



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

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Renaissance

Transsexual Divides All-women College

by Emma Wilkins

The sole remaining all-female college at Cambridge University [U.K.] has broken 126 years of tradition by admitting to its fellowship a woman who started life as a man. The decision to admit Dr. Rachel Padman, 43, as a Fellow of Newnham College has caused discord among senior academics, including Germaine Greer, the leading feminist who is a member of the college's governing body.

Dr. Padman, a physicist specializing in star formation, underwent a sex-change operation to become a woman in 1982, and legally she remains a man [in the U.K.] According to the statutes of the college, which was founded in 1871, all fellows must be women. Although Dr. Padman advised Dr. Onora O'Neill, Newnham's Principal, of her past before taking up her fellowship last October, the news is only now beginning to circulate in the college. The issue has caused disharmony and brought distress to Dr. Padman, who is a committed and well liked teacher.

Dr. Greer, who admires Dr. Padman's work, is horrified that she has been admitted as a fellow because of the apparent breach of college statutes. "We have driven a coach and horses through our statutes and I can't believe we did it. It's disgraceful that Dr. Padman has been placed in this situation. It makes me very angry," she said. Although Dr. Greer regards sex-change operations as mutilations, her opposition is based on principles not personality, she said. "I like Dr. Padman. We all know she is a distinguished physicist, but what is the point of having clear statutes if we just ignore them? We should have answered these questions before her appointment. We have to be true to the spirit of the original bequest to the college as a women's college for women." Dr. Greer said her position was supported by a number of senior colleagues. "Our position is not that Dr. Padman should resign but that she should never have been placed in this situation in the first place. The dignity of the college is marred by this unfortunate event." She added that many members of the governing body, which includes all fellows, were unaware of Dr. Padman's past. "Dr. Padman's past was kept secret from us. We were told by people outside the college making fun of Newnham and, frankly, we feel we have been

made monkeys of." Dr. Greer, whose first instinct was to resign, is now considering calling an emergency meeting of the governing body. Dr. O'Neill, who became Principal in 1992, declined to discuss the legality of Dr. Padman's appointment.

Dr. Padman's status was known to senior staff who wholeheartedly support her, Dr. O'Neill said. "Dr. Padman's change of state is ancient history. Furthermore it is not secret, covert or unknown among colleagues."

Dr. Padman, said she would consider resigning if colleagues were unhappy with her position at the college. "If I thought there were any significant number of women in the college who were, despite what I perceived, unhappy about me being there because of my past, then I would resign. Obviously, I don't want to go because it would be losing something I love. It is an exhilarating feeling being surrounded by clever and intelligent women," she said. Dr. Padman was initially reluctant to join Newnham because of her operation and rejected the first letter of approach from Dr. O'Neill. "I wrote back to her saying that there was this in my past and that I wouldn't want to bring the college's name into disrepute. I said I didn't think me joining was a good idea." Dr. O'Neill replied saying she was aware of Dr. Padman's sex change and again invited her to join the college. Last October Dr. Padman, who studied at St John's College for a Ph.D. in 1977, took part in a ceremony at the Principal's Lodge admitting her to the Fellowship. She swore an oath promising to uphold Newnham's best interests.

Dr. Greer said that one way to resolve the situation could be for Newnham to vote to admit men as fellows. The last time the issue was debated in 1990, it was rejected by a small majority.

If there were to be a vote, however, Dr. Padman said she would oppose the admission of men. "Newnham is the only college I would like to be associated with because of its special status. I like women and I like the idea of an all-women environment. "If there is another vote I would want to keep Newnham single sex. I think the admission of men would lead to a diminution of opportunities for women in Cambridge and I want to keep the college's special status."

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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 8 pm all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

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

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

Affiliates

California

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

Connecticut

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

Georgia

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

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

Illinois

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

Louisiana

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

New Jersey

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

Titusville: Meetings are 1st Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing. Call Terri [redacted] at 609-[redacted].

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, Rachel [redacted], P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

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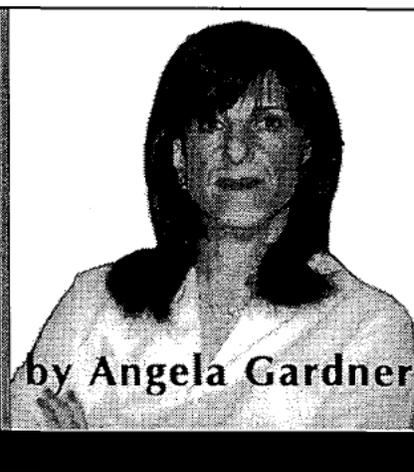
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Local Calendar

August

- 2 Ren. LSV
- 2 NJ Support – JoAnn Roberts, guest speaker
- 9 MOTG
- 9 Ren. Lehigh Valley
- 9 Ren. Delaware
- 16 Ren. GPC

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

I can't believe another month has slid by. In fact, two months have slid by, since we didn't produce a July issue. I have been one busy little editor and I haven't had much time to keep track of the my usual showbiz drag facts, rumors and gossip. In fact, I left the country for awhile and didn't even have television! Oh, the horror.

Not having the boob tube was a reasonable sacrifice when you consider that I spent a week in the fabulous Caribbean. Well, "I" didn't go, but that guy who shares my body went. At least he brought it back with a tan. I could have done without the mosquito bites, though. And he did bring me a lovely batik print dress that he found on the clearance rack at a quaint little shop in St. Johns, Antigua.

OK, that's enough of the girl-self/boy-self stuff. It was me, alright? I had just finished with helping out at the **2nd International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues** hosted by Renaissance in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, and I had been en femme for four days. I was the Princess of Prussia. (JoAnn is the Queen.) After one day of packing it was time to hit the islands for a battery recharge.

I gotta tell ya, I was the whitest person on the entire beach, and to add to my mysterious presence, I had a good crop of beard shadow—all over my body. I electric razored everyday before my morning swim but until I darkened up a shade or two it was pretty scary. Just ask the groundskeeper of our hotel. He couldn't take his eyes off that expanse of pale white with black

dots. Why can't body hair go prematurely grey, all at once?

Anyhow, after a week in the islands I was recharged, tanned and ready to rock. The day after I returned I was in that little batik print number doing a talk to a graduate sexology class at Chestnut Hill College on the wonders of crossdressing. It's so nice when you can be your own show and tell.

Ten Candles On Our Birthday Cake

After that it was one thing after another. We had a great turnout at the 10th Anniversary party on the 21st of June, around 200 folks showed up to have dinner, jam with some live music from **Terri [redacted]**, The Drag Queen of The Blues, featuring **Helen [redacted]** on bass, and hear some performance art from **Kate Bornstein**. Kate was worried that she might have offended some of the more delicate attendees with some graphic material from her book, *Gender Outlaw*. Well don't worry Kate, I'm sure you did, but I liked it. Besides, that's what performance art is all about. Get the audience to feel something. Now if I could only get someone to feel my leg. But, I digress. Too many rum punches in the islands I guess.

So here we are, Renaissance is ten years old and we want it to go on for many more decades helping people be their own transgendered selves without guilt or shame. Sometime in the past ten years of assisting people the Board of Directors forgot to put together a ten year plan and so we've just

been chugging along. Now, the engine is all set to run out of steam. The Board, in an effort to keep the best newsletter in the community available to the most folks by keeping the yearly subscription price down, neglected to raise the rates high enough to pay for the increased costs of doing business in the 90's. After a big Board meeting this month it was decided to continue to run Renaissance National and keep producing a newsletter. If you haven't already gotten all the details on the bailout plan you will soon. If you want to know more call the office and talk to me. If you can afford any additional donation to help keep National running please send it to the office. Help Renaissance to keep on helping.

Boy, can she get serious or what? I think she started to tear up on that one. Back to the world of TG fun.

Turn To The Left

You better work, as one well known drag queen is wont to sing, and indeed I did. I was lucky enough to be picked by the ladies who run **Lola, Inc.** to be one of their models for their Fall catalog and updated website. I attended the open call for models held a couple of months ago in New Hope and used all the little modeling tips I've picked up from the World Wide Web, and *W* magazine, to wow 'em. Remember, if you're going out for a modeling job, wear a short skirt. Models always do that. Anyhow, it worked for me, along with the fact that I had acting experience and could do what I was told without having to be told too many times. We did the shoot (I love that kinda talk) in July (on the first day of the great heat wave of July) and I think the finished product is gonna be good. The Lola ladies are fun to work with and the photographer gave great direction. Of course, on the downside, I had to diet for a week to prepare. I used the model's diet—Marlboros and diet Coke. It was tough cause no matter how you season a cigarette, it just doesn't taste good when you eat it. Washing it down with the diet Coke helped but I hate that artificial sweet-

continued next page

News Beat...

ener aftertaste. Yuck. It keeps the weight off though, I'll say that for it. I was actually able to wear a slinky white Spandex number that I would have never fit into a few short weeks ago. Of course there was a woman named Roberts there who kept yelling, "Suck it in!" Seriously, the things you have to do for a modeling job! Unlike many of your super models I had added worries. Our call time (that's when you have to be there for the shoot. Oh boy, more fashion talk) was 8 a.m. and that meant I had to get up at five to do something that Naomi Campbell never has to do—shave my whole body. The girl who came down from New York City, **Miss Minerva**, had to get up at four in the morning since she came in by train. She still looked fabulous. She's a waitress, and not in a donut shop, either. She works at a place which she tells me was the first drag eatery in Manhattan. It was there before **Lucky Cheng's**. Running on three hours sleep and too much coffee have made me forget the name, but if you really wanna know drop me a line and I'll call her and find out just for you. The third girl was **Miss Brittany** and together we made a tasty trio, or something alliterative.

Girlfriend, we worked from eight to eight. If you think it's tough maintaining your glamorous image when you go out for the evening, try being in top form for twelve hours. I loved every minute of it. Even those short naps I took while standing up. (The girls always caught me when I started to tip.) How did we do it? Caffeine! We also had hair and makeup help from **Miss Tips**. That's **Lynda Krupa** from **CDTips**. (A *News & Views* advertiser.) Whenever we got shiny the photographer would yell, "makeup!" and Lynda would hit us in the face with a giant powder puff. Oh, no... that was just an hallucination due to sleep deprivation. She just used little brushes and puffs. Basically, I loved every minute of it. But, like I said I've been so busy that

all this column's been about is me, me, me. As they say in Antigua, "No problem, mon."

A Saucer Full of Dish

I did hear a couple of things in between the meetings, the modeling and the bingeing and purging. (It's a joke!) It seems that Hollywood is a-twitter with rumors that famed director **Michael Chimino** has "gone transsexual." Just because the guy's gotten his hair done blonde and might be using a little eyeliner doesn't mean he's a TS. He's probably just a crossdresser. Whatever the case, keep up the good work Michael, and by the way, the management has asked me to let you know it's time to renew your *News & Views* subscription. Chiao, bubala.

Scary Woman, Walk On By...

I had to use that title, it was just too good. *Esquire* magazine asks "Who is the Scariest Woman Alive?" in its annual "Women We Love" issue, which just dropped into newsstands everywhere. Sixty-two percent of its readers said **Roseanne** is the scariest woman, followed by **Kathie Lee Gifford** and President Clinton's accuser **Paula Jones**. Well ya know, Roseanne is the Wicked Witch of the West. Ah, my pretties! And have you looked closely at Kathy Lee? That girls wearing more makeup than me, and that's doing some. Paula Jones? Ohhh yeah, that's scary kids. What's up with that 'do? Like ya know?

Which women did *Esquire* readers adore? Cover girl **Julianna Margulies**, publishing doyenne **Katharine Graham**, TV and stage star **Christine Baranski**, singer **Fiona Apple**, Xena herself **Lucy Lawless**, and actress **Anne Heche**. The rest are all first class examples of the type of woman that we members of the transgendered community should seek to emulate. Perhaps someday *Esquire* will do an issue of "TG Women We Love." Of course that means that they'd have to do the scariest TG woman. Don't go there girls!

Scary Woman, Scary Man

The scariest man in the USA, at the moment, is serial, spree, psycho killer **Andrew Cunanan**. He started out killing close friends and then moved on to anybody who happened to be around when Andrew needed some cash or a car. It seems that his most famous victim, fashion designer **Gianni Versace**, was at least an acquaintance of Cunanan's. They met several years ago in San Francisco and it's come out that recently Cunanan was spotted at a party in Versace's mansion. He's apparently been hiding in plain sight in Miami's high fashion, jet set, gay mecca—South Beach. All news reports concerning Cunanan have made much of the fact that he is a gay gigolo. He's single handedly set back the cause of gay rights by at least twenty or thirty years. He's given the whole Bible thumping population of the entire country a great opportunity to ignore all the good, wholesome homosexuals and concentrate on how awful them there homo killers are. Don't get too comfortable in your transgendered armor. The latest word is that police found the cheap hotel where Cunanan was hiding out and among the items he left behind when he took it on the lam was a hair trimming device of some kind. Police now theorize that Cunanan may have shaved his body hair and disguised himself as a woman. In South Beach it wouldn't be out of place to spot another drag queen, either. So, if the police theory is true, soon the southern Baptists will be able to point their fingers at that awful dress-wearing homo-killer. I hope they catch him soon. If he *has* done the femme disguise they should stake out cosmetic stores, clearance racks and the shaving cream counters of all the local drug stores.

Contest! Big Prize!

That got your attention. Back in the June issue we included a sexual fantasy survey for a woman doing her doctoral thesis. All the members who got the *News* got the survey and the doctoral candidate only got 4 of them back.

continued next page

News Beat...

Realizing the the quickest way to get a response was to offer money, **Nina Barnes** (the candidate in question) is offering a contest that could net you a big prize. The rules are simple: fill out the sexual fantasy survey put it in an envelope, include a card with your name and address (your name and address should not be on the survey) and mail the whole shebang to—Nina M. Barnes, 524 West 10th Street, Kansas City, MO 64105. If for some reason you have lost your copy of the survey write to her this minute and she will send you one. Your completed survey must be in her hands by September first. Then on September 31st she will put all the address cards in a chic designer hat and pull a winner. The winner gets \$50. That's an easy fifty bucks for detailing your sexual fantasies. So get busy girls. Win that fifty bucks, and think about donating it to your favorite charity, Renaissance.

Thanks to everyone who has stepped forward with a donation so far. All of us at the National level appreciate the added assistance. If you can't contribute any extra cash try to tell other transgendered people who don't get *News & Views* about how good it is and try to get them to join. They can sign up for the rest of the year for just \$10.

See ya next month.



Hate Crimes Developments in D.C.

Reported by Dana Priesing

There is a great deal of momentum around the hate crimes issue just now. First, the informal coalition of major civil rights organizations here in Washington continues its efforts to assemble a bill that would broaden the Department of Justice's (DOJ) hate crimes investigatory and prosecutorial jurisdiction to include actual or perceived (i) disability, (ii) sexual orientation & (iii) gender. Gender activists briefed coalition members, DOJ and certain critical actors on the Hill on the idea of ensuring through legislative history that gender is construed broadly enough to cover gender difference. If this effort comes to fruition, DOJ would be able to act when, for example, state or authorities refuse to investigate a rape of a Brandon Teena because Brandon purportedly "lies" about his gender and is therefore deemed untrustworthy. If this bill is introduced, you will be informed with the hope that you will contact your Congressional representatives and express your views concerning the bill's merits.

Second, the White House is planning a hate crimes conference in November, and the hate crimes coalition will have a role in structuring the event. The plan is to push for the conference to cover in some way the topic of hate crimes against those whose identities, physical characteristics or manner of expression transgress gender-based stereotypes. If you or someone you know has been victimized by such a hate crime, please contact me if the victim would be willing to consider coming forward. I can help

prepare the victim's statement with him or her (or s/him, whatever...).

I should say something about what a hate crime is. There is a difference between an assault or a murder, and an assault or murder that constitutes a hate crime. In a hate crime, in addition to the violence itself, there is evidence that the perpetrator has an animus against a group, and "selected the victim as a representative of that group."

The argument often is made in policy circles here that gender different folk do not need specific protection as such, because they will be covered by sexual orientation-based laws. (We've all heard this in the ENDA context, right?) In order to counter that argument in this context, we must demonstrate that gender-different folk are being specifically targeted as such. Brandon Teena's murder makes a fairly good example. It is difficult to argue that anti-lesbian bias was involved in his murder, for he lived and presented as a man. Arguably he was killed because he violated the gender-based stereotype that a male sense of self and masculine expression exist only in individuals assigned to the male sex at birth (a stereotype we all know to be nonsense).

Hopefully you get the idea of what I'm looking for. If fortune smiles, we will profit from both the hate crimes bill and the hate crimes conference by having a greater number of Americans see us as human beings with civil rights problems much like those of other marginalized groups.



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Criticism of IFGE Convention Was Unfair

By Linda Buten, Chair of the board of the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)

[Ed. Note: Last month we printed an article by Richelle G., from the *Born Free* (Riverside, Calif) newsletter that was highly critical of the IFGE's role in the Cal Unity convention in Long Beach, Calif. Here is a verbatim response to the author from IFGE's Linda Buten.]

Dear Richelle,

I am responding to your editorial in the *Born Free* newsletter that was reprinted in *Renaissance News & Views*. Let me enlighten you on a few items:

California Unity — Keep one important thing in mind, the California contingent and IFGE were 50/50 partners on this project. It is no one partner's job to pat the other on the back. As at all conventions, things will go wrong. Volunteers negate assumed responsibilities, people are no-shows, and Murphy's Law will hold true to form. Considering the circumstances, difference in venues, personality conflicts, etc., etc., I felt those who grunted the responsibility, Alison Laining and Joan Goodnight, did an admirable job. I have attended over 50 gender conventions in the past 15 years, participated in approximately 20, and completely organized a BE ALL two years ago in Cincinnati. While we all can see room for improvement, it certainly did not deserve the bull whipping you passed out.

FtM track — You stated that "For the first time at a convention of this sort there was a... track for the Female to Male TSs." In all due respect, this is the eighth time it has been repeated at an IFGE Convention. A similar program has been around for 5 years at Southern Comfort, and smaller versions have been at previous "Be All" weekends and "First Events." IFGE was not only the pioneer of such programs, money from IFGE helped fund the first FtM International Conference. (BTW- Seed money and leadership from IFGE also helped material-

ize the first "SPICE Convention", the "American Boyz Convention, the International Conference on Sex & Gender, ICTLEP, and the New Women's Conference.)

Board Members — You said IFGE Board members seemed non-existent. This is somewhat true, but what you don't realize is, the convention partners agreed that no one person be singled out. IFGE directors nor anyone else were permitted to wear identification ribbons as in past conventions. I personally attended every luncheon, dinner, cocktail party and function that time would allow. I even went bar hopping and dancing every night with new groups of people. I spoke with as many individuals as humanly possible. I always saw many of the other board members present. If you don't know them, how do you know they were there or not?

Recognition — You stated that, "the IFGE leadership and Board Members did not recognize the efforts of the local volunteers." Again it was decided by the partners that there would be no special awards for those who worked on the convention. Born Free members are part of the California Team, not exactly a group of outsiders. I don't know anyone who attended that convention that did not realize that the local groups played a large part in making it a success. It was in all the printed literature and announced several times at the podium. (BTW - IFGE did present a special award for Joan Goodnight, but I guess you missed it.)

Thursday night — Thursday night was a fund raiser for IFGE. I remember no promise or even a suggestion of dinner, only entertainment. Jim Bridges and members of the Gay Community freely donated their time to help us raise money, that in return goes back to the Community.

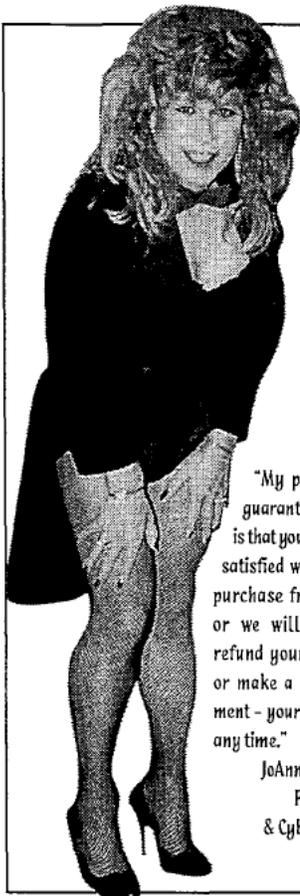
I have no idea why you think this was so offensive. The Gender Community is striving to be inclusive of everyone with gender issues — including many Drag Queens. Your statements

about them are leaning towards just being divisive, something we need a lot less of in our community. You may see Jim Bridges only as a money sucking entrepreneur who lives off the community, but if you would get to know the real person, you could have never made this statement.

Background — IFGE was established 13 years ago by individuals like you, from existing groups like yours. It was never designed to be an umbrella organization, and does not claim to be. (I hear this term used repeatedly by people who do not understand the IFGE concepts.) The purpose was to bring together community leaders and try to accomplish things no small group could do by itself. The IFGE "Coming Together Convention," is everyone's and anyone's forum. It was a tool where a local group or groups can entertain a national convention in their home town. The local group is expected to do most of the work on the local level. The conventions serves as a platform where leaders come together for many different reasons. The awards night is one of those reasons.

Community Awards — The IFGE Awards night is not an evening where IFGE gives awards to IFGE volunteers. Years ago, community leaders felt it would be grand to honor anyone who worked for the common good of the Gender Community. A separate group of individuals called the Selections and Awards Committee was formed for this purpose, and it is they who determine who is nominated and receives awards. A member of our board, Winnie Brant in this case, helps organize and maintain this committee, but the Committee speaks for itself. The cost of the awards is provided though the IFGE general fund, but the awards do not bear our name, nor do the Board have a say on who receives what. This year there were eleven awards presented at the banquet, three of them went to current and past IFGE Board Members. Over

continued on page 11



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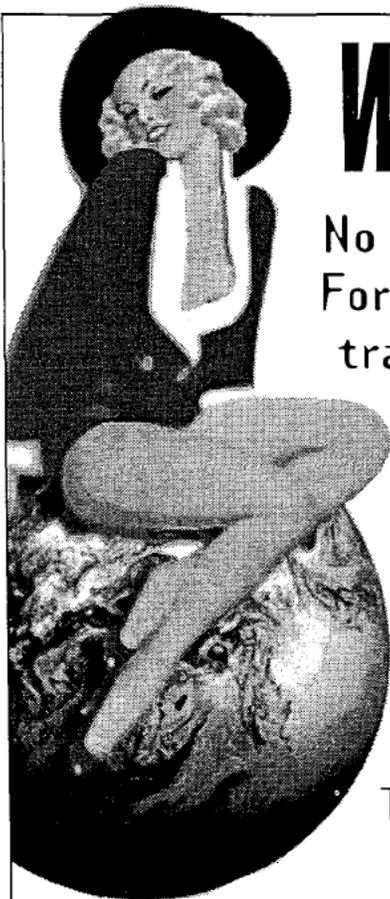
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We skipped a month with the newsletter this summer and a lot of surprising news has come to light in the interim. Let's catch up...

We learned that certain members of the military have sex outside the bonds of holy matrimony. Imagine that! Soldiers, sailors and flyboys (and girls) cutting off a slice of strange tail. A shocking development that has left me completely disillusioned about our armed forces.

Congress is holding hearings on another new scandal. Apparently, wealthy businessmen and corporations make contributions to political campaigns with the aim of convincing elected officials to vote their way on issues that concern them. Big money buys influence in politics? When did all this start, I wonder?

Cigarettes are addictive and the tobacco companies were trying to hush it up. It turns out that some secret ingredient called "nicotine" is the culprit. Now that the cat is out of the bag, people who never knew that smoking five packs a day was bad for them can get some legal and financial recourse.

The Pathfinder space mission to Mars has helped us learn that the red planet is uninhabited. However, the fact that the rocks have cute names like "Casper" and "Barnacle Bill" leads me and others to believe that some civilization must have once existed there.

And now like an alien probe into the soft tissues of the transgender community, we will begin our search for intelligent life in newsletter-land...

A HOUSE DIVIDED?

A few columns ago, I wrote about the brouhaha over by-laws in the **Chi-**

ago Chi Chapter of Tri-Ess. Apparently, the controversy lingers on. The March issue of the *Chi Tribune* newsletter carried three interesting articles that reflected the sniping going on over those dreaded by-laws.

In a column titled "Who is Miranda Stevens?" Miranda tells a little about her work as an officer of the Chi Chapter and identifies herself as a human rights activist. She writes that she "has a very difficult time... knowing that our own membership policy is discriminatory." Chi Chapter, as a Tri-Ess sorority limits full membership to heterosexual crossdressers only. Miranda continues, "I strongly believe membership should be open to all. For that reason, I voted against the adoption of the Chi Chapter by-laws."

Gloria Wright authored a column she titled *Disease!*, in which she warns the members of Chi Chapter against the tendency of some transgender support group leaders to become autocrats. She says that the old **Gateway Gender Alliance** support group came undone because of the tyranny of their leadership, who saw the group as their own club and everyone else be damned. I may be reading too much between the lines of Gloria's article but it seems she may be taking a sideways swipe at the current Chi Chapter leadership who adopted the by-laws without a general vote from the membership.

Denise [redacted], the Chi Chapter President, concludes her "President's Podium" column with a denial that dissenting views are being kept out of their newsletter. Apparently, at least one member charged that Denise, as both Editor and President, has the power to omit from the newsletter any

opinion pieces that disagree with the officers' viewpoints. Denise claims this is untrue and only space restrictions force her to withhold some contributed pieces from the *Tribune*.

It should also be noted that Chi Chapter elections are coming up and all the current office holders are unopposed. In my mention of the by-laws controversy from February, it was discovered that most rank and file members had no strong opinions about by-laws, pro or con.

That is too often the "problem" with our support organizations in a nutshell. A few concerned individuals who try to manage the group in the way they think best, a few dissidents who disagree and stir the pot, and a vast majority who simply don't care that much for the political aspect of the enterprise.

AIRHEAD? MOI?

One of my first *Vis a Vis* pieces way back when was a review of an article titled *If You're Going to be a Female, Please Don't Be an Airhead*, written by the wife of a crossdresser. The gist of the piece was that too many crossdressers focus on the more shallow issues of femininity and come across more like airheaded bimbos than complete women.

The original article was one of the most popularly reprinted pieces in the history of newsletterland, appearing in almost every group's newsletter over the past couple of years. Now, there has been a response titled *If You're Going to Be Female, Do the Best You Can* written by a Lanette W., and it too is appearing in many newsletters across the land.

Lanette defends the crossdressers, who may indeed seem like bimbos at times, on several counts. Firstly, most crossdressers have not had the years of experience necessary to swim past the shallow end of the femininity pool. Even though most crossdressers in support groups are thirtysomething and up, their feminine alter egos may only be a few years—or even just a few months—old. No wonder we may seem fixated on nail polish, shoes and hairstyles. We need to get through that stage before we move into more weighty issues.

She points out that crossdressers do not intentionally try to mock real females by focusing on surface appearances and lightweight topics. In fact, "we would give anything to share the full female experience," she says. The trouble is that we start with the outward trappings of femininity and then have a hard time finding others with whom to share anything deeper. For a lot of married crossdressers, spousal support is strained, thus shutting out any sharing with the one real woman in their lives. Support groups should be a source of help but if the room is filled with crossdressers stuck in the same development stage, they could all be airheads together, and that is how the original complaint came to be filed in the first place.

So Lanette lays out a fairly decent response to the criticism leveled at us. She concludes her article by saying, "I am still learning, and I am hoping that more understanding genetic females will help me find the answers. The answers will reside in being afforded the opportunity to share in the female experience with those who are understanding and willing enough to allow us in."

WELCOME TO THE RENAISSANCE-A-THON!

In a letter sent to members of Renaissance, JoAnn Roberts and Angela Gardner informed us that our organization is having financial difficulties. In fact, the difficulties are so serious that they wrote, "If not for some of the income produced by the Congress on Sex & Gender, Renaissance National might have closed its doors by now."

This news came as something of a shock to me and I'm usually clued in to stuff like this. I can imagine that it is perhaps a greater shock to the general membership and other individuals in the TG community.

Renaissance has always been a strong and growth oriented organization. Aside from our core chapters in Philadelphia, Lower Susquehanna Valley, Delaware, and Lehigh Valley, we also have affiliate organizations scattered throughout the US. Financial shortfalls are not uncommon in growing enterprises as costs climb faster

than revenues. That Renaissance now finds itself in dire straits only points up that no organization or its membership should ever become complacent in its support base.

The activities of the Renaissance Chapters are distinct from the Renaissance National organization but their success in membership helps fund the National organization through dues and newsletter subscriptions. If the Chapter memberships dwindle, support to National dwindles likewise. That is why it is vital to have dynamic leadership at our Chapter levels to retain and increase membership by having something to offer those who come through the doors each month. But it is also incumbent on the membership to support their local Chapters by participating or getting involved to improve things if they see deficiencies.

The National Board is requesting a one time contribution of only \$7 per member to see them through this crisis. That is a small price to pay for the benefit of having an organization like Renaissance to call your home away from home. Perhaps out of this difficulty, we will see some renewed vigor out of our leadership and the general membership to insure our continued success.

BREAST OBSESSED

In my last column I lamented the passing of my favorite sitcom, "Married...With Children." I may have found a weak substitute in the WB Network's show "Unhappily Ever After." The reason for my interest in this not terribly funny Sunday night entry is the young actress who plays the daughter on the show, Nikki Cox.

Young Miss Cox is built so as to make the Kelly Bundy character from "Married" look positively undernourished.

I don't know where the producers of this show found Nikki Cox, but I suspect she probably answered a casting ad in *Variety* that read, "Wanted: beautiful young actress with unfriggin'-believable hooters to play role of daughter on inane WB sitcom." Believe me, Nikki Cox fills out the part very well indeed.

Showing off a truly great set is not just a game for the young lovelies. Wit-

ness the recent cover of the *National Enquirer* with a photo of fifty-something Raquel Welch, still the "Great White Slope" of bosomania after all these years. In the photo, Raquel fills and spills out of the sheer lace cups of a lovely evening gown. She's currently playing the title role in Broadway's *Victor/Victoria*, a woman impersonating a gay man impersonating a woman. If you can believe Raquel Welch playing a man... then she is truly a great actress.

And while we're plumbing the depths of my breast obsession, did you happen to catch the episode of *Home Improvement* when Pamela Anderson, the original "Tool Time Girl," returned to work alongside the new and current "Tool Time Girl," Debbe Dunning? Now, I'm a big fan of Pamela Anderson. In fact, whenever I see her I want to applaud her performance... but I usually only have one hand free. And while Debbe Dunning doesn't have the surreal Barbie-Doll looks of Pamela, when they stood side by side and chest to chest on *Home Improvement*, Debbe made Pam look like a skinny little boy. And that's worthy of a one-handed round of applause from any red-blooded male, cross-dresser or not.



Second International Congress Revenue Report

Income

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Registrations | \$16,874.00 |
| Vendors | \$800.00 |
| <u>Donations</u> | <u>\$2,135.00</u> |
| Subtotal Income | \$19,809.00 |

Expenses

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Postage | \$2,000.00 |
| Reproduction | \$1,100.00 |
| Rooms (Spkr/Staff) | \$2,100.00 |
| Travel (Speakers) | \$1,700.00 |
| Food & Bev | \$9,801.00 |
| A/V Costs | \$1,900.00 |
| Entertainment | \$585.00 |
| <u>Hirschfeld Exhibit</u> | <u>\$1,000.00</u> |
| Subtotal Expenses | \$18,386.00 |

Net Profit/Loss \$1423.00



Gender Reflections

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

Counseling The Partner of the Crossdresser

Elaine came to see me because of rage and frustration with her husband Eddie who is a transvestite. She refused my offer to meet with them together first and then individually. At our first meeting I learned that Elaine believed crossdressing was a bad habit, although not an illness, and therefore did not see the need for counseling for her husband. She however, came for help in dealing with Eddie and helping him to get over this habit.

The above scenario is not unusual although there are several variations on the theme of trying to change one's partner. There is the mental illness scenario, the one that involves sin and redemption, and the one which confuses sexual orientation and gender identity and may cause a partner to doubt her heterosexuality as well as that of her spouse.

What all these situations have in common are:

- The woman is almost always ignorant about transvestism. She does not understand that it is not a condition of

illness, sin or homosexuality and she needs help to know that she plays no role in her husband's gender expression. Prescribing books that render a comprehensible explanation of this behavior is very useful along with building a trusting therapeutic relationship.

- The couple's sexual relationship is frequently compromised. Transvestites often want to crossdress prior to or during sex with their wives. To the woman who doesn't understand and is frightened, disgusted or upset by this inclination, sex may become an ordeal or an event subject to conditional agreement. Eventually a situation may evolve in which each partner takes turns enjoying sex. For example, "Tonight we are doing it my way, or we are not doing it at all!" The remedy to this requires the participation of both partners in treatment and I encourage them to meet with me together.

- In all cases the woman is powerless to change her partner's need for periodic crossdressing. No technique, no seduction, no punishment will dis-

courage the expression of his feminine persona for long. However, with his agreement, such expression can be managed or shaped to better conform to her expectations of a husband. Again, counseling is most effective when both partners participate.

- Wives of CDs seeking counseling either have a terror of discovery of their husbands' transvestism or a need to expose them to the people who are most meaningful in his life. Either of these needs, if unexamined and not understood, may contribute to the death of their relationship—if not the end of the marriage. Individual counseling can be very effective in giving the spouse a window into her unconscious motivation to cause either herself or husband such pain.

In counseling the partners of a CD, I address the above issues and any individual concerns that are raised. Dealing with children sensitively and with primary emphasis on what is in the children's best interest often is a focus of treatment. Arranging for sufficient privacy to process what is occurring between them, becoming reassured of husband's discretion, and establishing fair rules surrounding costs involved in husband's purchase of clothing and membership in gender organizations, are some of the variety of concerns specific to certain but not all couples.

Dr. Anderson can be contacted at: 1537 Franklin St., Suite 104, San Francisco, CA, 94109. Phone: (415) 776-0139; FAX: (415) 441-0936

Going Once... Going Twice... Sold!

Charity Auction To Benefit Renaissance National

Anyone interested in a Corvette (radio-controlled) for sale? Or a theater card from the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*? We've got both in the upcoming First Annual Renaissance Charity Auction planned for October 18 at the Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting.

The Renaissance National budget crunch has been alleviated to a degree by the generous donations of Renaissance members. In an effort to bolster the coffers, the Greater Philadelphia Chapter has offered to hostess a charity

auction at their October meeting. How can you participate? You can help in two ways. First, you can donate items to the auction. Items do not need to be transgender related (our members *do* have many and varied interests), but they do need to have high interest value. For example, we do not want clothing unless it is an upscale beaded gown or a fur. Likewise, no shoes, please. Jewelry is limited to high-quality costume items and real gold, diamonds, and pearls.

Then after you've made your donation, attend the auction itself to buy some of the items. Board member Beth Marshall has offered to be our auctioneer for the evening. Beth will also need volunteers to work that evening. Contact the national office to donate, or volunteer to help. Show up on the 18th with cash or checks.

In next month's issue we will have a list of donated items and will continue to run that list as it grows until October. See you at the auction. 

IFGE...

the years IFGE Board Members have received about 30% of all awards given out. Keep in mind, most of us are very involved in a number of organizations, and IFGE is just one of many.

Long time dedicated leaders like Joan Goodnight in your area, are very far and few between. Most people who win a national award like the Trinity or Virginia Prince, have at least 10 years of community service under their belt. I personally have been very active for over 17 years. I still lecture in colleges, answer mail, work hotlines, organize meetings, and meet the newcomers on a local level. I've spent large sums of

money and twelve years on the national scene. This year I received my first and only award.

You speak about Saturday night's attendance. If you haven't figured out the general attitude of the Gender Community by now, let me clue you in. Ninety plus percent of the Community takes, never gives back, and couldn't give a damn about the next person. Sure it was hot, hard to see and hear, and they really didn't know the person.

But for those who did attend, it was a chance to say THANK YOU to those special leaders who have given so much in the past.

I hope that next time you decide to publicly voice your views about any person or organization you sit back and

re-think, research, and speak lovingly from your heart. Healthful and constructive criticisms are always welcomed but your letter ran from self-congratulation to unbridled vehemence aimed at IFGE. The Gender Community is too small to be divided by walls of ill will. Building bridges between differences is our hopes to a better tomorrow. If you are dissatisfied with anything regarding IFGE, myself or Alison would be more than happy to speak with you. I hope you will continue your efforts with the Born Free Organization and I regret not having the opportunity to meet you personally.

Sincerely,

Linda Buten Chair of the Board of IFGE



EEOC Comes to ICTLEP

The keynote speaker at the International Conference on Transgender Law And Employment Policy's (ICTLEP) sixth annual conference, Transgen '97, was Commissioner Reginald E. Jones of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). He is one of four people directing the affairs of the mammoth agency, charged with enforcing all federal statutes concerning employment discrimination. At the time of his nomination [to the Commission], Mr. Jones had served as Senior Legislative Counsel in the office of Senator James M. Jeffords (R-VT), since January of 1993. Previously, from 1989 to 1993, he had been the Minority Counsel and Staff Director of the Labor Subcommittee on the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Mr. Jones also worked on a wide variety of legislative issues during his years in the Senate, including successful enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as many other, less renowned efforts to revise federal employment civil rights law.

Commissioner Jones spoke to the ICTLEP convention about the battle to end employment discrimination against transgendered persons. He

traced tg activists' efforts, starting with Karen Kerin's contacts with Senator Jim Jeffords (R-VT) as early as 1993, through the transgender national events in D.C. in October of 1995 and February of 1997, to recent discussions in his office at the EEOC. He mentioned EEOC's early efforts to use Title VII and its sex-discrimination protections on behalf of transsexuals, and their rebuff by three Federal Appeals Courts. His opinion of these decisions is succinct, "For me it is a matter of intuitive common sense that such discrimination should be included within the sex category of Title VII... I think both the result and the basis for the analysis are wrong."

Before his appointment to the EEOC in 1996, Jones worked on Capitol Hill for many years and discussed the legislative history of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) from that perspective, and suggested ways in which the transgender community can work effectively for legislative change.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was created by Congress and enforces Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

NOW Passes Transinclusion Resolution

After years of debate and dialog, the National Organization for Women (NOW) has passed a resolution on transinclusion. The successful vote followed personal support by NOW President Patricia Ireland, and concentrated efforts by NOW-NJ President Bear Atwood and NOW Lesbian Rights Coordinator Kim Ward.

The measure was originally introduced and unanimously passed at NOW-NJ's State Conference in 1994, and then introduced at the 1995 National Conference in Columbus, Ohio. A dozen gender activists showed up with petitions supporting the measure. But, in spite of signatures by over half the attendees, the measure was tabled by the National Board, where it languished for the next 2 conventions.

The breakthrough was prompted by an invitation Ms. Atwood extended to transgender activists to address the State Coordinators Conference in San Francisco several months ago. As more State Presidents got behind the measure, Ms. Ireland asked activists to address the NOW National Board at the current conference.



Hot Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"A word to the wise ain't necessary—it's the stupid ones who need the advice." — Bill Cosby

Well, well. Guess who just slapped the gay community across their collective face? The **Georgia State Attorney General's** office, that's who. See, there was this woman who was offered a job with the Attorney General's office there which was later revoked when it was discovered the woman was **lesbian**. Now, I'll bet you thought that she was protected from discrimination because of her sexual orientation. And well she might have been if that would have been the argument used to rescind the job offer. It wasn't. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals found that the woman was let go not for her sexual orientation, but because she seemingly did not appreciate the importance of appearances. They said the case was about "**conduct**" and "**appearance**" not "sexual orientation." Gee whiz! Appearance? Now I wonder what law that gets covered under? It's certainly not covered under the recently proposed **Employment Non-Discrimination Act** (ENDA) supported by the gay community's **Human Rights Campaign** (HRC). But, it might have been if the 1997 ENDA proposal had been tg-inclusive where appearance is the heart of the issue. If the ENDA backers are smart, they'll learn from this.

Maybe HRC is starting to see the wisdom of a tg-inclusive policy. They're sending lobbyist **Nancy Buermeyer** to this year's **International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy** (ICTLEP) to present a Q&A session on HRC and its relationship to the tg community. That's easy. It doesn't have one if HRC thinks talking to one or two people from the community is a relationship. **Phyllis Frye**, ICTLEP Executive Director, has an interesting take on the tg-exclusive ENDA bill. She calls it a bill asking for "special rights" for gays, lesbians and bisexuals. That should put a knot in HRC's pantyhose. Finally, Frye announced she will no longer produce the annual conference after this year. No word yet on whether the ICTLEP board will continue to hold the conference.

Want to understand more about appearance on the job? Maybe we should ask **Kristine Holt** to talk to HRC. Holt, a male to female transsexual in transition, was fired from her job for allegedly violating her employer's dress code. Holt responded by filing suit alleging her firing violated the **Pennsylvania Human Relations Act** (PHRA). The court ruled Holt had no claim under PHRA and on appeal the lower court ruling was affirmed by the state's Supreme Court. It was clarified that a person seeking protection under PHRA must demonstrate a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more of life's major activities and that transsexualism does not fall within that definition.

You lose one and then you win one. A federal district court in New York held that **transsexuals are protected** under New York State and City Human Rights Laws. (Maybe Holt should move to New York.) Although every federal court that has considered the question of transsexual employment discrimination under federal **Title VII** has generally rejected it, this court found that the "in-

terpretation of the [state] HRL and city HRL is independent of federal analysis."

I received a review copy of lesbian writer/activist **Pat Califia's** *Sex Changes: The Politics of Transgenderism*. I was not at all pleased with it. Califia totally ignores the contributions of crossdressers to tg politics. She builds her case solely on the ideologies of transsexuals, as if they had an exclusive right. In fact, speaking of transvestites she states, "Their cultural history overlaps and is linked with the politics of the transgendered community but is not identical to it." She lost me right there. That one sentence told me Califia doesn't have a clue as to who and what make up the "transgender community" and its "politics." She reviews, extensively, **Virginia Prince's** *The Transvestite And His Wife* and refers to Virginia as "he" totally ignoring the fact that Virginia created the word "transgender" and that she has lived as a woman full time for the past 30 years. Instead Califia uses this 30 year old book as if it is the TV Manifesto, and we all know how outdated it is now. I find it hard to believe that Califia could not find any positive contributions to tg politics by CDs. I wonder if she ever heard of the **Bill of Gender Rights**? Or maybe she wasn't told that CDs played a major role in forming **GenderPAC**. This book needed a lot more research before publication.

If you haven't yet seen **Con Air** with **Nicholas Cage**, **John Malkovich**, and **John Cusack**, then you've missed one of the great summer blockbuster movies. But there's another reason to look for **Con Air** — **Sally Can't Dance**. That's the name of one of the convict characters in the movie and Sally is transgendered, most likely transsexual. Sally is played by New York actor **Renoly** (just the one name) who says that, "...Sally is the bravest character in the film. I wanted her to be feminine and sexual and daring, and that's who she is." Ap-

Hot Buzz

parently some of the gay watchdogs didn't appreciate Sally and were enraged according to the July 22 issue of *The Advocate*. I say who cares if a few gays were upset over Sally. She isn't one of theirs; she's one of ours, convict or not. I thought Sally was played quite well. Renoly has his thoughts about the gay ire: "I often see gay people making fun of drag queens and looking down on transvestites and cross-dressers. To me, for someone to look at their own image and criticize a gay person for being feminine is a sign of not really caring for and accepting your own kind." You go girl! Sally *can* dance.

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Southern Comfort Conference 1997 announced the launch of their website, at <<http://members.aol.com/sccatl>>. Here you'll find maps and directions to the site, a preliminary schedule of workshops and activities, and even a photo gallery of images from the 1996 event. The Southern Comfort Conference will be held from Wednesday, October 1 to Sunday, October 5 at the Atlanta Central Holiday Inn (418 Armour Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30324). Please join us for our Seventh Annual weekend of seminars and activities. To contact Southern Comfort Conference: Write: P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta, GA 30357-1591 Call: (404) 633-6470. E-mail to <SCCATl@aol.com>.

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A cosmetic surgeon will do consults online. He will even take a still video image and alter it to show you what you might look like after cosmetic surgery. **Dr. Edward James Domanskis** at <www.plasticsurgery-video.com> has set up the site. All you need is a video camera connected to a computer connected to the net (try Kinko's) and \$250 for a 30 minute consult. Right! Not.

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Right up there with cosmetic surgery is liposuction. Now there's a new method called **lipo-dissolution** or LD. The procedure claims to remove fat without dieting, surgery or scars. The technique uses high energy ultrasound to **melt the fat cells** right through the skin. Only

problem is no one seems to know where those melted fat cells go. The procedure is very experimental at this time and has its critics as well as supporters. We'll keep you posted on developments.

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I was really pleased to be invited to participate again in the **Citizen Ambassador Program** sending sexologists and educators around the world. Last time, I was invited to go to **China**. This time it's to **Poland, Hungary** and the **Czech Republic**. I could not attend last time and I can't go this time either, but it was nice to be asked.

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Some of the Fashion Buzz was about the auction of **Princess Di's** gowns and who was after them. It was rumored that **RuPaul** would be submitting bids. Not bloody likely. LaRu is a bit chunkier than Di, doncha think? Actually, I have it on good authority that Joan Rivers impersonator **Frank Marino** did buy one of the gowns. Frank, who is a slim size 10, has no intentions of wearing the gown. He says it will be used for some good old Vegas-style PR and then probably be resold to another collector. Speaking of RuPaul, have you seen him on the new episodes on VH-1? Miss Thing is putting on a little pouch and should not stand sideways to the camera (dish, dish). Come to think of it, he shouldn't turn his back either. And lose the corset, too, while you're at it.

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While we're sweating it out in August, you need to start thinking about the Fall and what fashions are coming into vogue. Fortunately for most crossdressers you're going to be "IN" fashion for a change. The Buzz for Fall is all about **stiletto heels** and **micro-mini skirts**. The stilettos can be **pumps, sling-backs, short boots** or **calf-high** boots as long as the toes are really **pointy** and for maximum effect should show **toe cleavage**. Hop on over to the **Classic Pumps** website <www.classicpumps.com> and check out the fare. I've already got mine. How high is high? On the runways, spikes topped out around 5-inches. In real life, most will be between 3 to 4 inches high, which can be pretty dangerous. Combine that with ankle straps, open heels and pointy toes and you gotta

be careful in these things. Sounds kinda like "Don't-wear-these-at home. I'm-a-professional-crossdresser" type shoes.

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Meanwhile **micro-mini skirts** that flirt with indecent exposure laws were seen everywhere on the runways. One can only hope that what shows up in the stores will be designed with a modicum of good taste. Ha! A transvestite with good taste in clothes. There's an oxymoron for you. The micro's for Fall are **short, tight, slit, side split, or wrapped**, take your choice. **Richard Tyler** claims that the ultra short skirts are "...not shocking. It's an accepted classic length." What the Hell, if you've got the bod, flaunt it. Everyone else will be jealous.

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Also returning for Fall are **menswear** and the **power suit** (a.k.a big shoulders). This menswear thing happens every few years and women are encouraged to go raid the men's closets and stores. Now what do you think would happen if men were encouraged to go raid women's closets and stores. They'd be arrested, that's what. There's gender inequality for ya. Meanwhile, the power suit of the 80's has been reinterpreted with strong shoulders, tiny waists and short skirts.

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The evening look for Fall is another piece of good news for crossdressers — **sequins** and **beads** are back in favor. And it's about time, too. I have far too many sequin dresses languishing in my closet and no where to wear them. As usual, there's always at least one eccentric fashion idea per season and this Fall it is pairing something beaded (a top or vest) with some simple, understated daywear. Where is **Christine Hochberg** when you need her?

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Finally, **oval** or **rounded nails** are back in style. I favor oval shaped. They make your fingers and hands appear slimmer and longer and I'll take any help I can get to appear more feminine.

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So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think being "in fashion" is a victimless crime. Comments? Write care of this publication or email to <cdspub.com>.

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Now I Know How You Feel

Now I Know How You Feel

by Linda Kaye

As the partner of a transgendered man, perhaps the most difficult thing to understand is what the crossdresser feels when dressed en femme. I hear that question all the time from women in transgendered relationships, and I, too, have often asked that question.

Some years ago, I had a CD friend express joy at having the wind whip the skirts around her legs, and the feeling of air against stockings. It gave her that "Marilyn Monroe" feeling—you know, when she stood over an air vent and the air whipped her skirts up? Well, I tried to relate to what my friend was saying, but short of knowing how free the wind made me feel, I couldn't relate to the rest of her statement.

My partner, Vanessa, gets a feeling of deep satisfaction when wearing breast forms. It is a real sense of pleasure and completeness for her. I enjoy her breasts, but I have never had that feeling about my own. They are simply part of my body, neither big nor small, and not necessarily important to me. Likewise, Vanessa enjoys the feel of silky lingerie and the tightness of briefs. I enjoy wearing sexy lingerie but mainly for the look, rather than the feel. So, here again, I could not relate.

However, the other day, upon leaving the office, I dropped my keys as I

was putting them in the car door. I had on a long skirted denim dress, and as I stooped (in a hopefully ladylike way) to pick them up, my skirt swirled out around me, onto the pavement. I experienced a sense of complete delight at this, feeling overwhelmingly feminine at that moment. As I drove home, I realized that I had experienced a sensation that my partner, Vanessa, must experience, as do all crossdressers.

I began thinking about this pleasurable feeling and remembering things similar to this that happened to me in the past. As a teenager, I loved to dress up in flowing robes with lots of scarves, and I would (in the privacy of my room) swirl around, fantasizing that I was a dancer and part of a harem. Childish fantasies but fun, and I did enjoy the feel of the flowing cloth around my legs, and the silky feeling of the scarves.

I also remembered how much I have always enjoyed wearing long skirts and dresses. My first thought was that they covered up my hefty legs, but on second thought, I admitted to myself that I enjoyed the femininity of the long skirts, that they made me feel soft and sexy and beautiful.

Ah, at last I had found the common ground with my partner, Vanessa. Just as I experience the pleasure of certain types of clothing, so, too, does Vanessa.

She does not get these feelings when dressed in male clothing; nor do I. She experiences a sense of pleasure, a softness, a rightness when she is dressed in women's clothes; so do I. I detest androgynous clothing or wearing any type of male-like clothing. So does Vanessa.

Comfort often dictates to us what we wear; yet, comfort can be unfeminine at times. An old Tee Shirt is so comfortable, but when I am feeling particularly sexual, I want the feeling of silk and satin against my skin. When Vanessa wants to feel feminine and sexy, that's what she wears. Even when dressed as her male self, she wears something soft and feminine underneath, a reminder of the feelings which mean so much to her. Likewise, I always try to wear a sexy, rather than comfortable, bra and undies, simply because they make me feel feminine.

I think I've finally found that common ground with my partner and it is a realization that took me years to reach. I find that I prefer my partner as Vanessa, and this added realization of what she feels makes me feel even closer to her. It adds to the intimacy of our relationship, that inner communication we have. It makes things even better. Well, gotta go—Vanessa and I have some shopping to do!



It's The Journey That's Important

by Vanessa Kaye

A by product of our goal-oriented society is that we tend to place far greater value on the destination, or end result, than we do on the journey. Overlooking the landscape along the highway, and thinking only of how many more miles it is to our destination, results in missing out on the pleasures and lessons we may experience along the way.

When I was living in Tokyo, a friend of mine asked if I would like to go with

him to see an archery tournament. I accepted his invitation and following a short train ride to Meiji Shrine in the downtown area, we walked through the gardens and eventually came upon the archery area. I thought it was odd that such an event was being held at a holy place; however, one comes to expect such things in the East.

My friend explained to me that the men who were in the tournament were the finest archers among the priests. He also told me that

years and years of training were required before one was allowed to compete in such a competition.

I looked around and something just didn't seem right. There was no "scoring" as would be typical in an archery tournament in the west. The targets had no such provisions for a "bull's eye," nor the surrounding rings. I asked my friend, "How do they know who wins?"

"Win?," my friend repeated. "Oh,

continued next page

Vanessa...

you misunderstand. They are not competing against each other. It is not like that at all."

I then asked, "How do they keep their own score. Is one part of the target more points than another?"

"Target?," again my friend replied with question. "The target isn't important at all. It is simply to stop the arrows from going into the trees."

"This isn't a tournament. What's the purpose?" My friend, who often found me to be quite lost in such concepts, replied, "The object is not the target. It is the drawing of the bow. The arrows will find the target on their own. Watch."

I did as I was told. It was simply amazing. The archers, possessing great strength and discipline, were able to pull back their long bow strings so slowly, that it almost appeared they were not moving at all. It took several minutes from the time the arrow was placed in the bow, until the time the arrow was released.

It was then that I finally learned the

"secret" of Eastern ways. It's the process, the journey, that is important. This can be seen in every aspect of their society. Perhaps the most popular example is the "Tea Ceremony." To an outsider, this at first appears to be an over elaborate, ritualized, waste of time to prepare a not so tasty cup of green tea. However, the tea is not the point. It is the process, the pleasure of watching someone prepare the tea, the porcelain pieces, the bamboo brush, the clothing, and the frame of mind one achieves. The tea itself, is the least important part of the entire ceremony.

In the impoverished areas of the Orient, this attitude is even more obvious. Regardless of the person's station in life, or their task, they take pleasure in whatever it is they are doing. Imagine watching a street sweeper, with a straw broom not a machine, singing and sweeping. There was the newspaper recycling man who always carefully wrapped and tied up the bundles of old papers, in perfectly uniform packages. Why go to such effort? By the end of the day these were going to be thrown into some enormous shredding

machine. The answer is in an underlying teaching, "Take pleasure in what you are doing at the moment, whatever it is."

So it is with crossdressers. Linda and I speak with a great many couples. One of the complaints we often hear from spouses and partners of crossdressers is, "It just takes so long for him/her to get ready. It's a great waste of time."

No, it is not a "waste of time." It's the pleasure of the process. The transformation process, is one that should be relished, not rushed. Like the slow, disciplined drawing of the bow string, it should be enjoyed. Just as the target is not the object, neither is the completed external feminine image. It is the process, not the result.

When one takes the time to enjoy the process, whatever the task, the result will follow naturally. Much the same as the arrows found their target.

One dear sister of mine, out of necessity, often transforms herself in her truck or van. This is sad to me. While I know that she has the pleasure of being her femme self for a time, I feel

continued on page 14

To Goddess & Beyond...

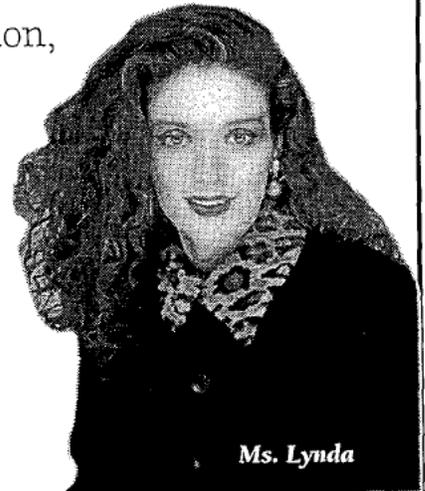
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Ms. Lynda

Second Congress Cuties Cut Up!



Miss Gardner takes advantage of a captive banquet audience to promote the 10th Anniversary Renaissance History booklet. (see page xx)



Dina Amberle (otherwise known as Our Lady of the Feathers) shows her finery at the Renaissance 10th Anniversary Banquet.



Jody (r) and Angela get up close at the Park Ridge Hotel on the glittering banquet night.

Vanessa...

that she is missing out on something very important. She is not able to enjoy the process of transformation.

While I dress quite often, when I am going out, I have a certain "ritual" or "ceremony" that I follow. Much like the tea ceremony, it is the pleasure of each step that I relish, the end result follows naturally.

I begin by preparing whatever clothing I'll be using. If it is something that needs ironing, I iron it carefully, slowly and with pleasure. Next, I select the appropriate undergarments. Finally, I select the shoes and jewelry.

All of the above clothing and accessories are readied. The lingerie is carefully and neatly placed on the bed cover. The shoes, placed by the foot of

the bed. The outer clothing is placed on hangers on the outside of the closet door. The jewelry, earrings, necklace and rings, are polished and placed on the dresser top.

Next, I arrange my cosmetics by the sink. I begin by laying out a small hand towel. Then, I make sure to wipe the each container and to fluff each brush. Each particular make-up item is placed in the order of use, from left to right on the towel.

Once all of these things are in place, I prepare a luxurious bubble bath. In the bath, I shave carefully and closely. I take the time to enjoy the bath. After drying, I apply a skin moisturizer.

Once ready to begin the makeup process, I pour myself a glass of wine to enjoy and turn on the radio.

The application of makeup can be a

great pleasure, if not rushed. Take the time to apply each product in a particular order. Between each step, I sip some wine and wait for the product to set, before proceeding.

As the transformation process progresses, I find that I change internally as well as externally. Gone are the pressures of everyday work and demands. These are now replaced by a feeling of serenity and peacefulness.

The final touches of putting on the clothing, jewelry and hair, complete the external transformation. I take the time to enjoy this image. And, as I look in the mirror, I find that the person I see, agrees with the person that I feel within.

Take the time to enjoy the process. The external appearance will follow naturally.

Hugs, Vanessa



Cuties? Oh yeah!



...and cuties they are! Miss Bob Davis (l) from San Francisco, and Miss Ben (r) from Richmond, Virginia, sport the latest look in 21st Century fashion - no hair. We all wonder how Miss Bob kept that hat in place all night. MORE PHOTOS ON PAGES 19, 23, 24.

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Making Sense of It All

Why?

For most of my life I have asked, "Why?" Why am I the way I am? Why am I different? Why do I have to have these feelings, these wishes to be feminine, when I know my body is (or was) that of a man? Why can't I be like everyone else? Why, why, why? It has taken me a lifetime (least a good portion of it) to understand at last that the "why" I have been asking is the wrong one and that there is another "why" which is more productive both for me and ultimately for those around me.

The "why" which has plagued me all my life has a self-pitying sound to it, as if I were asking, "Why me?" It sounds more like a complaint than anything useful. To keep asking "why" in this manner is to keep looking for a culprit. What I have finally learned is that blaming is useless, except as a way of avoiding responsibility for one's self.

Rather than spend time and energy trying to figure why I am the way I am and blaming someone/something for my feminine wishes, I have finally seen the truth of the matter. The truth is that my life would be fuller and more productive if I could simply accept myself for who I am the way I am. My so-called "condition" might be better seen for what it really is: my identity as a person. Just as the sky is blue and the grass is green, so, too, is my sense of self a gift from God. If I do not respect that gift, who will? It is time to treasure this gift of life and to be kind to it. I should feed it right, though not excessively, clothe it properly and enjoyably, allow it to find personally satisfying work and hobbies, and perhaps most important of all, help it to find fulfilling human relationships. Maybe I will even allow myself to reach into the unknown to realize the sacredness of all that I feel and do in this life of mine. I will then see that I am only a small but nevertheless important part of the scheme of things and that I must

do my best to make my life, and the life of each person with whom I come in contact, a better experience.

It is out of this effort to live more fully in the present, especially as a transgendered person, that I have begun to know the true meaning of the question, "Why?" It is that meaning, introduced above, along with some answers out of my own life experience, which I have tried to capture in a poem called, appropriately, "Why?":

Why?

For sunsets
that pave a lake with gold,
and mornings
when hope resounds
in every chirp.
For deep skies at night
with stars that hypnotize,
and the sun at noon
which heats the hunger's blood.

Why?

Because babies smile
and kittens purr
and horses prance
and butterflies dance.
Because God speaks
in thunderclaps
and signs His name
in lightning bolts
and takes you in His arms
with every ocean swell
and every wilderness breeze.

Why?

To see the fields
of wild flowers
that decorate the valleys
in the high country,
to smell the hay just cut
and the animals
that fertilize the pastures,
to taste wild berries
and trout just caught and cooked,
to swim and run and love and sleep
and live those moments
the memory keeps.

Why?

To meet old friends
and meet with new ones,
to dance and drink and laugh
and play
and learn of life
both good and bad,
to cook a meal,
to read a book,
to write a poem,
to feel the sand,
to share one's soul
and hold another's hand.

Why?

That I may listen
to my favorite melodies,
to my favorite souls
and to myself,
that I may be
and be with others
till the rains cease
for me.

And so at last I am beginning to ask a "why" which yields meaningful and useful answers to the daily challenges of my life as well as to the challenge of my life as a whole. It is true that my gender confusion is itself proving to be at least a partial explanation of the general and mystifying unhappiness I experienced during a good portion of my life, which included childhood, teenhood, and adulthood. I never thought that something called "gender confusion" could be a major factor in my unhappiness. After having spent a great deal of time and effort trying to solve the riddle of my being, it turns out that my self-recognition and self-acceptance as a transsexual seem to have settled a lot of my inner turmoil. But I no longer have an interest in asking why I was so confused about my gender in the first place. I simply want to face life with the answers I find to the fundamental human question we all must ask, regardless of our gender: "Why?"



The Name Game

by Joan Goodnight

In perusing the newsletters from around the country, I see that the name game is once again enjoying immense popularity. It seems like we rather enjoy the mostly nonsensical pastime of determining what those of us in the gender community like to call ourselves. Now the most general terms bandied about are: transvestite (TV), transsexual (TS), and transgenderist (TG). Within each of the first two terms there are variations to the nomenclature, i.e., a transvestite is also known as a crossdresser (CD), drag queen (DQ), no-op, etc.; a transsexual can also be identified with a descriptor of being pre-op, post-op, male to female (MtF), and female to male (FtM).

The term transgenderist, however, was coined by none other than the dowager empress herself, Virginia Prince, to identify those macho males that wish to live full time as women, wear all the exotic and erotic frilly foos associated with the fairer sex, but do not wish to partake in the ultimate pleasure and fantasy of genital amputation. You're not going to catch this bunch checking in to Dr. Biber's Bed and Breakfast and giving new meaning to the term "Rocky Mountain Oysters." No siree! This species is also generally

loath to identify with either the TV or TS elements of the community because of their unique and lofty position but feel they are deserving of their own classification. I couldn't agree more. When, on occasion, this breed does condescend to mix with the remainder of gender society, they do tend, however, to remain aloof and have adopted an "I'm more feminine than thou" attitude, plus they generally look upon their crossdressing sisters as brothers, and view the transsexual, regardless of sexual switch, with nothing but utter contempt.

There is, however, one major sticking point to the term transgender, or transgenderist. Since its invention the usage of the word has been bastardized to the point that it no longer really identifies what Virginia originally had in mind when she coined it. Through common usage over the past several years the word transgender has come to mean all of the elements that make up our community. How many times has the phrase "the transgender community" been used, referred to, or just plain popped up whenever commentaries or conversations concerning community affairs take place? No one really knows, but when the term is used it's generally meant to be all inclusive rather than singular.

I think that in order to honor Virginia and her most devoted disciples we need to formulate a new and unique descriptor. I took it upon myself to contact various people in both the scientific community and government service whose specialty is assigning proper identification to people, places, and things. They have come up with the perfect nomenclature for our friends. Therefore, *it* has been decreed because these individuals are neither transvestite nor transsexual, but lie somewhere in between, from this day forward and forever after, these full-time men in tights shall be known as Transvestuals.

This term appears to defy our American passion for shortening names to suit our vocal laziness but in the interests of remaining a red-blooded, tax-paying citizen I suppose we could acquiesce and call these people "T-vest's." Since there are already political action committees (PACs) formed for the TS and TV segments (Transsexual Menace and Transvestite Nuisance) the joint scientific/government committee has taken the liberty of forming a PAC for the T-vests. It's called the "Transvestual Annoyance PAC." Their mission is to lobby and annoy every gender organization in the country with a unique brand of silliness concerning gender terms, definitions, and the pursuit of celibate heterosexuality.

© *Girl Talk*, Vol 12, #6, June 1997.



From l to r: Dallas Denny, Exec. Director of AEGIS; Marisa Richmond, Chair of AEGIS board & member of Tennessee Vals; Queen of Prussia and chair of the Renaissance board, JoAnn Roberts; Exec. Director of IFGE, Alison Laing.



Congress volunteers Gloria I (l) and Christine Hochberg. Thanks to them and ALL the volunteers, the Congress went off without a hitch.

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Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Greetings, girlfriends! May your air conditioner be in perfect working order and your makeup stays put when you go out! Following my foray into the wide and wonderful (?) world of television, courtesy of my little article on Ellen DeGeneres, I've torn myself away from Dan Patrick, Charlie Steiner, Linda Cohn, Bob Ley and the rest of the gang on *SportsCenter* just long enough to regale you, my ever loyal readers, with more shopping tips and tricks.

Back in April, I had an opportunity to partake of a different and unique experience and I wish to share it with you now. Early in the month someone put me in touch with Selena Lesko, a local Mary Kay representative here in the Philadelphia area, who was interested in expanding her client base to include crossdressers. I called Selena, who told me of her services, and said she wanted to come to a meeting of the Greater Philly Chapter to do a demonstration.

Selena's idea was to take, for lack of a better term, a guinea pig at the meeting and make up said subject totally from scratch. Extremely curious about what sort of cosmetics Mary Kay (and their Avon brethren) have to offer, I volunteered to be the test subject. Happy to oblige, Selena suggested I come to her home for a dry run prior to the meeting so she could determine what to use on me beforehand, so she doesn't waste time doing same during the demonstration.

Armed with my "big hair" wig and a sampling of the cosmetics I regularly use, I journeyed to Selena's home.

Never having dealt with a Mary Kay rep, I was pleased to be treated very well by Selena from the moment we met. We went to her home office where she had all the tools of her trade, which included loads of sample items, brushes, pamphlets and books. Suffice it to say, Selena had enough stuff on hand to make up every face that comes to a Philly meeting!

After looking over the sample stuff I brought along, Selena consulted a large loose leaf binder to determine what colors would look best on me, and that book had literally dozens of examples. Once she selected the right one for me, we began the session with cleansing, toning and moisturizing—Selena would do half my face in front of a mirror to illustrate how it should be done, then she would have me do the other half. Once the canvas was clean we started putting color on it.

Using only the smallest amounts of foundation and powder, just enough of each to fill a thimble, Selena was able to achieve sufficient coverage. (Which surprised me greatly.) She did half, then I did half. From there, we went on to eyeliner—violet of all colors—which made quite a dramatic difference in how my eyes looked. Then it was on to eyeshadow, brow pencil, cheek color, lip pencil and lipstick. All the while, Selena explained in great detail how each item worked and how I should use it.

Then, she showed me something really cool—lipstick adjusters. This is a cream that when mixed with lipstick changes its color. The adjusters come in four shades: warm (pale yellow in

color), cool (pale blue), light (beige) and dark (almost black). I was wearing a bright red, and when Selena added the dark adjuster, the color changed to a sultry looking magenta! It was amazing! With all four adjusters at one's disposal, one tube of lipstick could yield four entirely different colors!

All during the dry run (which I enjoyed, by the way) Selena made notes on what she used so she could repeat the procedure at the meeting. Then she gave me samples of what we used so I could experiment at home. She also provided me with brochures of the Mary Kay product line, including one tailored specifically towards women of color. That brochure features 9 shades of foundation, 25 shades of eyeshadow, 24 shades of blush, 14 shades of nail polish and 23 shades of lipstick. Quite a large selection to say the least!

Along with cleansers, toners and moisturizers, skin products, hair care products, tanning products, fragrances, makeup removers and men's products (YUCK!), Mary Kay most definitely has a lot to offer. The prices were quite reasonable, well within the range of those of you out there who might balk at buying high-cost cosmetics in a department store. In my opinion, I think this would be well worth investigating. Oh yeah, and the makeover at the meeting was a terrific experience.

In The Swim

If you're in the market for a swimsuit, as there's plenty of Summer left, check out the latest offerings from the Victoria's Secret catalog. They have lots of great looking styles in fabulous colors, including their Miracle Bra Swimsuit collection which features underwire bikini tops for push up shaping. For those of you unwilling to show off your belly buttons, V.S. also has a sizable selection of maillots and tank suits, including a to-die-for metallic tank modeled by Tyra Banks! To get a catalog, call 1-800-888-8200.

While we're on the subject of swimsuits, I saw something interesting in the June issue of *Glamour*. Jantzen, a famous name in swimwear, has a website (reach it at www.jantzenswim.com)

continued on page 23

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Shopping...

which has an interactive segment that shows swimsuits that address problem figures. They have styles that minimize or maximize the bust, shorten or lengthen the torso, minimize the tummy or flatter the hips and thighs.

Speaking of interactive stuff, The Gap (www.gap.com) has a virtual dressing room with digital dolls where you can "try on" their latest fashions. You can mix and match clothing and accessories as well as change colors and patterns, depending on what's

available in the stores. The Gap's wardrobe is updated every four to six weeks when new merchandise hits the stores. While you can't buy their clothing online, you can find the address and number of the store closest to you through their Store Locator.

Lastly, besides the usual cornucopia of bills, I get some unusual stuff in the mail. Early last month, I got a catalog from The Sportsman's Guide (for any good ol' girls out there, the number is 1-800-888-3006). Curious, I leafed through it and, much to my amusement, I found on page 20—and I kid you not—camo undies! A bra and panty set done up in an honest to gosh

camouflage pattern! However, at a cost of only eight bucks for the set which is one size fits all, that doesn't say much for it's quality.

Well, girls, it's time to move on, I've spent way too much time in front of my computer and need to get some sun. As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments' at

@voicenet.com>.

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



Gender pioneer Virginia Prince (l), and "dressers" Dee McKay (c) and Glen Midgley (r) all presented papers at the Congress.



Renaissance National Librarian, and now historian, Lee Etscovitz gives us a big smile since she's now finished editing the 10th Anniversary history

Resources

Background Papers

Background Papers are \$1.25 each:

1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
4. The Matter of Children
5. Annotated Bibliography
6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
7. Understanding Transsexualism

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JoAnn Roberts reads a touching letter from Renaissance benefactor Dr. William Stayton at the banquet.



Dr. Sheila Kirk (l) and JoAnn Roberts share a moment at the start of the Congress. Hey, we just noticed... the Congress was run by blondes. Sheila, JoAnn, Angela... all blonde. It's a wonder it happened at all!



Gender Outlaw, Kate Bornstein (l) (another blonde) and JoAnn pose after Kate's dramatic reading at the 10th Anniversary banquet.

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