00</u>
Total Income:	<u>\$289.00</u>

Ending Balance as of June 13: \$1485.69

Note: We donated the entire proceeds from the month of May to IFGE. Income stated is greater than the amount donated due to monies which were received the first two weeks of June.

We also mailed ten intro packets this month.

Discrimination

an Editorial

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Discrimination, whenever it is encountered, is a difficult pill to swallow. It is a sickness of society which is propagated by good intentions. I have never heard of a single case of discrimination in which the person doing the discriminating did not believe that what they were doing was right and just.

Hitler certainly felt he was doing the world a favor when he took action against the Jewish people. The KKK feels it is helping society with it's injustices against Blacks and other non-white races. The people of Kokomo Indiana felt they were protecting themselves from Ryan White and Buschman Conveyors and Hill's Department Stores felt they doing what was best for their companies when they discriminated against me.

Fortunately, the moral conscience of our over all society is beginning to see discrimination for what it really is; that is, a warped set of self values and self esteem on the part of the person who is doing the discriminating.

The worst kind of discrimination to handle is discrimination by those who themselves are trying to fight discrimination.

It has been no secret that here in Cincinnati there are several different Lesbian support groups, almost all of which hold their meeting at Crazy Ladies Book Store. As gay (transsexual) women, several of our women have tried with no success, to attend these regular support meetings. They have been told that they are not welcome there and that they should go back to living as men. This discrimination comes from women who are fighting to gain acceptance by "normal" society for the right to live and function without discrimination, yet they deny acceptance to transsexuals the right to live and function normally in the gay world.

The real icing on the cake came when I was asked to stop attending a Gay and Lesbian support group which was sponsored by Cincinnati Mental Health Services. The two counselors Randy and Connie, met with me on a night prior to what would have been my fourth meeting.

I was first told that they were not prepared to deal with transsexual issues in that support group. I assured them I was not there to deal with transsexual issues (which are issues of gender not sexuality) but with the aspects of suddenly finding myself to be a gay woman. Now they changed their strategy and said that they were concerned for my well being. They felt I should have weekly counseling. I again assured them I would take their concerns to my counselor whom I see monthly but that I felt I needed a support group as well. They offered no suggestions or help but insisted that I would not be permitted to attend further meetings even though they admitted that I had not been

disruptive or injurious to the group. They simply did not want me to attend.

I might have expected discrimination from the Crazy Ladies' groups but I did not expect it from two people who were supposed to be professionals. Admittedly, being a gay transsexual woman is a little different then being a regular gay woman but professionals should not balk at the chance to gain more knowledge and experience.

I have no doubt that they believed what they did was right and that they were not discriminating. I am a little different than their standard gay clients, and it was precisely those kinds of differences Hitler wished to eradicate from the world. The rest of the world felt he was wrong. The Kokomo school system was not set up or prepared for a boy with AIDS but the courts felt they were wrong. Buschman Conveyor felt it was able to fire me without compensation on the grounds that differences cause problems. The Unemployment Bureau felt they were wrong.

I have many gay and lesbian friends. They all seem to accept me as a woman and as a gay woman. They are also people who seem to accept their own sexuality and seem comfortable with being gay or lesbian. They also think Randy and Connie were wrong.

It is hard to believe that this kind of people will be able to offer much help to gays and lesbians whose real problems stem from the fact that they are different when they themselves admitted that they are not prepared to deal with people who are different.

Maybe I expect too much. I certainly expected more from Cincinnati Mental Health Services.

A BE-ALL SCRAPBOOK

by Belinda

It's Tuesday afternoon, as in the Moody Blues song, and the feeling has returned to the big toes on both of my feet. I have just returned from the Be-All-You-Want-to-be weekend in Pittsburgh. My feet suffered just a little from four straight days on heels. The little indentations on my earlobes, from clip-on earrings, have also disappeared. While I have vowed that I will convert to pierced ears, I will stay on high heels.

Where to start, to chronicle the glorious weekend? How about a description of the hotel lobby, which was actually a wide open mall in an atrium setting, with plants, a waterfall, and tables under canopies from both the bar and the restaurant. It was impossible to check in for the weekend without walking the length of this mall at least twice. I did it in black shorts, suspenders, and a zipped-down performance wear top, teetering with apprehension on my low heels. Whether or not this was an actual reality, I imagined all the eyes of the wool-suited corporate types on me as I walked here and there to get all signed in. A matronly looking woman wearing glasses on a chain (who turned out to be a hotel staffer) said "My Lord, just look at those legs! Just beautiful!" My nervousness evaporated like a fog.

I arrived Thursday afternoon and was to meet up with Cathy and Laurie and Candy Lee from our group along with Claudia and Dana from IXE. After a welcome seminar, all of us ladies boarded school buses to trek to downtown Pittsburgh and climb aboard a riverboat for a dinner cruise.

For those of you unfamiliar with Pittsburgh, the city busted out of its status as a smoke-bound, rust belt sloth years ago. While on the first leg of riverboat tour, parapetted townhouses on the river bluffs, plus spanking new art deco architecture pleased the eye from every direction. We were all graciously and enthusiastically received by the riverboat staff. Such dignified treatment would continue on throughout the weekend.

Friday I awakened early to attend a ballroom dance session taught by my father. Actually, my father spells his last name differently, but this was a neat coincidence anyway. As many of you know, I have extensive dance experience but kept quiet about this fact while enjoying the class. Still it became obvious to the instructor that I knew what I was doing, and he kept using me for foxtrot and swing demonstrations.

Candy Lee found me after the dance lesson and excitedly told me about the fashion show scheduled for lunch. "You won't believe the gorgeous clothes you get to model," she said. Gloria, from the Lavender and Lace Boutique had set up a nifty little shop in one of the hotel suites, and she was providing clothes for the show.

Eve from Chicago organized all the models. Word got out, or maybe I just admitted to Gloria that I adore spandex. She gave me a drop dead

Zebra minidress to wear, along with a Body Glove top and pants aerobics outfit, also a powder-blue T-shirt dress. Candy Sue wore, at one point, a stunning bright green evening gown of satin and chiffon, which she was able to take home with her at a reasonable price.

Just when I was about to enter the luncheon in the zebra dress and 5" heels, Linda appeared from around a corner. As in previous years, she brought her whole family along, and they would enjoy the pool and the nearby Pittsburgh sights while she frolicked at the conference. All the vendors present for the Be-All kept booths near the dining room entrance. They included Wigs by Rachel, Pretty Nails by Terri, and the Just For Me Boutique which specializes in making custom clothes for us.

The night before on the riverboat Kay Gould took me by the arm and introduced me to Jim Bridges. She swore that I should do everything to get into one of his workshops, as he would enlighten me to all sorts of new makeup tricks. Cathy and I attended this workshop and we both agreed it was extremely helpful. Just a sample of the advice from this master, who served as the Rolling Stones makeup man from 1972 to 1984: put on all eye makeup first so that you can clear up the fallout which inevitably occurs, also do not put foundation on your neck (shave close instead -- he recommended using baby oil and shaving inside the hot shower). While teaching us all about shadows and foundation Jim kept the atmosphere lively with his anecdotes about experiences such as performing stunts for Barbara Stanwyck during the Big Valley filmings. They would put him in a dress and wig and topple him off Conestoga wagons or horses.

Along with my stunning new makeup I threw caution to the wind and became a blonde, as I've always wanted to do but never tried because I felt sure my coloring was all wrong. In his shop Jim had an ash blonde wig that was long and straight. For some reason that particular shade works with my fair coloring and when I saw the results in the mirror I was hooked. I may never go back to being a brunette!

An all male chorus entitled the Renaissance Group sang for us after Friday's dinner. By the way all the dinners consisted of health conscious fare, turkey with stuffing, chicken with sauce, poached fish and the like. The chorus sang love songs such as "Begin the Beguine" and a few classic

selections. At breakfast the next day we all kidded around that it would have been very funny if the group had sung The Lumberjack Song by Monty Python. That certainly would have broken up the classy atmosphere, which was the best thing about the conference.

Fast forward to Saturday, which consisted of an entire day of seminars. I had signed up for the Transsexual seminars and enjoyed discussions with Sister Mary Elizabeth and Christina Young about some highly charged topics such as telling family and friends (about your situation) and maintaining good professional relations with your employer through the transition. Sisters from all over the northeast and Chicago offered their input and made themselves available for in-between conversations. Many of the girls from D.C., in particular, were friendly to me.

Saturday night we all wowed to the Strut your Stuff talent show. Candy Lee composed the theme song to the event which she sang and played on guitar. Wendy Parker accompanied her and several other acts on the piano. Wendy turned out to be quite an amazing lady. She organized the talent show and in between numbers kept everyone doubled over at her brand of gender-related humor. I enjoyed the impressions, given in historical contexts, for example if Paul Lynde had taken Betsy Ross' place and designed the flag. She mimed holding the flag as if it was an afghan and wailed "Do you think it's too busy?" For the talent show itself, the acts consisted of diverse numbers - one lady from Virginia played an expert flute while another from West Virginia sang and played guitar. Of course there were the lip sync performances and our own Valerie Johnson came from nowhere to perform a Taylor Dayne number.

Space prohibits me from rambling through a tour-de-force about this event, and I expect to bore many of you in Crossport and elsewhere with all the details about it for many months to come. Yvonne Cook had tried to take me along to a Be-All conference way back in June 1987, just after I came out and joined Cross-Port and she was there when I made it for the first time this year. Every night after the festivities concluded we would invade the Expressions lounge, a typical hotel bistro with loud music and absorb stares, questions, and a few well-placed whistles during our time at the convention. While I drove home I replayed all the events of the weekend and basked in the glow of all the support and strength I found through all the seminars and related conversations and smiled

at the barrage of compliments I heard. I will see you there (in Akron, I think) next year!

An Open Invitation

from the Crystal Club

Dear Ladies:

Thanks to your kindness, we have been receiving your newsletter each month. It's nice to keep up with what's happening in our neighboring city a couple of hours drive away!

We've noticed that some of the Cross-Port members are expressing interest in a different sort of meeting. Some ladies would like to get together on Saturday when there is more time to get ready. Some would like to have a more private setting. Some would like to have speakers and presentations.

We'd like to invite members of Cross-Port to the Crystal Club meetings in Columbus. We meet the 4th Saturday evening of each month in a motel conference room. While we don't have a speaker every meeting, we do sometimes have them, and we are planning to have more speakers this year. We also rent an adjacent room so that ladies who prefer not to dress at home will have a place to change clothes. The motel has very reasonable rates (about \$30.00) and if there is much interest, we can probably work out a discount with the management. Sometimes, after the meeting, some of the ladies will go out to a local gay bar, where we've always been made to feel welcome and are treated with the greatest respect and courtesy.

Since we do rent a motel room and provide munchies and soft drinks (BYOB if you want something stronger) we do charge a \$15.00 meeting fee, or \$20.00 for a couple. We also must screen people before they come, but if Heather, Cathy, Linda or Jennifer of Cross-Port will vouch for you, that's good enough for us. We have given a map showing our location to these four Cross-Port leaders, but please let us know you are coming so we can have enough food. Alternatively, you can phone us directly and we will screen you.

Of course, members of Cross-Port are welcome to join the Crystal Club as well. There is a \$3.00 discount for those who pre-pay their meeting fees. Many of our members belong to other clubs as well

and attend out-of-town meetings frequently. (I hope to reciprocate soon, although the logistics of a Thursday night meeting over an hour's drive away are kind of tricky.)

Please understand that our meetings are for cross-dressers and transsexuals, and their significant others. Persons attending should be completely dressed as the gender they are presenting (i.e. as a man or woman, not as a mixture). We keep the meeting location and the identities of our attendees confidential, and we ask that you do likewise. Wives/S.O.'s do come, so please dress and behave in a lady-like manner. (We're a fairly conservative group and we dress accordingly.)

You can write to us at P.O. Box 287, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-0287. Our phone number is (614) 777-0648.

Thanks very much. We're looking forward to meeting you!

-- Mary Ann

Build your own resource library.

BODYSHOCK: The Truth about Changing Sex by Liz Hodgkinson - \$18.00

GENDER NETWORKER newsletter (two 1988 issues) by Rupert Raj - \$6.66

In Search of Eve: Transsexual Rites of Passage by Anne Bolin - \$18.00

Standards of Care - Harry Benjamin Int'l Gender Dys. Assoc - \$5.00

The Uninvited Dilemma: A Question of Gender by Kim Stuart - \$15.00

T.U.D. Research Supplement - \$15.00

If you are interested in any of these books write GENDER CONSULTANTS, Box 1224, Station A, Toronto, Ontario,

Big Screen T.V.

by Tommie-Sue Volin

Do you have frog-legs; webs between your thighs because they don't make pantyhose tall enough for you? I've tried a couple of solutions, hoping to feel like a princess instead of a frog.

First I tried wearing "high-high" stockings instead of pantyhose. They always worked out more like "knee-highs", with the tops showing if I wore skirts above knee length.

A couple of months ago, I came across a brand of pantyhose called "Extra". Apparently they come in "queen's" size only. The size tag on the ones I've gotten say: Fat Fanny 5X, 5'6" & over, hips 65"-75". I'm 6'1" and 170 pounds. I am under weight according to the charts, but the pantyhose fit. I could be even taller and they would still fit. I feel more like a princess and I haven't had a pair of my "Extras" run yet.

The only store I've yet found these pantyhose is Value City. They come in several shades of beige and cost about \$1.50. If the pantyhose fit, wear them.

Publication Notice

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InnerView is a monthly publication of Cross-Port for its members and friends. Subscription dues are \$18.00 per year payable in January of each year. It is our goal to support the TV, TS and Gay communities and in return we need your support.

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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, trans-sexuals and their family and friends.

Well I'm back from the "Be All" weekend in Pittsburgh, and I must say that it was a super good time.

I came up with the whole family this year, like I have for the past three "Be All Weekends". They did their thing, and I did mine. It's funny, because there is always someone who finds out I have my family with me, and they always ask if my family knows I dress. Can they really be this dumb?

As usual, there were many wives and girl friends in attendance. I got to meet many new friends, and renew friendships with many I had met on previous outings.

I think my favorite line I heard was when Belinda said, "This is great. Why hasn't anyone told me how great these weekends are? Next year if my boss won't give me time off, I'll just quit."

At the luncheon on Saturday, I had the privilege to present IFGE with Crosssport's check for \$ 250. Well lets just say an IOU, since we couldn't find the check. At that time, I announced that IFGE has more than \$ 2000 in the trust fund, and challenged other groups and individuals to contribute. After the luncheon was over, Yvonne Cook took me aside and said that some people just handed Merissa some contributions. They totaled more than \$ 27,000. I almost died. It was then, that I realized I should go home and close my business and start a TV church ministry.

They had a great lounge in the hotel. It was a younger crowd with loud music. Most of the older ladies stayed away, but I just loved it. It's not nearly as easy to do out reach when no one wants to be seen talking to the "Fag". But as the night got late, a few got the nerve to speak to me. Soon, I had made friends with about ten of them, and they liked me so much, they took me out to breakfast. The next night, many of the same people returned to learn more about what makes us tick.

I ran into Nancy Coyle. She was one of the first crossdressers I had ever met, back in 1981. We were both in Tri-Ess as a member of the Lambda Delta Chapter, based in Louisville. She now

lives in Kansas City, and is a founding mother of CAF. (Crossdressers and Friends) It was really good to see her.

At the luncheon on Saturday, the speaker was Dr. George Brown. Some of you old timers may remember when he use to come to our group each month. He was based in Dayton Ohio so he didn't have far to come. Crosssport was his first case study, and he has written about us in many of the papers which have since been published. For the past three years, he has been with the Boulton and Park Society in San Antonio, Texas. He has become one of the true professionals helping our community.

I also ran into an old friend named Melanie from the Paradise Club. She tells me she's in charge of getting the hotel for the Be All next year. It looks like it will be in Akron, Ohio. I hope to see even more of Crosssport present next year.

Wendy Parker tells me a crossdressing holiday is in the works for the Los Angeles area in May of next year. I'll let you know all the details as soon as they are out.

CAF of Kansas City, now has its brochures out on the Fall Harvest Weekend & The Moon Shadow Ball, to be held Nov. 1-4. The total cost of the weekend is only \$100, and this includes everything but your room. If you would like more information, contact CAF, P.O. Box 4092, Overland Park, KS. 66204.

I attended the IFGE summer board meeting while at the BE All. I have been asked to be Chairwoman of the Program Committee. This means I would have the responsibility of choosing the site for the convention, and overseeing its operation and any other major program IFGE would institute. This is the job Robin Esch has given up since she has resigned from the Board of Directors.

The Tapestry is running about 6 weeks behind, but rest-a-sured, it is coming soon. We have just hired another full time employee to work on the Tapestry, so this will not happen again.