



Renaissance

News & views

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Vol. 12, No. 2 • February 1998 • \$5.00

Fighting a Cyberspace Blockade

TO: Potential Plaintiffs (*Which includes Renaissance—Editor*)

FROM: Ann Beeson, Staff Attorney
American Civil Liberties Union, National Legal
Department, 125 Broad Street, New York, NY
10004, 212-549-2601 (tel) 212-549-2651 (fax),
beeson@aclu.org (email)

DATE: January 9, 1998

RE: Litigation to Challenge the Mandatory Use
of Blocking Software at Libraries in Loudoun
County, Virginia

Thank you very much for expressing an interest in serving as a plaintiff in our potential intervention in a case challenging the mandatory use of blocking software at libraries in Loudoun County, Virginia. The following memorandum provides more information about the commitment required to be a plaintiff.

BACKGROUND

Late last year, the Board of Trustees of the Library of Loudoun County, Virginia passed a policy entitled, "Policy on Internet Sexual Harassment," which requires Internet filtering software to be installed on all Internet access terminals in the libraries.

The policy was passed despite the vigorous objections of the ACLU and other civil libertarians, local library patrons, and many teachers and parents in Loudoun County. The policy does not allow either adults or minors to access the Internet at the library without the blocking software under any circumstances.

The libraries implemented the policy by installing a blocking program called, "X-Stop," which is produced by a company called Log-On Data Corporation. Several experts have conducted searches in order to determine what sites are actually blocked by X-Stop.

They have determined that X-Stop blocks access to a wide variety of sites that contain valuable information for adults and minors. For example, X-Stop blocks access to information about gay and lesbian issues and literature (especially sites targeted to gay youth), AIDS

and HIV-related speech, safer sex information, art sites with classic nudes, and a variety of other sites with no sexually explicit content that are caught within the crude technology of X-Stop's blocking devices.

In December, in a case called "Mainstream Loudoun v. Board of Trustees of the Loudoun County Public Library," a group of local library patrons filed suit to challenge the use of the filters. The ACLU is planning to intervene in the case in order to represent web content providers who are being blocked by X-Stop.

We believe it is important that the First Amendment interests of both web speakers and library patrons are represented in the case, because they may be somewhat different. (For example, the Mainstream Loudoun plaintiffs have said that they would approve of an Internet policy that required minors to get parental permission before accessing the Internet.

Some of our clients, such as those who provide safer sex information on the Web, may want to be able to communicate their information to teenagers even if their parents do not consent.) The lawyer for the Loudoun County plaintiffs is aware of our planned intervention, and we will be working closely with him once we intervene in the suit.

The case asserts that the mandatory use of X-Stop in the library violates the First Amendment rights of library patrons and Internet speakers who wish to communicate constitutionally protected information. In *Reno v. ACLU*, the case which struck down the Communications Decency Act as unconstitutional, the Supreme Court granted the Internet the same high level of First Amendment protection granted to books and other printed material.

The Court also held that the Constitution prevents the government from reducing adults to viewing only online content that is fit for children. It would be unconstitutional for a public library to remove from the shelves books

continued on page 6

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 GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open at 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, PO 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-[redacted] or Dorothy at 215-[redacted] (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>.

Renaissance News & Views

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Phone: 610-975-9119

WWW - <http://www.ren.org>

On AOL keyword: Renaissance

\$5.00 per issue, \$36 per year (12 issues). Previous year back issues are available for \$2 per copy plus \$0.52 postage and handling: Send check or M.O. to the above address, attention: Back Issues.

Editor-in-Chief - Angela Gardner

Managing Editor - Lee Etscovitz

Contributing Editors -

Dina Amberle Jessica Brandon

Lee Etscovitz JoAnn Roberts

Layout & Design - Treetop Press

Business Manager - Jessica Brandon

Distribution - Emily Sheldon

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 invite 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.

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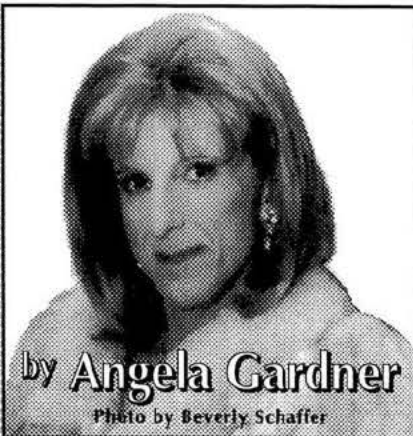
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Local Calendar

March

- | | |
|----|--|
| 4 | Ren. Library Discussion Group - Wayne, Pa. |
| 7 | Ren. LSV - Harrisburg |
| 7 | NJ Support - Trenton |
| 14 | Ren. Lehigh Valley |
| 14 | Ren. Delaware - Wilmington |
| 21 | Ren. GPC - Wayne, Pa. |
| 28 | MOTG - Red Bank, NJ |

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

Photo by Beverly Schaffer

I'm so excited, and I just can't hide it! Oh girl, we're gonna have a Spring Ball.

A gigantic part of crossing the gender border, for me and a lot of our crowd, is having the fun of getting all dolled up and attending an **event**. Going to a meeting or hanging out at a club or bar is OK, and just going out to dinner in public is fun, but it doesn't have the extra thrill of finding a special gown, perhaps getting your nails done in a salon, getting a new do, digging out that ridiculous little clutch that only holds a lipstick and cab fare, and going to a ball.

April 4th is the night, and the day, since it's Renaissance Education Day at the GPC meeting site. You can dress all day. First as a serious business woman as you attend informative seminars that will help you improve your femme image, and then in all your glittering splendor as you feed your soul with the glamour of a fun evening at the Parkridge Hotel (site of the 10th Anniversary Party). The daytime seminars feature programs on fashion, shopping and cosmetics. What more could a girl need? How about electrolysis, a program on SRS and in-depth information on just what transgender is anyway? It's all going on during the day on April fourth at the GPC meeting site. Presenters include **JoAnn Roberts**, **Dr. Sheila Kirk**, and **Jessica Brandon**. There are eight different presentations that should supply something for everyone.

The evening begins at 7 p.m. with cocktails in the upper lobby area at

the Parkridge, which is only five minutes from the GPC meeting site. After the day of seminars, there will be a suite available at the hotel (starting around 4:30 PM) for those who wish to change for the evening. If you want to use the changing facilities, make sure you check the box on the registration form included with this issue. Dinner is at eight with dancing to follow.

The whole day and night costs \$80. If you want to attend the daytime only that's \$45, and the Spring Ball alone is \$50. Tell your friends.

Everyone's excited about The Spring Ball and the seminars, 'cause this event is just the start. Next year we're gonna party in 1999 with the first Renaissance convention. If you have ever attended a three day gender event, you know how much fun they can be. This year it's only one day, but next year Education Day and The Spring Ball will be just one day of the three day event. (Got any ideas for a name? Send your ideas for the convention name to the National Office. How about *Renaissance Be More Closer Together—Run For The Border '99?* Nah.)

So, start shopping for a gown and meet us at the Spring Ball.

We've Got The Resources

Back to the serious stuff. JoAnn Roberts, out of the goodness of her heart... and the fact that she's too darn busy, has donated her **TG Resource Guide** to Renaissance. What's that mean? Well, JoAnn's company, CDS, used to produce a com-

prehensive guide to resources for the transgender community. It started out as *Who's Who in the TG Community* and then expanded to include over four hundred resources for girls like us. Everything from breast forms to attorneys is included in the listings. CDS made this useful volume commercially available.

The good news is, now when you join Renaissance you'll get a copy of the *Resource Guide* for free as part of your member benefits. (This means *you* if you're already a member.) The catch? We've gotta get the darn thing printed. In order to print the book we're going to charge service providers to be listed. This means that we need to assemble a marketing and production team. If you have sales experience, please let me know (a call to the National Office is all it takes). We have to contact each of those four hundred or more listings and pitch the idea to them.

If you have desktop publishing experience, let me know. We need someone to lay out the book so we can have it printed. A project of this size should keep us busy for a while, but we're going to do our darndest to have the guide in members' hands by mid-year. This will be an on-going project that will be updated and distributed every year. To enhance revenue, we will sell the guide to non-members. At some point we may put a searchable guide on our website which you can access with your member number. So, if you have the skills we need, please contact me ASAP so we can get the ball rolling. Now back to the entertainment.

And... That's The Fake News

Girls! I gotta tell ya, it's only January and I got my Christmas present for 1998. **Norm MacDonald**, the unfunny anchor of *Weekend Update*, AKA "The Fake News," on that NBC chestnut *Saturday Night Live*, has been relieved of that position. Say hallelujah! They say that the "suits" (slang for network executives) don't have a clue when it comes to

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talent, but it seems that one of them, NBC honcho **Dan Ohlmeyer**, know's bad comedy when he see's it. On a Late Show appearance recently, Mr. MacDonald told a supportive Dave Letterman (and I thought Dave, at least, knew comedy) that Ohlmeyer fired him from the anchor spot cause he thought Norm "wasn't funny." It's a miracle! A network exec with a brain. Right on Ohlmeyer! Not funny? MacDonald exceeded the requirements for being not funny. He was actually offensive... at least to the transgender community.

Over the past year or so, old MacDonald made several bad jokes about transgendered people, the most offensive of which was a comment that everyone involved in the story about an FtM man who was murdered, including the murdered man, should be shot. That's right Norm, if it's too hard for your pea brain to figure out... just shoot 'em. This type of sensitivity on Norm's part won NBC plenty of attention from community activists. You'd think after putting up with an attack from wild-eyed TG activists that Normie would play nice. You would be thinking wrong.

This idiot went on to make a couple more (at least) disparaging remarks about various members of the transgender spectrum. And, like Ohlmeyer said, all of this was unfunny. I mean, you could watch the *Weekend Update* segment all the way through and not get a chuckle. I've gotten more entertainment from watching squirrels. The squirrel is a noble rodent with at least 50 more intelligence points than the erstwhile anchor. Norm, on the other hand, seems to be a complete moron. On the *Late Show* appearance, Dave told Norm that he was no quisling. They made a big deal of how Norm didn't know what that was. (Hey, look it up. I'm a busy Diva with paragraphs to write.) The point is, I don't think Mr.

MacDonald did have a clue about the meaning of "quisling."

Unfortunately, he's still on *Saturday Night Live*. At least when he appears in skits he doesn't have any chance to throw in any stupid adlibs. He's gotta stick to the script and do stuff like his Bob Dole impression, which isn't that bad, but we probably won't see much of it this season. If you'd like to see less of Norm, or you just want to congratulate NBC on doing the right thing, hop over to the NBC website and drop them a note. And don't worry about Norm. Even if they kick him completely off the show, he'll still be able to make a living. The world's full of morons just like him who seem to find his unfunny humor entertaining. But then again, there's always somebody who enjoys anything.

All Greek To Me

Did ya hear about the Greek TS and the deputy district attorney? Now that sounds like a sitcom idea to me. Giorgos Sakellaropoulos is the DA in question, and it was his political misfortune to fall in love with Jenny Hiloudaki, a former prostitute and transsexual. When they found out about Jenny, the Greek High Court disbarred Mr. S. (Who's got time to keep typing the whole thing? Giorgo, shorten that name, babe.) Now I ask you, what's wrong with having a TS mistress? How's that gonna affect your work?

The real irony here is the fact that Ms. Hiloudaki is his mistress. It seems Greeks don't get upset about extramarital affairs. They don't even mind extramarital affairs with other men. (It's where they came up with the term "Greek Love.") No, what's got the High Court's wigs in a twist is the nature of the lover. Jenny had SRS in 1990 and has been a fixture in the Greek media speaking about transsexuality and prostitution. That was just a bit too much for the Court. They thought it showed he had a deficient "social character." I wonder what the judges do in chambers, if ya

know what I mean?

I'd love to know how Giorgos and Jenny first met. I have searched the Net for a pic of the lovely Jenny (there is a B&W shot in the clipping sent by reader Peter M.) but I haven't come up with anything. Give your search engine a try, 'cause she's worth looking at, and you'll know what Mr. S. saw in her.

The Greek public is a bit more forgiving that the Court. In a phone poll conducted by a television station in Athens, 82% of the 20,000 respondents said it was wrong to fire Sakellaropoulos. Maybe the fellas on the bench are jealous. In any event, Jenny, stop fooling around with married men. (I bet he told her he'd divorce his wife.) And Mr. S., what are ya gonna do now? Out of work with a pregnant wife (yeah, it get's worse) and a mistress to support. Not a good place to be. Mr. S. says he's thinking about taking the case to the European Court of Human Rights. Well, in the meantime there's probably a lot of work available defending the rights of the TS prostitutes in Athens. That should pay the bills for a while. Good luck young lovers. And Mrs. S., one word: d-i-v-o-r-c-e.

Foxy Lady

(To the tune of "A Place For Us.") There's a show for us, a lovely show for us... OK, enough of that. It's embarrassing when a TG columnist goes wrong. *Ask Harriet* is a new sitcom on the Fox Network that features a man who regularly wears women's clothing to make a living. And guess what, he's not a Greek prostitute.

The plot is as follows: Macho sportswriter loses job. He can't get work 'cause all the editors in town hate him. His best friend from the paper suggests that he write the advice column, since the last woman who did it passed away. He likes the idea and submits a sample column, thinking that if he gets the job he'll write at home and fax it in. The woman editor loves the column,

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wants to see the writer in person. Our hero is a former love of the editor's, and he's talked into giving it a shot in order to get the big salary (which he needs) and to "show her." One thing leads to another, as comedy often does, and he starts spending a lot of time in heels.

Anthony Tyler Quinn plays the sports writer, Jack Cody. He used to star in "Boy Meets World." Now it's man meets dress. And I gotta tell ya, he doesn't look that bad. Jack's femme character is called Sylvia Coco. Who's Harriet? That's the name every writer who has done the advice column has used. In order to become Harriet, Jack has to be Sylvia. Sylvia's taste in ladies' apparel runs to the overtly sexy. She keeps her skirts short and her bust large.

The jokes are pretty much what you might expect, and the writers have done their best to make sure that, as a man, Jack Cody is muy macho. We get to see the macho (just short of a creep) guy have to go against his natural inclinations and act like a woman. It's even funnier if Sylvia forgets herself and let's some of Jack slip out. One good example of that was Sylvia speaking to a crowd of professional women and reverting to the Jack mode to flirt with a woman in the audience. The punch line—the woman flirts back.

Of course, in order to enjoy the

crossdressing hijinks, some suspension of disbelief is necessary. Just like watching professional wrestling, where it helps if you really believe it's possible for a 280 pound man to jump onto another man from the top of the ropes without causing him severe medical problems. So it helps here if you forget all the lessons about crossdressing that you have learned over the years as you enjoy *Ask Harriet*.. I believe it's possible for a fella to call his best friend, ask him to bring an outfit to the janitor's closet at their office building, rush to the closet, change, and get to the sports complex for a date with the publisher. Sure. And how come nobody has the slightest clue that Sylvia is Jack? Actually, that's not true. There's a homeless guy who panhandles outside the office building who let's Sylvia know that he know's what's up.

And then, Sylvia seems to know a lot more about female impersonation, including how to produce a fairly femme voice, than a macho sports-writer should. Who's doing this girl's makeup and hair? Could Jack Cody have a little secret? Guess we'll have to see more episodes before we get the answer to that.

Jack's co-conspirator in all this is his buddy, the restaurant critic. (I'll bet he doesn't look bad in a dress. If I know writers like I think I do, I bet he shows up in drag before the season's out.) He convinces Jack to try the drag job bit, and he seems to do most of the shopping. When Jack needs to become Sylvia, he calls his

pal, who shows up with a new outfit. One of the jokes is that he can't get cash back for returns, so Jack has an increasing credit at the dress shop.

So kids, aside from these little totally unbelievable details, *Ask Harriet* is a fun show that might actually do some exploration of the territory between the genders. Let's keep our fingers crossed. Catch it on Fox Thursday nights at 8:30 Eastern. And Sylvia, darling, two things honey. One, never let 'em shoot you in profile. The jaw hon. it's not a feminine sight. Two, watch the calf muscles, doll. Try to keep 'em relaxed. They're not bad legs but ya don't want to have em' looking like lady bike racer's. Please, lady bike racers, don't send me letters.

Check Out Dem Bathin' Beauties

This is February and this is the Swimsuit Edition. I'm happy to say that the honored tradition has continued as you'll see on pages 16 and 17. (That's a hot tub I'm sitting on. Hard to tell. My loyal photog, Randi Thomas, labored under adverse conditions to get that shot. Talk about the right stuff. It was 32 degrees out there. I froze my breastforms off) To my surprise, my swimsuit shot is the biggest in the layout. Well, I guess it pays to have friends in the production department. Thanks, Jess.

That's it for this month, my little protoplasmic bio forms. Stay warm, and don't take any plastic shoes. See ya at The Spring Ball. Big kiss!



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Cyberspace...

that contain graphic safer sex information, simply because the library disapproved of the content.

It is equally unconstitutional for the library to block access to controversial material on the Internet. The blocking software, like the CDA, prevents adults and minors from accessing and communicating constitutionally protected information.

FILING THE INTERVENTION

Before we make a final decision to intervene in the case, we must first have a committed group of plaintiffs. We would like to make a final decision and to file the papers within the next two weeks. Because of the time constraints, we urge you to consider carefully the information we have provided and to try to obtain approval by next Friday, January 16, 1998 for you or your organization to participate as a plaintiff.

We hope that the following information will assist you in reaching a final decision about whether you can participate in the suit. If you agree to participate, we will provide you with a formal retainer agreement that will discuss the terms of our legal representation in more detail.

The ACLU National Office and the ACLU of Virginia will jointly file the intervention and will serve as counsel for all of the intervening plaintiffs. We will ask the court for an injunction to prevent Loudoun County and the library from using blocking software because it violates the First Amendment rights of Internet speakers and library patrons. (Our intervention will seek injunctive relief only, and will not include an action for damages.)

PLAINTIFFS

We are putting together a coalition of Internet speakers whose information is blocked by X-Stop to serve as plaintiffs in the case. We expect to include speakers with web sites offering information about safer sex and

AIDS-related issues, gay and lesbian literature, banned book and censorship-related sites, and arts-related sites. The Loudoun County policy limits the ability of speakers all over the world to communicate information to Loudoun County residents over the Internet. Thus, the plaintiffs will include web sites operated from several different states.

LENDING YOUR NAME

Your primary commitment to participating as a plaintiff is a commitment to lend your name to the lawsuit. By lending your name as an Internet speaker who communicates valuable information that is blocked by X-Stop, you will help us convince the Court that this kind of online censorship is just as unconstitutional as removing books from the library on the basis of their controversial content.

TIME COMMITMENT

The commitment to be a plaintiff is also a time commitment - plaintiffs need to be available to provide information for the lawsuit. If you are an organization, you will probably want to designate a few people to serve as contacts for purposes of the suit.

The litigation may be quickly resolved, or may take years to complete. Regardless of the duration of the case, you will probably spend no more than three to five days providing information for the lawsuit.

The time commitment may be shorter or longer depending on whether a trial becomes necessary. Initially, before we file the lawsuit, we need you to provide us with general information about your web site, the material that is blocked, and why you believe it is important for you to be able to communicate this information to all web users, including patrons of the Loudoun County library.

After the lawsuit is filed, we may ask you for additional information as it becomes necessary for various phases of the case. Most of this information can be provided to us by regular mail, e-mail, or phone, so in per-

son visits will not be necessary. As part of discovery in the case, the defendants may request answers to interrogatories (sets of written questions) or may request to depose you (reserve a time to ask questions orally). If this happens, it is unlikely to take more than a day or two of your time.

Finally, if the case goes to trial, we may need you to testify in court. This, too, is unlikely to require more than two days of your time.

COSTS AND FEES

No financial contribution is required for participation in the lawsuit. We will pay the costs and fees involved in bringing the suit.

If we win the suit, we may apply to the court for reimbursement of attorneys fees and costs. If the court ultimately requires the defendants to pay fees and costs, the money will go to the legal organizations rather than to the plaintiffs.

RISKS

There are very few foreseeable risks to participating in the lawsuit. You will receive some publicity from your participation in the lawsuit, and may receive calls from the press.

(This can be good or bad, depending upon your perspective.)

Some press articles may try to label the plaintiffs as "smut-protectors," but of course we will fight that label with reference to the very legitimate information that the plaintiffs provide.

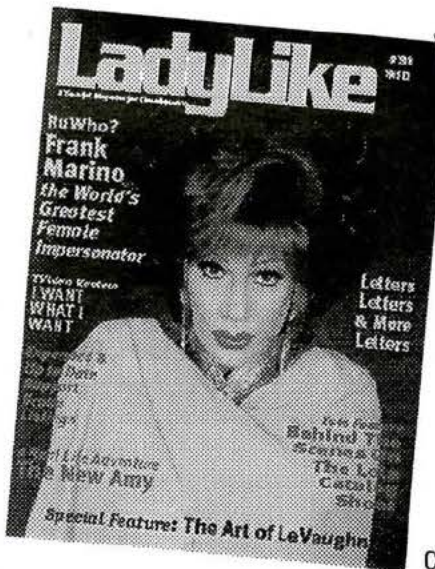
Finally, there is always the possibility that a plaintiff could be personally fined by a court for some specific act or omission made in the case without the knowledge or advice of counsel; we mention this risk for the sake of thoroughness, but it is unlikely that you would actually encounter this problem.

Thanks again for your interest in serving as a plaintiff in this important case to protect free speech rights in cyberspace. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions about the lawsuit.



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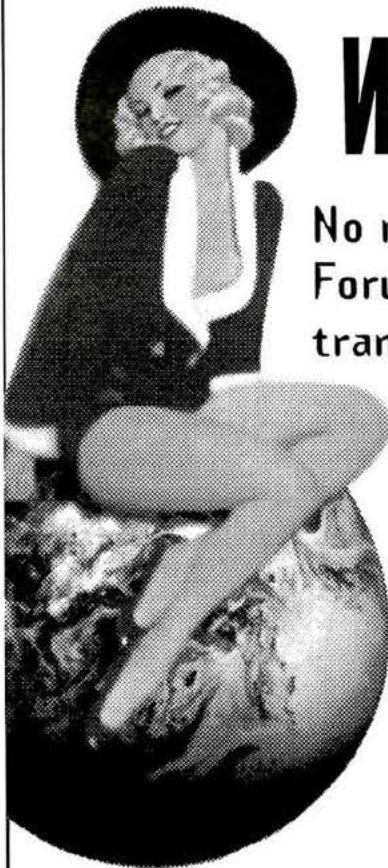
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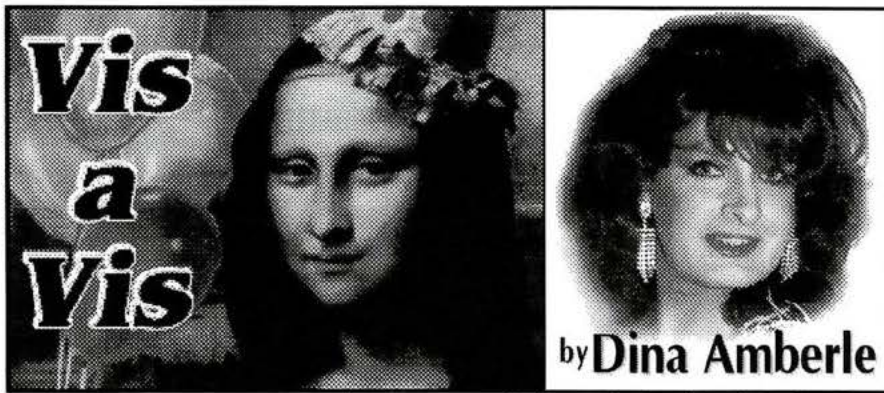
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Man's quest to set meaningless records continues unabated. As I write this in mid-January, we are in the midst of several attempts to circle the globe in hot air balloons. Hot air ballooning is a great spectacle to behold, as the majestic balloons fill and silently lift off the earth for a romantic glide along the currents of the winds.

But this modern day quest to circumnavigate our sphere bears little resemblance to Phineas Fogg and his straw basket dangling beneath a canvas bag of heated air. The present day contestants are riding in climate controlled capsules, with space-age balloons that cost a small fortune and sail at altitudes of 20,000-30,000 feet.

Oddly enough, with all the technology brought to bear on this quest, they are being stymied by a combination of their own twisted electronics and that oldest of old-fashioned impediments: the wind. It's a belly laugh, if you think about it. And what will be proven if someone manages to get one of these floating condos to circle the earth? A record and a place in history...right next to the first person to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Good grief.

But it's still fairly early in this new year, so perhaps I should set out on my own hare-brained scheme to set a meaningless record. I think I've got a shot at the "Most wear out of a pair of Sheer Support pantyhose without a Run." The trick is in not laundering them, because that only weakens the space age fabric that will propel me into immortality. Okay, that seems a little un-hygienic.

Maybe I could shoot for "The longest streak of wearing one false

eyelash crookeder than the other." Heck, I already have four or five years headstart working on that soon-to-be-famous record. But wait, even better: "The most consecutive fabulously interesting newsletter columns about transvestite support groups." Oh, yeah, that's the one for me. In fact, let me get started on it right now...

CROSS-STRESSING

Jane Ellen Fairfax, the National Chairperson of Tri-Ess, wrote an interesting article that appeared in several group newsletters recently. It was titled, "Keep Away, Sister! You'll Get Me Read!" Jane Ellen gives her eyewitness account of a very attractive crossdresser named Carolyn who asked the organizers of the Holiday En Femme to "keep the group away from me, they'll get me read!" Why an attractive crossdresser who is afraid to be seen with other crossdressers would attend a convention of them is a question that no rational person could surmise.

Jane Ellen then delved into a topic that she feels is hampering the growth and development of novice crossdressers, namely, the adversion some of the experienced girls feel about being in the company of less-accomplished crossdressers. It has come to her attention that some "old guard" types are actually suggesting that novice crossdressers be excluded from outings because they will get the group read.

Aside from the mean-spiritedness of that kind of thinking, Jane Ellen also believes it is self-deluding to chase after the grail of "passing," particularly in group activities, but also in

solo excursions. Buoyed by wishful thinking, most crossdressers convince themselves they pass better than they do. When a group of them goes out in public, little defects magnify one another, and the whole group is usually read.

The real victims of this thinking would be the new crossdressers who come to our support groups for, well, support and camaraderie. If they are shunned because they don't meet the experienced members' standard for appearance, they can be hurt emotionally and withdraw from the groups we established to help each other. I myself have never heard of this type of exclusionary practice, either in practice or by suggestion. If Jane Ellen is correct that some ladies are taking that position towards their newer sisters, it's abominable on a personal level and destructive on a community level.

And I agree wholeheartedly with her statement that a group of crossdressers can never hope to "pass." That is the height of self-delusion. Like Jane Ellen, I question the entire "passing" syndrome as hopeless and counter-productive to enjoying oneself as a unique individual. Jane Ellen concludes her article with an anecdote that occurred while out as a man with a colleague. Carolyn, the supposedly passable doll, strolled past with "supreme confidence" inside a hotel lounge. Another man nearby also saw Carolyn and exclaimed, "Well, would you look at that! It's a man!"

A GREAT WAY TO SPEND THREE MINUTES

One of my favorite Beatles songs is, "Sexy Sadie," on the White Album. The song, ostensibly about an egotistical sexpot, was actually written by John Lennon with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in mind. John, the cynical idealist, became disenchanted with the Maharishi's act during the Beatles' extended visit to the Yogi's compound in India and wrote the song as a jibe at the holy man.

He admitted to copping out with the title and lyrics, but you can easily replace "Sexy Sadie" with "Maharishi,"

and the song takes on a whole different meaning. But the musical composition of the song is what attracted me first and still does to this day. John's piano is the dominant instrument in the song and gives it the musical hook that makes it so memorable.

But under the piano, Paul McCartney's heavy bass line provides a rhythmic counterpoint. And Paul, never content to play a simple pedestrian bass pattern, throws in some hooks of his own that put some meat on the bones of this simple song. George Harrison's rhythm guitar lines are buried in the background but slash to the fore in the escalation of the choruses, stealing some of the piano's thunder beneath the vocals and actually becomes the lead instrument in the song's plaintive finale.

Ringo Starr lays down one of his best drumming tracks on "Sadie:" nothing flashy, but giving the song an additional shot of adrenalin with some interestingly timed off-beat hi-hat shots throughout. Besides John's biting lead vocal, Paul, George and John also combine on the harmonies to underline the song's message. It's a great song lasting only three minutes and fifteen seconds, but there is much to listen for. It's also a great example of the band playing together even as the whole Beatles' experience was winding down and falling apart.

In July of 1969, a year after the song was recorded, the Beatles were pretty well finished with each other, playing out the string with the "Let It Be" and "Abbey Road" albums. But ere at least were the Beatles, laying down all the separately great pieces in a whole that transcends the sum of the parts. "Sexy Sadie" is only one of my favorite examples of a perfectly constructed piece of art, but you can choose your own favorite song, film, painting, etc., and make the same case.

Crossdressing, too, is a work of art requiring a combination of elements, from all the disparate makeup items to hair selection and clothing choices that help us to make a single presentation of ourselves as we would like to

be. To appreciate your own work, or to enjoy the work of others, it's fun to pick out the individual pieces which, when fitted together, create a package as pleasing as the Beatles' "Sexy Sadie." "Sexy Sadie, how did you know the world was waiting just for you?" Put on your stuff, and take a walk outside. Maybe you'll find out if it's true.

COVER STORIES

The "Transgenderist" newsletter of the TGIC group in Albany, New York carried an article titled, "What's So Great About Makeup?" in the December issue. The piece was written by Evan Lawrence, a female-to male transgenderist. Evan relates some memories of his mother, who used all the makeup and foundation garment artifices common to women in the 1950's and '60's.

Although most male crossdressers secretly adore all those unnatural conventions to create the illusion of "ideal" femininity, the litany of the sundry notions and undergarments commonly worn on a daily basis did seem somewhat surreal. As a child of the '60's, Evan said he rebelled against all of those artificial enhancements growing up as a young woman.

Now, as an F-t-M transgender person, he continues to question to what extent he wishes to conform to "male stereotypes." He states, "I don't see that trading one set of stereotypes for another is an improvement. I think that as TS's, TG's and TV's, we have a special opportunity, maybe even a responsibility, to study society's expectations before we embrace them."

He mentions that the same mindset that made him reject girdles for women also makes him reject neckties for men. Likewise, his refusal to wear high heels as a woman also gives him pause about wearing men's jackets on 90 degree days. "I'm not trying to dampen anyone's fun at vamping once in a while, but I have to think that anyone, straight or trans, who is afraid to be seen without something that screams 'I am a man' or 'I am a woman' is dealing with serious insecurities."

Evan embraces the concept of the "third gender," as outlined by some TG activists, both men and women, who forsake artificially enhancing their appearance to blend in with gender norms. He recognizes the risks inherent in this line of thinking by saying, "Whether society will accept us without artifice is another issue, but I hold that we need to concentrate on creating our personae just as we are, rather than trying to conform to some downright damaging expectations."

Although it comes from a more radical approach to gender than Jane Ellen Fairfax's comments about the myth of "passing," they both are simply asking us to consider that we are individuals, and the expression of self is more healthy than bending out of shape to conform to artificial and arbitrary constructs of gender.

MY KIND OF HETEROSEXUAL CROSSDRESSERS, CHICAGO HAS

The Chi Chapter Tribune, published by the Tri-Ess sorority in Chicago, Illinois, had a series of articles dealing with a proposal before the membership to "open" the group to all comers in direct conflict with the Tri-Ess charter. Tri-Ess has a "restrictive" membership policy, in that it allows full membership only to heterosexual crossdressers, with a separate lesser membership class for transsexuals, or gay and bisexual crossdressers.

This policy has been a hot button for many people in the TG community, some of them belonging to Tri-Ess sororities in various cities. Most Tri-Ess members are fiercely devoted to the concept of an organization exclusively for heterosexual crossdressers, with the allowance of other TG persons in the "Friends of Tri-Ess" membership class.

The Chi Chapter is one of the largest Tri-Ess sororities. The proposal to open the membership policy was forwarded by their Vice-President, Miranda Stevens, who feels the policy

continued on page 14



Gender Reflections

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

Gender-Questioning Youth

Last month I wrote about the feelings of guilt and shame and the concomitant behavior of secretiveness which I have found is pervasive in the early years of transgenders. There is currently a movement to remove the diagnosis of Gender Identity Disorder (GID) as applied to children from the diagnostic manual of mental disorders. As I understand the motivation of the supporters of this movement, it is to prevent the inhumane treatment of these children—aversive techniques (electroshock therapy), behavioral conditioning approaches (rewards and punishments), and hospitalization—in order to extinguish transgender identity.

There is, however, little said by this movement about these children's real need for therapeutic support to deal with their guilt and shame surrounding their gender identity issues. It is this emotional response to a baffling

condition that merits treatment. There is much that children have to accomplish in their formative years. They need to perfect physical skills, acquire a tremendous amount of information, develop relationships within and outside the family, learn to cope with authority, and develop judgment which will allow for increasing autonomy. When guilt and shame pervade the developing child's psyche, and secretiveness inhibits his ability to express himself, psychic energy is diminished and the accomplishment of all tasks is made more difficult.

These children are suffering. Not only are they upset by their gender dysphoria but also their productivity, competence, judgment and maturity are affected, further contributing to the cycle of guilt and shame. Anyone interested in the welfare of children, transgendered or not, should be will-

ing to consider that, given the current inability of society to nurture and admire these young people, psychotherapy may be an ameliorating factor in helping such youth develop to the best of their potential.

Interestingly, most cross-gender children display fewer cross-identified behaviors over time. By late adolescence, 3/4 of such boys, even without the intervention of therapy, no longer demonstrate the symptoms of GID. However, their psychological adjustment is not known. We do know, however, that children who are discriminated against, do poorly in school, and have a history of unfulfilling peer relationships, are vulnerable as adults to developing low self-esteem and a host of neurotic symptoms.

Instead of opposing the diagnosis of GID and therapy for gender-questioning youth, wouldn't it be more humane to prescribe treatment for the psychic consequences of this condition? Some believe that GID should be removed from the manual of mental disorders and relabeled as a physical condition. That possibility should receive serious consideration in view of our society's negative view of mental illness, but it does not address the need for psychotherapy for real psychological problems.



Renaissance Leadership Conference

At its November Board of Directors Meeting, Renaissance National introduced its new strategic development plan, Operation Renaissance. The plan is the culmination of several months of committee work which involved analyzing the challenges, needs, and responsibilities of Renaissance in terms of where the organization is today and where it wants to be as it moves forward into its second exciting decade of development.

The emphasis of the plan as a whole is upon six main strategies and seventy supporting tactics, all of which aim to support the overall

membership, especially in terms of the chapters and affiliates which, in effect, constitute the basis for each individual member's contact with Renaissance as an organization.

One of the first new initiatives is the establishment of the RTA Annual Leadership Conference for officers of the chapters and affiliates. (Keep in mind that the initials "RTA" now refer to our new name: Renaissance Transgender Association.) The inaugural conference will be held on Saturday, February 21, 1998 at Renaissance National Headquarters in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

This day-long event will deal with

a variety of topics and issues, such as organizational planning, membership development, outreach programs, revenue development, and the overall relationship between the National Board and the individual chapters and affiliates. Concerns and suggestions of individual members of Renaissance can be made known at this conference through chapter and affiliate representatives.

Through this conference, the goal is to strengthen Renaissance as the organization's second decade has begun, and to be a driving force in the transgendered community at the start of the new millennium.



The Spring Ball Is Back!

by **Angela Gardner**

A while back, so long ago that I can't even remember exactly when, Renaissance decided to have a party. It was to be a chance for everyone to wear their best dress and highest heels, an opportunity to get all gussied up. It was going to be a chance to wear the prom dress you never wore in high school, or the coming out gown that you wanted to wear for your debutante party while you went to some lucky girl's coming out party as a young man. We called the event The Spring Ball, and at the time we had visions of having it become an annual event. It didn't, but this year we decided to try it again.

This year The Spring Ball will be held at the Parkridge Hotel at Valley Forge. We used the Parkridge for the 2nd Congress on Sex and Gender, and the staff and facilities were all excellent. The festivities for the evening begin with cocktails at seven (cash bar), enhanced with light hors d'oeuvres. At eight we will all sweep

grandly into the ballroom for a delightful dinner featuring our choice of Prime Rib or Chicken Piccata. Vegetarians can substitute a vegetable lasagna. Desert will take the form of a sinful triple layer chocolate cake. To aid the digestion of this sumptuous feast, dinner will be accompanied by classical music performed by two young ladies on the violin and cello.

After dinner the danceable music will commence, and we'll dance till we have to take our pumps off. Then we may all retreat to the hotel's bar, Mad Anthony's, for a nightcap.

To put on the truly glamorous and glittering event we'd all love to attend, the ticket price will be \$50 per person. The Ball is the capping event of a day of Renaissance activities. Seminars of interest to the members will be presented at the Greater Philadelphia meeting site during the day. The daytime program will cost \$45 per person. If you wish to attend both the daytime activities and the Ball you can do both for \$80. A suite

will be available at the Parkridge Hotel for those wishing to change from their seminar suits to their evening finery.

A reminder: this year we can take Visa or Master Card as well as checks, money orders, or old fashioned cash. Look for the flyer in this issue and get your reservation in early. Breaking with a long standing Renaissance tradition, this time we will send tickets to those who are attending just the Spring Ball. Those attending both the daytime workshops and the Ball will pick up their tickets when they register in the morning.

Once again the National Board has visions of this event becoming an annual activity for Renaissance. At this time plans call for this one day event to expand into a transgender weekend event for 1999. Come join us for the day and help make this year a success, while you wear that expensive outfit you thought you'd have to go to New York City to wear. See you at the Ball!



Renaissance Education Day

by **Lee Etscovitz**

As we now all know, Renaissance has officially modified its name to identify it as a transgender organization. But this modification, which speaks to our uniqueness, does not mean that we are no longer educative in our mission. On the contrary, we are more deeply committed than ever to transgender education.

So it should come as no surprise that, on Saturday, April 4, 1998, prior to the return of our Spring Ball in the evening, which reflects our equal belief in the importance of the social dimension of life, we are also hosting a Renaissance Education Day. The flyer and registration form for this daytime event is included in this edition of the newsletter.

As you will note in the program

outline, there are eight seminars being offered throughout the day, all of which end in plenty of time for us to get ready for the Spring Ball. These seminars, offered by experts, reflect a variety of major concerns and interests which exist among us in the transgender population in general and in Renaissance in particular.

JoAnn Roberts will be speaking to some of our so-called "outer" concerns with presentations on cosmetic tips and tricks as well as on dressing stylishly. Lee Etscovitz will simultaneously be speaking about some "inner" concerns in terms of transgender classifications followed by the tasks involved in getting our lives together.

We will also have the opportunity to attend seminars offered by Dr. Sheila Kirk on hormones and on

transgender surgery. At the same time the Savarese Salon of Philadelphia will make a presentation on electrolysis, and Jessica Brandon will discuss the art of shopping successfully.

These seminar offerings will hopefully be a significant contribution by Renaissance in its commitment to being educative in the area of transgender interests and issues. With the dinner and dancing that follow in the evening, we will all have had a chance to meet some of the needs of both the mind and the body as we meet together for a full day of stimulating activity.



Hot•Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"The interval between the decay of the old and the formation and establishment of the new constitutes a period of transition which must always necessarily be one of uncertainty, confusion, error, and wild and fierce fanaticism."

— John C. Calhoun

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The furor over the **Winslow Street Foundation** (WSF) "loan" to the **International Foundation for Gender Education** (IFGE) has died down, but the issue still remains—what of the WSF? Almost everyone thought the WSF was a separate entity and found out it isn't. The IFGE board meeting at the end of January will have as its major theme the WSF and what to do with it. My thoughts, and I've shared them with several IFGE board members, are to spin off the WSF as an independent entity and appoint a new governing board made up of representatives from other national organizations. In other words, make the WSF truly a **community fund**. This way the WSF survives regardless of what happens to IFGE.

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According to **Nancy Nangeroni**, Executive Director of IFGE, what may happen to IFGE is going to be only good stuff. Nancy says when she took the helm in November, IFGE was \$80,000 in debt and losing money. Today they're no longer losing money

and they've started chipping away at the debt. She also says the IFGE web site has been redesigned and will be kept updated weekly. I hope those are good predictions for 1998, because past performance left a lot to be desired. I'd estimate IFGE received between \$60K and \$80K in donations the past few years, and they were still in the hole in December 1997.

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It's been announced: the **Third International Congress on Sex and Gender** takes place at **Exeter College, Oxford, England** from the 18th to the 20th of September, 1998. The theme of the third Congress will be, "Trans-GENDER Agenda." The keynote speaker will be **Professor Louis Gooren**, Endocrinologist and head of the Gender Clinic at the Vrije University Hospital of Amsterdam. Dr. Gooren was also the keynote speaker at the Second Congress hosted by the **Renaissance Transgender Association** last June. If you can volunteer to help at the Third Congress, please contact Stephen Whittle at <s.t.whittle@mmu.ac.uk>.

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A Pennsylvania **transgenderist** finally won her battle to change her name legally to Lisa. This person had been living as a woman for 22 years with a **male ID**. Last year she finally got around to asking a county court for the name change, and the judge denied her request, because even though she had extensive cosmetic surgery on her face as well as breast implants, she had not had reassignment surgery. (It's a damn good thing for the judge that **Phyllis Frye** wasn't in the court room when he made that decision!) The decision was reversed by a three judge Superior Court panel which said, "We believe that the better-reasoned approach is to require such a petitioner to demonstrate that he or she is permanently committed to living as a member of the opposite sex." So, there you have it. In

Pennsylvania you do not need to have reassignment surgery to get your name legally changed. All you have to do is show a commitment to living in the opposite gender role.

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A new and very interesting publication crossed my desk this month. The **International Court Communique** is the new newsletter of the **International Court System**, founded in 1965 by José J Sarria. The International Court has 66 chapters in the **U.S., Canada, and Mexico**, with more blossoming all the time. The **Communique** is 24 pages filled with information about Court happenings. I've been very impressed with the court members I've met in New York and Omaha, so it was very cool to see what many of the other courts were doing. A subscription to the quarterly is a mere \$15 a year. The Court also has a web site at <<http://convex.uky.edu/~jajone00/court.html>>.

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Speaking of Courts, the **Imperial Court of New York** is hosting its 12th annual **Night Of A Thousand Gowns Charity Ball and Coronation** on March 28. This year it's a benefit for Body Positive and PWAC/NY. The venue is the New York Marriott Marquis. **Gold tickets** are \$125 which entitle you to reserved seating (advance sales only), with doors open at 6:30 pm for cocktails (cash bar), an 8:00 pm full 4-course sit-down dinner, with entertainment, award ceremony, and Coronation at midnight, dessert buffet at 12:30 am, and dancing until 1:30 am. **Silver tickets** are \$75 and include general admission with doors open at 10:00 pm for entertainment, award ceremony, Coronation at midnight, dessert buffet at 12:30 am, and dancing until 1:30 am. For ticket information, please call Matt at 212-741-3115. Accommodations at special rates are available at The Marriott Marquis by calling 800-843-4898 or 212-398-1900. Please mention

"Night of a Thousand Gowns" when making your reservations.

I had no reservation last month touting my **Fall 98 Paradise In The Poconos** weekend. Now, however, I have to take back what I said. **The Pines** resort is being sold for sure, and we will not be hosting the event there. I have found a new resort, but I have not nailed down a contract yet, so I'm not going to make any premature announcements. I will have definite plans by next month.

One of the early adopters of the web for tg-commerce is **Best Value Products**, and they've done pretty well with their web site, according to **Laine and Tyler** who run the site. They called to let me know that after several years in development they have finally produced their own line of clothing for crossdressers. These are top quality clothes made expressly for Best Value and designed for a male body. The best part is the price. For example, a simple **black dress with long sleeves** and high neck is \$69.95, which is a great price. It's not high fashion but really basic stuff, just what many people need. And they've left two inches at the hem and sleeves for adjustments. Among other items available are a **black mini skirt** (\$34.50), and a blouse in gold lamé (\$56.95) or white (\$54.95). There are a few other items, and more will be added. In addition, they have everything else you'd need to complete a wardrobe. You should write for their catalog. Best Value can be reached at PO Box 156, Wyncote PA 19095, or hit their web site at <www.bvpb.com>.

The fashion world had its share of faux pas last year. Several fads just did not catch on at all. Here are several that failed to click with real women... Power Suits with **sharp shoulders**, too, too retro... **Hard Candy** nail polish for men, got any candy apple red for while I work on my Vette?... Anything **sheer**... **Fur trim** anywhere but on the collar and cuffs of a coat... Stilettoes (gasp!, oh no!).

The hottest new heel is called the **Kitten Heel**. It's short, maybe inch and

a half, tops, but it's skinny, shaped, easy to wear and quite easy to walk in.

Last month I dubbed the **mini with a slit** a dumb idea. Several people poo-pooed that idea, But **Jami** agreed with me. To wit; "I agree with you 100 percent, but how much you wanna bet a lot of CDs buy those skirts? Since when has the choice between showing lots more leg and being graceful and ladylike been won by the latter? How much stuff from Frederick's of Hollywood do you see at conferences? I hope your note causes some folks to think twice. I know it made me reconsider buying one." Jami could wear one and get away with it, too.

Josie Natori has been creating sexy, glamorous lingerie for over 20 years, and this year she's designed an exclusive **Eveningwear Collection** inspired by those designs. Camisoles, bustiers, blouses, dresses, and long tunics with high side slits are all included. You can find Natori at the more upscale stores like **Saks** and **Bergdorf Goodman**.

It will look like **Laverne & Shirley** invaded the stores come Spring. You'll see **pleated skirts** everywhere and in every style—accordion, box, knife, whatever. Poodle anyone? If you go for this retro style drag, then top it off with a snug fitted twin set (very 50's) or a little tee. Expect to see longer lengths in the stores, too. The most popular will be mid-knee length, with some just a little above and some just a little below.

Along with the skirts, we'll see other 50's styles trying to make a comeback, like **chintz party dresses** and **capri pants** in pink. I don't think it will take. But there is another movement to bring 40's retro style back and that I think will take off, especially with the guys. Pencil thin moustaches and **Ricky Ricardo** jackets will rule. You heard it here first.

To go along with the 50's retro style, makeup artists have brought back a trick from the 60's, **white eye makeup**. Powders make the greatest impact, creams are more subtle, and pencils are easy to handle. Where to place the

color? You can make your eyes really pop by placing the white on your brow-bone. Other accent locations are under the eye and on the lids. I suggest you stick with the browbone for a tasteful application.

Last month I made a tiny mention of **Wolford** hosiery as being expensive. They are, but they are also considered the world's best. **Andie** sent along these tips for buying **Wolford** at less than full retail... "As a user (exclusively) of **Wolford** hosiery, I have to stand tall and defend them as the greatest hosiery that you can wear. The texture is unbelievably soft and smooth. The durability is beyond anything I have ever experienced before. As to the price, let me give you some tips. Twice a year, the **Wolford Boutiques** (in NY, NJ, Chicago, San Francisco, and others) have sales where all styles are marked down between 30 and 70 percent. I have been the first in line for the last 2 sales, and have gotten some real bargains. In addition, **Neiman-Marcus** also puts a limited stock on sale more often. But the best prices are found in **Vienna, Austria**. On a trip to **Austria** last year, I purchased 40 different pairs for myself. (You can't imagine what I was thinking as I went through customs. I was afraid that I would be accused of illegal importing.) The prices there are 40-60 percent less than U.S. prices. If someone is interested, I can give people advice where they can go, or fax orders. If a few friends get together and share the UPS charge, you can still save a bundle. It is worth the effort. [redacted]@aol.com>."

The dress for the season is very simple and uncomplicated. It's **basic black**, a somewhat fitted sheath, no sleeves and cut with fairly high neckline. Tres chic. Keep the length just to mid-knee or above. Dress them up for evening with strappy **high-heel sandals** or **D'Orsay** pumps, clutch, and you're stylin'.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? Comments? Write me care of this publication, or send email to the [redacted]@cdspub.com>.
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Vis A Vis...

is discriminatory and wrote an eloquent argument for changing it. Chapter President Denise wrote a forceful column against the proposal.

Chapter Secretary Kiki [REDACTED] weighed in with her opinion against the proposal. The membership vote came down 80-19 against the "open membership" amendment. It was interesting to read the comments on both sides of the issue. Both Denise and Kiki noted that the wording of the amendment was clouded in political correctness, concealing the net result that ANYONE would be able to join the Chapter, even non-crossdressers.

Miranda, whose TG Rights activism includes a successful local campaign for equal rights in the city of Evanston, does have more of the gift for political verbiage than her opponents, and if the quotes of her amendment are accurate, it could be construed as perhaps too "cute."

I've been on two sides of this issue, depending on whose persuasive arguments I'm reading at the moment. There's nothing inherently evil about a "Hetero only" membership clause, and the recent allowance of the "Friends of Tri-Ess" category takes some of the sting out of the "excusatory" epithet often hurled at the organization.

In Chicago, there is another strong "open membership" TG group (a Renaissance affiliate, as a matter of fact) called the Chicago Gender

Society. Certainly in this case, there is no intrinsic need for the Chi Chapter to become a second "open" group.

In cities or locales where there is no other alternative for non-heterosexual crossdressers or transsexuals, the case for "open" membership is a little stronger.

It's troubling to read some of the paranoid heterosexual comments made in favor of excluding other TG-identifying individuals from Tri-Ess, Kiki [REDACTED]'s negative commentary being a prime example. All Tri-Ess members and officials should be reminded that a fair amount of supposedly heterosexual crossdressers in Tri-Ess organizations respond in the positive about hormone usage, fantasizing about sex change operations, living full time as women, or enjoying the attention of men.

It's one thing to believe in a solid concept of heterosexual crossdressing, quite another if it is grounded in insecurity about oneself or other people's private lives.

THE ENVELOPE, PLEASE

January is the month in which we nominate and vote on our "Renni" Awards for the most inspirational females in the categories of Film, Television and Newsmakers.

All of the nominees have not yet been chosen as of this writing, but a few of the early candidates include Kim Basinger, Elizabeth Hurley, Ellen DeGeneres, Princess Diana, and Mother Theresa (our first posthumous nominees). The balloting will have taken place at the Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting on

January 17. A press release and notification to the awardees will be made soon afterwards.

If you were unable to attend the meeting and would like to participate by post or e-mail, please send us a vote for your candidates in each category. Even if they can't win this year, they may become eligible nominees for next year's awards.

WAITING FOR THE WEDGIE

Philadelphia was the host of the U.S. Figure Skating Championship in January, so we were treated to all manner of information about the technical aspects of the sport, the skaters themselves, and perhaps most interestingly, about the costumes worn by the female contestants.

The "Philadelphia Inquirer" ran a long article on the subject in the January 8 edition. Although some big name designers have gotten into the act, most of the costumes are still created by individual seamstresses, like Lauren Sheehan of Virginia.

The major challenge in designing costumes for women skaters is that they must be able to withstand the physical exertions of the skater's routines yet still look glamorous. The "Inquirer" article addressed one specific problem facing the designers: "...every girl's biggest fear is a big wedgie. Once that dress has gone up the back and gotten caught, you can't take your eyes off it." Amen to that, Sister.

As a very poor ice skater myself, I admire the ability of these women (and men) to perform their maneuvers as expertly as they do. As a cross-

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Vis A Vis...

dresser, I love the brief yet fancy costumes worn by the women skaters. And as a red-blooded male, I patiently wait for the skirt to fly up and keep my fingers crossed for the contestant's nightmare to come true in the form of a wondrous wedge.

Fortunately for the skaters, and unfortunately for the rest of us, a lot

of thought and design goes into protecting against this occurrence. Lauren Sheehan even gives seminars to parents and other costume designers to show them how to keep it from happening. Damn!

If you remember the '80s Olympic skating competition, where Katarina Witt was to make her big splash, there was a flurry of rumors suggesting that her finals costume would feature a thong-backed leotard beneath

her short skating skirt. Alas, it wasn't quite so spectacular as that, but it did show more skin than was deemed proper by skating authorities, and it is now used as an example of what shouldn't be worn in competition.

This is bad news for us casual skating fans, because their collective gluteuses are indeed maximus. We can't tell a salchow from a lutz, but we would certainly recognize a wedge if we saw one. Hope springs eternal.



Renaissance Library Report

By Lee Etscovitz, *Renaissance National Librarian*

The Library Discussion Group had its monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 7 (the first Wednesday of every month) at the Woods. The meeting was well attended, and the discussion was involved and interesting, as is usually the case. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 4, 1998 from 8:00 to 9:30 PM at the Woods (where the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of Renaissance

meets). At this upcoming meeting we are expecting to have one or two visitors, both of whom are F to M's (female to male transsexuals). Once before an F to M visited, and everyone was wondering if these new male visitors were crossdressers (male to female). Suffice it to say, the evening was very enlightening.

The Renaissance Library now has an archival set of the "News and Views" beginning with Vol. 1, No. 1 (August 1987) to the present. This

set, mostly of original issues, is for use in the Renaissance office only and should be of interest to anyone wondering what took place in our early years. The "Tenth Anniversary History of Renaissance, 1978-1997" by Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D., which is also on file in the library and which is also for sale in the Renaissance bookstore, provides a helpful perspective on the development of Renaissance in general and on the contribution of *News and Views* in particular.



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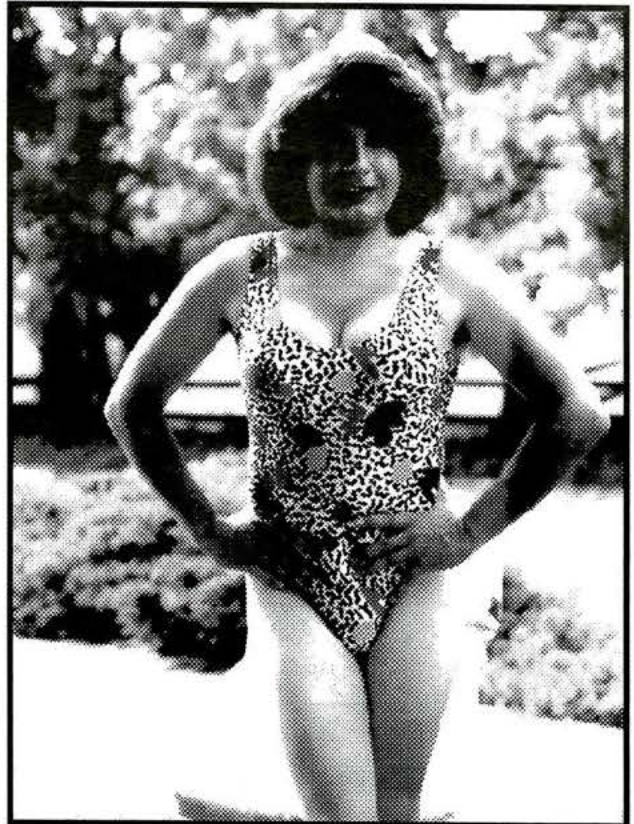
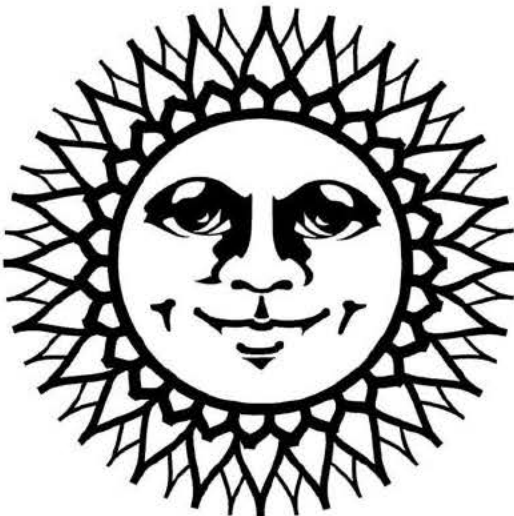
Swimsuit Issue '98:



Angela Gardner shows off her legs while lounging by the hot tub.

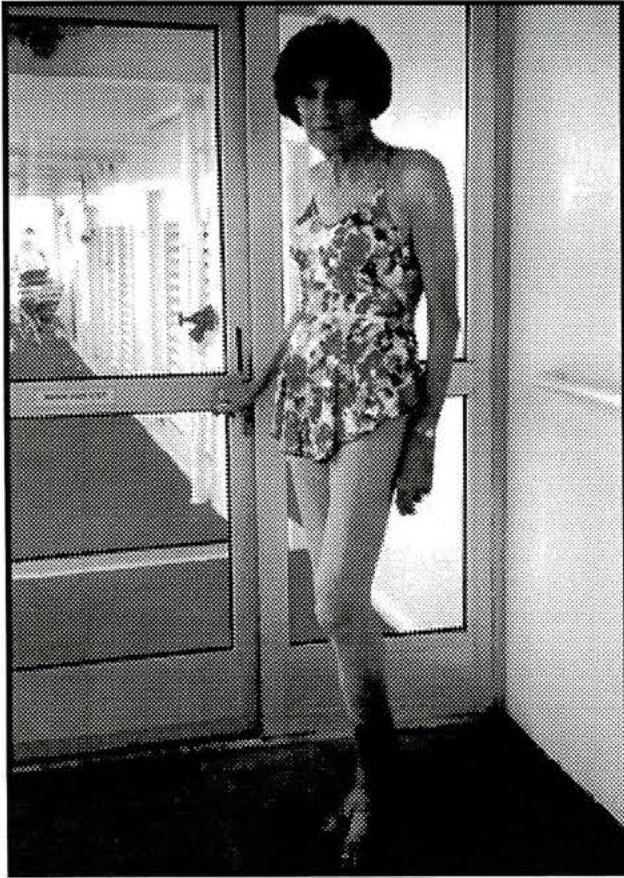


Babs [redacted] relaxing at Rainbow Mountain Resort in 1996.

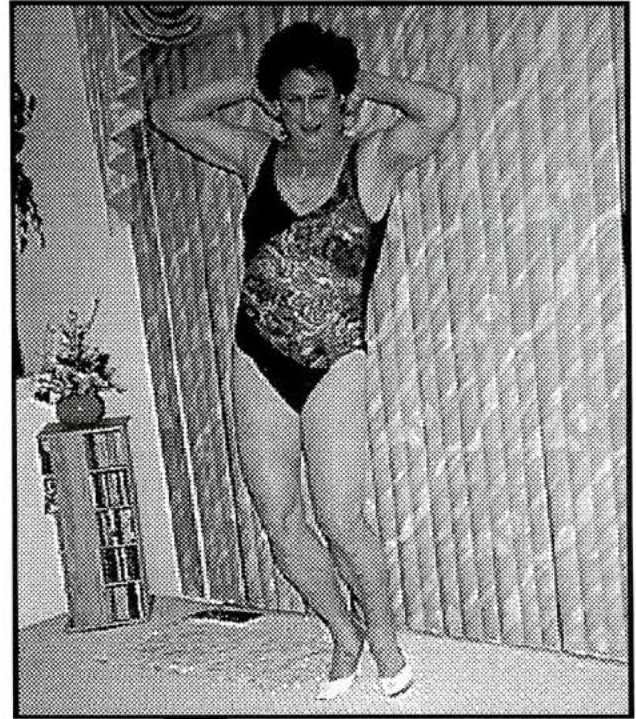


Ms. Vis A Vis herself, Dina Amberle alongside the cement pond.

Mona's Bathing Beauties!



The classy Jane [redacted] strikes a pose while at sea.



Josie [redacted] models a sharp looking one piece. You go, girl!



Leslie looks cool as she catches some rays down on the beach.



Renaissance's new Managing Director, Lisa [redacted] in a wooded setting.

Making Sense of It All



From the Heart

Sometimes, in a reflective moment, I think back on the direction-changing decisions I have made in my life, especially in terms of my gender journey. Ironically, for all that those decisions have turned out to be significant, most of them were not consciously made in terms of any gender change, yet without them I would most likely not have progressed to where I am now. I was simply following a feeling, a feeling I could not always verbalize and which often went against what seemed like a more rational and sensible thing I should be doing.

For example, my decision to seek a divorce from my first spouse after fourteen years of marriage was, in retrospect, the beginning of my journey into the unknown. I did not know what was wrong with me. I was simply very unhappy, and so, as responsibly as I could, I sought a divorce. I was seen by spouse and children and family and friends as being irresponsible, but I was responding to an inner unrest that I could not fathom but which was destroying me from within. And so I felt I had to take a step in the direction of some unknown resolution.

Another example of my going against what seemed sensible but which was something I simply felt I had to do was when I responded to an advertisement of the Renaissance Education Association with its open invitation to people who crossdress. I went to a meeting and have never

been the same since. Again, I did what felt right at the time, even though I risked losing a second spouse whom I continue to love dearly and to whom I am fortunately still married.

In both of these cases, and in several other instances during my life, I finally listened to my heart. Rationality is not necessarily to be excluded from the exercise of choice and from the implementation of impactful decisions. But in each phase of my gender journey, I finally let my heart tell me what to do, a basic step which the following poem, called "I Listened," describes:

I listened to my heart today
and heard the beat
beneath the beat
that keeps me on my way.

The sound was faint,
the rhythm dim,
but something there I heard,
and as I listened carefully
the sound became a word.

"Accept," it said,
"accept yourself
for all that you are worth."
Storms and rainbows suddenly
flashed
across my inner sky,
as if my heart were giving birth
to dreams that would not die.

"How can this be?"
I asked at last.
"Am I to be this bold,

to think that after all these years
to dream is not too old?"

The storms went on,
the rainbows gleamed,
my silent heart must speak,
for if I failed to listen now
my soul would soon grow weak.

And so I listened to my heart
and heard the beat
we often cheat
by keeping it apart,
till in despair
not even prayer
can place it on a chart.

The only record of this beat
has been within my soul.
To hear its sound
on solid ground
remains my lifelong goal.

My heart has never lied to me. It has always told me the truth, in this case my gender truth, so long as I have listened to it. My not hearing the truth or, worse yet, hearing it and ignoring it, perhaps out of fear, has always resulted in a kind of living death. Or to put it another way, in the course of my own existence, a living death, regardless of its duration, has always followed a "heart" attack for which, in the medical sense, there has never been any corrective surgery, not even a transplant. The only remedy for such an attack has always come from within my heart itself, one beat, one step at a time, until my heart and my sense of self have become one. Then, and only then, when I have finally listened to my own heart, have I, as a gender-troubled person, had a chance to live fully. And then, of course, my struggle has really begun. But it is a heartfelt struggle, for it is faced with a strength the gender truth requires, a strength which comes from the heart.



Lucent Technologies Protects Transgendered Employees

Columbus, Ohio. December 19, 1997.

It's Time, Ohio!, the Ohio chapter of **It's Time, America!**, a transgender lobbying organization, is pleased to announce that Lucent Technologies, the leading producer of telecommunications products, has adopted an Equal Employment Opportunity policy statement that includes protection for transgendered and intersex employees.

In the EEO policy statement, Rich McGinn, President and CEO of Lucent Technologies, said: "Demonstrated commitment to equal opportunity is an investment in our people and our future growth. Consequently, a company that attracts, selects, develops and retains the best will remain the industry leader.

Lucent's ongoing efforts in this direction will provide us with a critical, competitive advantage in the marketplace." Lucent is leading the

way in the creation of an open workplace. Its new EEO policy contains specific language to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity, characteristics, or expression.

Lucent's wording creates a separate, but equal, status for transgendered employees, next to the protection for sexual orientation. As far as is known, Lucent Technologies is the first large company to provide specific language in its EEO policy to protect transgendered employees.

Lucent's wording protects transsexuals ("gender identity"), intersexed ("gender characteristics"), and cross-dressers ("gender expression").

Actually, the wording goes beyond even these three narrow categories, protecting people whose gender presentation is nontraditional, including masculine women and feminine men. Lucent's wording thus goes beyond a promise not to hire, fire, or promote based on gender issues or sexual ori-

entation. Lucent prohibits any discrimination or harassment of its employees.

At Lucent Technologies there is also an employee-business partner diversity group, called **EQUAL!**, for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered employees.

Lucent's policy, therefore, is to prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, one's status as a special disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era, or because of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity characteristics or expression, in any employment decision or in the administration of any personnel policy.

It's Time, Ohio! would like to encourage other organizations and companies to follow Lucent's example and add specific transgender language to their policy statements. 

AEGIS and ITA Initiate Merger Negotiations

January 16, 1998

The Boards of Directors of two national transgender organizations, the **American Educational Gender Information Service, Inc.** (AEGIS) and **It's Time, America!** (ITA) are pleased to announce that they have initiated serious discussions in pursuit of a merger of the two groups, with the intention of creating a new organization designed to meet the changing educational and advocacy needs

of the transsexual, transgender, and other gender-different communities.

The boards recently approved mission and values statements and are working to develop goals and projects to meet the community's needs. To better determine these needs, AEGIS and ITA have developed a survey form which solicits input from all interested persons and care providers. The respective boards hope to reach agreement on this merger in the near future, but in the interim, the inde-

pendent operations of both organizations will continue.

The American Educational Gender Information Service has provided a variety of educational resources for professionals, transsexuals, and other persons since 1990. It's Time, America! has advocated on behalf of transgendered and other gender-variant persons through state-level chapters since 1994. 

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Shopping With Jessica



by Jessica Brandon

Greetings, girlfriends! Hugs and kisses to all my loyal readers since Valentine's Day is this month! So far, 1998's been pretty decent weather-wise. As I type these words of wit on January 5th, the temperature's inching up into the 50's, and it feels more like early spring than winter. But I'm keeping my fingers crossed and stocking up on rock salt from my neighborhood convenience store. Ya never know when old man winter will decide to drop by like a twice-removed relative for a sudden and unwelcome visit.

A few weeks ago at Renaissance headquarters in scenic Wayne, Pennsylvania, our exalted Executive Director, Angela Gardner, was kind enough to drop off the Jim Bridges Catalogue for me to review. For anyone who's unfamiliar with the name, Jim Bridges is one of the most renowned makeup artists in the country today and has, for the last ten years, worked closely with the transgender community to make us girls look our very best.

Jim has published a wondrous catalogue that caters specifically to the TG crowd, and from a first impression, it's pretty much a winner. Despite being only 16 pages, it's in full color, looks highly professional, and packs more good stuff than you'd find in publications with two or three times the pages. It begins with cosmetics, featuring all the tools of the trade, along with a complete makeup kit which includes Jim's "Bridges to Beauty" makeup instructional video.

Next we come to wigs. Jim offers twelve different styles (the "Justine" style with the cool bangs caught my eye) and nine colors from off-black to platinum blonde. Dresses, suits and jackets dominate the next nine pages, and they look terrific. Between the brightly colored panne velvet dresses, a killer red and black two piece suit, a stunning black coatdress for that career girl look, to your basic LBD (little black dress), there's something here for everyone.

What I find most interesting about the clothing in this catalogue is the sizing. The outfits come in three sizes, which makes ordering all the easier. There's Small (12-14), covering height ranges of 5-6 to 5-11 and weight ranges of 140 to 170 pounds; Medium (16-18, 5-10 to 6-3, 170 to 220 pounds); and Diva (20-24, 6-0 to 6-6, 220 to 250 pounds). Nothing arcane or complicated there. In fact, I don't think I've ever seen an easier to understand sizing chart than this.

Ahh, but that's not all, kids. On page 14, the boudoir page, you'll find one of the models wearing a gorgeous full corset which comes in black or ivory, with special colors upon request, and at a price that won't break the bank. There are also corset belts and body shapers in the same colors (special colors for the former) and breastforms in three sizes (34C, 36C and 38C) at perhaps the most affordable price I've yet to see anywhere. I was pleasantly surprised when I saw what they cost.

Now we come to the footwear

page, my favorite. Jim offers six shoe styles: basic pumps in three, four of five inch heel heights (the latter in white with cute, red appliquéd lips) along with sandals and mules with six inch heels. Rounding things out are absolutely gorgeous thigh high boots with four inch heels for whom that old Nancy Sinatra song, "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'," was written about. Jim's shoes and boots come in a variety of colors and in sizes from 8 to 14.

On the last page there are satin opera-length gloves in 15 colors, plus both beaded evening clutches and lightweight mesh handbags designed for easy opening so one doesn't lose one's press-on nails. Once I clear some space under my salary cap, to use a modern day sports term, I plan on ordering a few things from Jim and give you a first hand review of his product line. If you're interested in obtaining the Jim Bridges catalogue, send \$10.00 to P.O. Box 4715, North Hollywood, CA 91617-0715.

While I'm on the subject of mail order, I'd love to hear from you as to what mail order outlets are the best to deal with. Which ones have given you the best service, offered the widest selection of items, sizes and colors, fastest delivery time or the lowest prices? I'd also like to know what outlets you've dealt with that are less than stellar or didn't treat you with the respect due you as a consumer. Whatever info you can provide will help all of us become wiser, better shoppers.

Well, kids, that's all for now. Time to stroll to the nearest Sears and invest in a snow shovel. As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments, tips and opinions at [redacted]@voicenet.com, or by snail mail to the Renaissance National office address on page two. Until next month, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Happy shopping, sisters!



Discovery...

Six years later, after the search proved futile, the three siblings went to probate court to have Camilla Lyman declared legally dead—and to keep an estimated \$2 million, that had been set aside for her in family trust funds, from falling into the wrong hands. In a settlement with the Lyman family, O'Neil got Camilla's Hopkinton property, which was sold to Siner and Young last year, but received no part of the family trust funds.

Hopkinton Probate Court Judge Linda Urso declared Lyman legally dead in June 1995. In her written ruling, Urso said that some "disturbing facts surround her absence" and that O'Neil's testimony during the proceedings was "not wholly credible."

"The circumstances surrounding Lyman's disappearance as described by Mr. O'Neil are sketchy, and his actions for a long period of time thereafter are unsettling," Urso wrote, noting that "he continued to run Lyman's affairs as if nothing had happened."

Charles John Allen, the Boston private detective hired by Lyman's siblings, said O'Neil told him early in his investigation that Camilla had gone off to Boston for a sex-change operation. Allen had informants in Europe's transvestite scene snoop around to see if anyone fitting Lyman's description had had the operation, but no trace of her was found.

Allen said he wanted to search Lyman's property, but O'Neil wouldn't let him. Allen probed Lyman's bank accounts to find out what was

happening to interest income from her trust funds that was still being paid out after she disappeared. "It was sort of troubling," Allen said. "There were fairly large amounts of money that couldn't be traced." Allen would not go into detail, but said he has given his file on the matter to police.

Contacted by telephone, O'Neil refused to talk with the Associated Press. Cranston, R.I. attorney Roberta Regosta, who also helped manage Lyman's financial affairs, has avoided reporters as well.

The Lyman case has been a frustrating one for Allen, whose firm boasts it has located all of the 8,000 or so people it has been hired to find over the years— all but Camilla Lyman.



LSV Officers for '98

The Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Renaissance has elected its new officers for 1998 as follows:

- Managing Director/Chapter Leader: Jamie Lynn [REDACTED]
- Secretary: Karen [REDACTED]
- Treasurer: Don [REDACTED]
- Program Director: Ellen [REDACTED]

- OutReach Director: Kathy [REDACTED]

- Director at Large: Linda [REDACTED]
- Director at Large: Holly [REDACTED]



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Transvestite Film Draws Militant Fire In Tehran

(Reuters)

A film about an Iranian who resorts to cross-dressing in an effort to emigrate to the United States has come under fire from Islamic militants opposed to the government's liberal policies permitting the screening.

Residents and newspapers said groups of militants over the past week attacked cinemas showing the Iranian film, "Snowman," in several cities, including Isfahan, Shiraz, and Rasht. The daily newspaper *Salam* said a group of militants from the Ansar-e Hizbollah (Supporters of God's Party) attacked viewers leaving a cinema in Isfahan, including a disabled veteran from the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

The violence was the latest in a series of recent incidents across the Islamic republic in which militants attacked cinemas showing the film. The actions target attempts by the new moderate President Mohammad Khatami to ease censorship and fly in the face of his stated policies to reinforce the rule of law in Iran.

The black comedy, directed by Davoud Mirbageri and called, "Adam Barfi," in Persian, shows a man dis-

guising himself as a woman with heavy make-up in the hope of marrying an American and emigrating to the country of his dreams.

It has been attacked as immoral by the militants, despite its politically correct ending in which the man falls in love with an Iranian woman, and both return to their homeland. The daily *Salam* said militants in Isfahan tore down posters at the cinema and stopped the screening of "Snowman."

"Although the film is authorized and is being shown in 22 cities throughout Iran, the attackers threatened to set the cinema on fire, so we were forced to stop showing it," the manager of Qods cinema in Isfahan told *Salam*.

The film is being shown in 18 cinemas in Tehran alone, where tickets have been sold out for several days in advance. Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Ataollah Mohajerani authorized the showing of "Snowman," which his predecessor had banned. Asked about the incident in Isfahan, Mohajerani said police later detained the troublemakers, who had acted illegally, and the cinema had reopened.

He said such incidents were good publicity for the film, Iran's top box office hit this year. But on Saturday *Salam* quoted Ayatollah Jalaeddin Taheri, a moderate senior cleric who leads Friday prayers in Isfahan, as criticizing police, the intelligence ministry, and provincial officials for not putting a stop to instances of militants taking the law into their own hands.

In related incidents, the *Salam* paper said Ansar-e Hizbollah members stormed the Guidance Ministry headquarters in Isfahan on Tuesday, threatening the female staff. The office's director-general had filed a lawsuit against the intruders, it said. The group also attacked the Sadr theology school in Isfahan the following day, beating up two clerics and damaging the school, the paper said. "We have identified the members of the group and informed the police", a security official told *Salam*.

Ansar-e Hizbollah members have also recently attacked the offices of *Salam* and *Navid* magazine in Isfahan, a library at Isfahan university, and the houses of a clergyman and a university lecturer, the daily said. 

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Resources

Background Papers

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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

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A Grim Discovery in Missing Persons Case

From *The Washington Post*

December 27, 1997

by Terrence Petty

Hopkinton, R.I.— On a September morning in the southwestern woods of Rhode Island, as the maples and oaks were changing into their autumn splendor, Green Siner noticed a stench as he walked by the septic tank of his rambling old Victorian home. Siner shoved aside the heavy cement lid to see if the tank needed to be emptied.

"I looked in," he said, "and there was a skull staring up at me..."

Siner rushed into the house to tell Gardner Young, who bought the home with Siner a year ago. Young called police.

Police believe the skeleton in the tank is all that remains of Camilla Lyman, the previous owner of the house, who disappeared a decade ago. They also believe that Lyman, a transvestite millionaire and breeder of champion spaniels, was murdered.

What else did investigators find when they siphoned the septic tank? And who do they think killed Lyman? Police, concerned about compromising the investigation, aren't saying. Nor will they confirm rumors that they found cinder blocks wired to the remains.

Lyman's disappearance didn't arouse suspicion at first. In fact, there was no official search of Lyman's 40 acres until John Scuncio, a retired state police detective, took over as Hopkinton police chief a year ago and

re-opened the long dormant case. At the same moment that Siner found the skull in the tank, Scuncio was on another part of the estate, searching for a body.

Lyman, 54 at the time of her disappearance, was the daughter of Arthur T. Lyman, an affluent Bostonian with more than 30 years of public service in Massachusetts, including stints as commissioner of corrections and commissioner of conservation.

According to friends and family members, Lyman's father doted on her and she deeply felt the loss after he died of lung cancer in 1968. Sometime after that, Lyman's transformation into a man began.

The Brahmin heiress attended national dog shows wearing short hair, a mustache she grew with the help of steroids intended for her dogs, bolo ties, and herringbone jackets. In her masculine guise, Lyman bore a spooky resemblance to her father.

Lyman bought the Hopkinton house in 1984. When she wasn't at dog shows, she had little to do with the outside world. She was cranky to her neighbors. A stockade fence at the front of her property kept out the unwanted. She had even grown distant from her own relatives.

"She was cute and perky in her youth," says Lyman's sister, Mary Margaret Goodale of Boston. "She began to withdraw from us (the family) in the 1970s. I don't know why."

A small circle of trusted associates

living around Hopkinton took care of Lyman's practical matters, leaving the heiress to devote herself to her 58 dogs. One of those associates was George O'Neil, a fellow dog breeder from nearby North Kingstown, whom Lyman apparently considered her best man friend. O'Neil cashed Lyman's checks for her, picked up her mail, had power of attorney over her affairs, and was the sole beneficiary in her will, according to testimony at a 1994 probate hearing dealing with Lyman's estate.

O'Neil didn't inform police about Lyman's disappearance, even though he conceded noticing in July 1987 that she was missing, the probate records show. But O'Neil did keep maintaining Lyman's house and taking care of her dogs.

Police learned of Lyman's disappearance in December 1988, when her brother filed a missing persons report with the Hopkinton police. George Weeden, then the local police chief, saw no reason to doubt O'Neil's contention that Lyman frequently went off for extended periods without telling anyone. So Weeden chose not to dig up Lyman's property to look for her.

Lyman's brother and two sisters, however, were alarmed. They thought their sister loved her dogs too much to leave them for months. In August 1988, they hired a private investigator to look for her.

continued on page 22

To all Chapters and Affiliates:

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News & Views.

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