



PUBLISHED BY:

CrossPort
PO Box 1692
Cincinnati,
OH 45201
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Future Fun

June 5 - 9
Be All '96
Detroit, MI
800/879-2100

June 20
CrossPort
monthly meet-
ing. Dinner is
at 8:00 PM at
Mark Pi's, then
the meeting is
continued at the
OLDE STREET
SALOON in
Mason, OH.

July 24 - 28
S.P.I.C.E.
Philadelphia,
PA
909/875-2687 or
215/860-9271

Sept. 26-29
Southern
Comfort
Conference
Atlanta, GA

Opening A New Door

by Jennifer Caden

Hello everyone! For those of you who have not met me, I'm **Jennifer (Jenni)** and I am taking over as newsletter editor from **Bobbie Robertson**. Bobbie has elected to step aside as editor, and has left me a large pair of high heels to fill! (Figuratively speaking, Bobbie!) She has agreed to continue her Potpourri column, which

"At one time not so long ago, I was wondering if my cross-dressing ment I was mentally ill."

unfortunately did not make the early deadline for this issue. Don't be a stranger, Bobbie! You are welcome at any time!

This issue also introduces a new InnerView layout. The time seemed ripe for a "newsletter makeover," so I hope you like the results!

A little bit about me. I have been happily married for over 17 years to a very supportive and understanding woman named Marie, with two wonderful (well, most of the time ☺) kids, a girl (10) and a boy



(7). My wife said she thought I might be a CD before we were married. Fortunately, it didn't scare her off. It still frightens her somewhat, she says, but she has grown to accept me as I am. The kids were told recently about "Aunt Jennifer." My daughter seems to have accepted it well, although I think my son is too young to understand yet. He just says he thinks I am being "silly."

I do want to give a real big "Thanks!" to CrossPort just for being there, and especially **Diane, Jenn, Linda, and Melony**. Jennifer has been a big secret for many years. At one time not so long ago, I was wondering if my cross-dressing ment I was mentally ill. Just finding out there are others like me has helped me deal with a number of issues, including how well I like myself. I only wish I had known about CrossPort much sooner. Thanks again!♥

Post-Opinion

by Diane Torrance

Those who knew her said Christian was a beautiful, young woman. She moved from her native Tennessee to Chicago in the belief that transition and other preparations for SRS would be more easily accomplished there. She found work as a waitress and rented an apartment with a friend.

People are often stunned when I tell them the most important part of changing your sex is not surgery but changing your social identity. Once society accepts you as a woman, or a man as in the case of F2Ms, your sex change is about 95% complete.

Christian had changed her identity; everyone she knew accepted her as a woman. Then she met a man and, thinking she was like any other woman, invited him to her apartment. She told a few friends she had a date that night with someone she had met. And as young men are prone to thinking when a woman invites him over, he probably figured he was going to "get lucky" later that night.

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Post-Opinionion

(Continued from page 1)

The investigators found two glasses which had contained alcohol amid the carnage which remained after Christian's new boyfriend stabbed her thirty-four times and burned the apartment in hopes of destroying the evidence. Christian forgot that she was not yet completely female.

According to Sheriff's Deputy Tony Barreto-Netto of TOPS, the Chicago Police are giving this as much attention as they give any other homicide, but it is not being listed as a "hate crime" and they have no suspects. Transsexual Menace planned a vigil in Chicago to call attention to the fact that we are still being killed merely because we exist.

Cincinnati City Councilman Todd Portune is introducing an amendment to the Cincinnati hate crime law to include "sexual orientation." Although Mr. Portune has been and continues to be one of

the most supportive members of council, he doesn't understand the difference between "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" either. We are working on it.

GID and the DSM-IV

The latest hot topic on more than one electronic bulletin board the last couple of weeks has been the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, vol.4 (a.k.a. DSM-IV) and the way transgenderism is treated. Although crossdressing has been de-pathologized, transsexuals are now saddled with the label "Gender Identity Disorder" or "GID." One opinion within the community is, "this is a purely physical issue and not a mental disorder, so please remove me from this manual because I am not mentally ill." This of course is a true statement. Transsexualism is not a mental illness, it's a physical discrepancy between the brain and the body. The other opinion makes equal sense: The goals of most transsexuals include transition, hormone therapy and ultimately

surgery. In the absence of a definitive physical diagnostic tool, we are at the mercy of mental health professionals who have the training and knowledge to assess what is essentially a self-diagnosis. Surgeons really don't have the time or the training to weed out those who not good candidates for Sex Reassignment Surgery. As unappealing as a mental illness label is, it allows us to get into the system.

My personal feeling is that there needs to be an alternative between the two. Not everyone who says their brain is housed in the wrong body should have surgery, yet labeling us as mentally ill in order to access the system merely perpetuates society's less than charitable view of us. In the meantime, even though the dialog can get repetitive, there are physicians and psychiatrists who are transsexuals involved in the debate. Perhaps someone will hit upon the perfect solution to the entire dilemma. ♥

High Visibility

by Paula Ison

As usual, I went to my local country western dance hall on Friday May 10th. A friend, Steve, always goes with me as he did this time. We've talked occasionally about dancing as partners just to see how the locals would react but have never gotten around to it. For sure there would be some negative reaction from the crowd which we wouldn't care about but we would care if management, who has been supportive, penalized us in some way, so we never did it. Recently Steve, who is gay, started dating a fellow

named Tony who dances occasionally, so now the discussion wasn't "if" they would dance together, but "when" would they do it.

On that night Jennifer joined us at the dance hall, she had been there once before with me. We got there at about 8:30PM and about thirty minutes later, while I was chatting with Jennifer, Steve and Tony tapped me on the shoulder and asked "Did you see us dance together?"

No I hadn't, I was busy talking with Jennifer. I turn my back on

these two kids for a minute and they get into such mischief! They told me that they danced an entire dance and got lots of looks from the crowd but no one said or did anything about it. We get lots of looks from the crowd so their mission seemed successful. We continued to line dance for the next hour, Tony & Steve did not dance together again and everyone was having a good time when one of the bouncers advised us that the club manager wanted to see me in her office.

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Trans-A-Jennda

by Jennifer Marquette

I want to welcome **Jennifer** as our new newsletter editor and hopefully she will enjoy a long and rewarding reign. I'm also happy to announce that our own Miss Be All '95, **Kristine Jones**, will be writing a monthly article on make-up, style and other presentation "how-to's", an area that we have neglected in the newsletter until now. Article ideas and submissions are always welcomed. Please let us know what you want to see.

The June 20th meeting will again start with dinner at Mark Pi's China Gate restaurant in Middletown followed by a social get-together at the Olde Street Saloon in Monroe. I think everybody has directions by now, but if not, please request a map via the CrossPort line. Hopefully, more of the "veterans" will join us for dinner this time. Last month, half the people there were new members. Please call the CrossPort line by Tuesday evening, the 18th, to reserve a place so I can give the owner a reasonable head count. The

management is opening up the separate dining area that is usually closed on weeknights just for us! It is very nice and private and the staff is quite friendly. Let's make it worth their while to keep that space available to us.

You Wanna Ride The Harley Or Not

The possibility of meeting in the separate restaurant room at the Harley isn't going to work out. The problem is that they will only book that room a week out and we need three weeks for newsletter notification. Of course, we are still welcome to have our meetings there and they have some real sweet double suites that would fit us well. Of course, the room fee is \$175.00 or \$350.00 in food sales. That would require 20 people at \$17.00 each. There is also an excellent space for us at the Quality Inn Central that is newly renovated, private parking, separate entrance, etc. That requires 20 people at \$16.00 each. And the Vernon Manor has beautiful rooms available for us and

are anxious for our business but they are even more expensive.

I have a list of hotels with nice facilities. The two hotel situations that had the possibility of "free" meeting space as private areas of their restaurants just didn't work out. The Holiday Inn gave us a great deal on the space and I knew we wouldn't get close to those figures again. We have several real good hotel venues that would fit our needs nicely. What we don't seem to have is the price of admission. Depending on the hotel, we would need to guarantee 20-25 dinners at a minimum of \$13.00 per meal plus 17% gratuity plus tax. That's \$16.00 per person. And not a bad price for salad, entree, some other stuff you push around on your plate while waiting for dessert, the dessert, beverage, tax, tip and stunning dinner companions. But frankly, I don't feel I can guarantee those numbers even every other month, especially through the well-lit summer months.

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Up The Street and Around The Corner

by Heather

There are certain days that one never forgets, your wedding day, the birth of your children. These are happy times and happy memories, but there are also unhappy days that one never forgets, the death of a close family member or friend, the end of your marriage. My marriage ended May 21st with Magistrate Stubbs' monotone voice saying "I am going to grant this divorce", with that utterance a part of me died. It makes very little sense. Mary

would never live as lesbians and that was the best I could offer. Everyone tells me that it is for the best, that we both need to get on with our lives. Yet the pain is still there, and now anger is starting to enter into my heart. I am angry at Mary, I am angry at myself and I am angry at my God.

I am angry at Mary for refusing to explore any other solution other than divorce. I am angry at Mary for pushing this forward to its most painful conclusion. Each and every step came about at her insistent-

I left our marriage bed of twenty years at her request. I left my family whom I cherished at her request. She filed for the divorce. From her point of view, I'm sure she felt that this was the only solution she could accept, but we will never know because no other solution was tried.

I am angry at myself for not being honest with myself and coming to terms with who I am sooner. I am angry at myself for not being honest with Mary. I

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Kristine on... Hair Removal

by Kristine Jones

Shaving legs

The key consideration is whether you can get away with shaved legs. If not, try Danskins or other flesh-colored tights under pantyhose. They look almost like a shaved leg with stockings.

Legs and underarms have about the same hair density as the male beard. But the male beard is an average of 48 square inches vs. more than 412 square inches (nine times the surface!) for underarms and legs. Therefore, we have a lot more area to cover, no matter what technique we choose to remove hair. Ninety percent of women prefer shaving over waxing, depilatories, electrolysis or tweezing.

In winter, the dryness of the air parches the skin on the leg, and shaving can further dry your skin. Remember that preparation of the skin is essential, so a moisturizing shave cream is advisable. Try to wait at least one hour after shaving and moisturizing your

face before putting on make-up.

1. Avoid, if possible, shaving immediately after waking; the skin is at its most sensitive. Shaving in the evening is usually less rushed, less likely to result in nicks or cuts.
2. If in the shower, wet the skin thoroughly with warm water and wait a few minutes for the moisture to penetrate and soften the hair before removal. The warm water plumps up the hair and makes them stand away from the skin, making it easier to cut. The best time to shave is at the end of the shower or bath.
3. Leave tricky areas for last, such as the backs of knees and ankles. This is because the more moisture that they soak up, the more friction-free the shave and the less likely to cut. This can also be helped by priming the backs of the legs a few hours before shaving with a product which adds moisture.

4. Moisture is also essential to activate the shaving product you are using. The skin on your legs is drier than the skin on your face. If you use shaving cream, make sure that the preparation does not dry out quickly. That will mean that the razor will have something smooth to ride over. Soft Sense Shave Gel is a good, moist product for shaving underarms or legs. Barielle's Smooth Leg Shave or Benefits's Chamomile Shaving Mousse are great for legs because they soften the hair or stubble. Skintimate is a good shave gel made for women's skin, or try Gillette Wild Rain Shaving Gel.
5. If you use bar soap to shave with (which tends to clog and dull the razor), choose one with some cream content to make the lather last longer and soothe and send moisture back to your skin after shaving.

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High Visibility

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When I arrived at the managers office she had a city police officer with her and she told me that she had had 15 complaints about Steve & Tony and four of the complainants had walked out. She was concerned for our safety and strongly cautioned us to curtail these kinds of activities. The police officer reminded me that the redneck element could be a problem for us and he too was concerned for our safety. The two of them talked for 8-10 minutes, then I got to respond.

I thanked them for their concern and told them that we, too, cared about our safety, that's why we leave by 11PM before the cowboys have too much alcohol and start acting "brave." However, I told them that we go all over town, to any place we choose and won't be intimidated by people who know nothing about us. I reminded her that Steve and I had been exemplary customers for the past six months and that we weren't the problem, her other customers were the problem. She didn't

argue, she just replied, "they don't understand". Well, they'll never understand if we retreat to our closets, we must maintain a high visibility, how else will people develop a comfort level with us if they never see us?

As for Steve and Tony dancing together, I told them that it was too bad that some people were offended and that I didn't want anything to hamper her ability to run the club, but the complainants were probably also un-

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High Visibility

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comfortable with blacks, interracial couples, Jews, the handicapped and any other minorities. I told her that I wasn't aware that the club was either straight or gay, it's just a club where the common denominator wasn't our sexuality, just our love of country music and dancing.

I told them that I would ask Steve & Tony not to dance together for the balance of the night and that we would be leaving in about 20 minutes as it was approaching 11PM when we normally leave. She seemed satisfied so I left. Our meeting was cordial, no raised voices, etc. Both sides simply made their points.

For sure we made a lot of patrons uncomfortable that night. Most of those people had never seen a gay couple dance together nor had they seen so many cross-dressers in one place! The manager had mentioned that some customers commented that there were two of us now. (I didn't tell her that CrossPort was looking for a permanent meeting place!) Again, we have to maintain a high visibility so that these patrons become comfortable around us.

On the other hand, it's not our problem if they are uncomfortable. Anyone who takes the time to talk to us and ask questions walks away feeling good about the whole situation, as many people have done over the past six months. There are lots of customers who wave and say hello whenever we come into the club.

Over all, we were pleased with ourselves. we had made our points, stood our ground and no one got hurt or banned from the

club. It is important to note that the club is within their legal right to ban same-sex dancing and cross-dressing because none of the cities in our area have an Equal Rights Protection Law. That's why it's so important to get active in the community and support groups like Stonewall so that one day we'll either have legal protection or the locals will acquire a comfort level with us and we won't need those laws. Until then, we need to stay visible and claim those rights which we know to be ours.

* * *

I apologize for not writing a story in the past two months but I've been distracted by a beautiful young spirit from New Jersey who I met last year on a business trip. Many of you met her at the Christmas party. She recently accepted my marriage proposal and a September wedding is planned. She will re-locate to Cincinnati when we find a place with enough closet space. ♥



RuPaul's Top 10

RuPaul's Top 10 Drag Queen Tips

from the book

Lettin It All Hang Out'
by RuPaul

10. Remember: beauty is pain.
 9. Don't wear high heels in soggy grass.
 8. Never perm your own hair.
 7. Posture is essential. Elongate your neck and straighten your spine.
 6. Never wear flat shoes.
 5. Matte your face at least every 30 minutes.
 4. If someone clocks you and starts to dis you, pay them no mind. (Could someone please translate this one for me into English? - Ed.)
 3. Never respond to someone who refers to you as "Slim" -- as in "Yo, Slim!"
 2. Never let people see you eat.
 1. Be sweet. There are enough bitchy queens.
- (Right On! - Ed.)

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Trans-~~A~~-Jennnda

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I am finding it somewhat frustrating that many people want to have that decent, dignified setting that we had at the Holiday Inn but we don't even get a good turnout at Mark Pi's where you can order off the menu. I know they're different settings but I think you can understand my hesitation in committing to a hotel guarantee that could cost CrossPort a fair amount of money if we don't accrue the numbers. Maybe we can make this work in the Fall after Vampire Savings Time. Until then, I'd like some other suggestions because some of our regulars just simply aren't interested in meeting in a dark and noisy bar. And then there are some who are only interested in meeting in a dark and anonymous bar. That's where the two venue rotation idea seems to make sense. We just need the second venue.

Wish You Were Here

The Stonewall Annual Dinner was held May 18th at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom. The evening began with an excellent set by Carol Sherman-Jones band (of Carol's Corner Cafe) followed by brief speeches by half of Cincinnati's City Council and a letter presentation of President Clinton by staff member Bruce Lehman. There were videos produced just for this occasion by Joe O'Flynn, a terrific lighting show, award presentations and keynote speaker, Honey Ward from Chicago, a fine dinner and a special concert performance by pianist James Tocco. All this was followed by a dance held in the ballroom foyer.

It was one of those exquisite evenings that would seem to fit

the requests I hear often from our group: "What else can we do, where can we go, something nice besides our monthly meetings." Not only does a function like this seem to fit those desires but it gives us an excellent chance to increase our awareness and understanding in the alternative community. So how many CrossPort people were there? Me (I stage managed), Linda and Diane, who mostly represents Stonewall at such gatherings. The producers of this event wanted to make sure that CrossPort people felt welcome and really wanted us to attend. I'm afraid I was a bit disappointed with our turnout. If you think these are strictly "gay" events you're wrong. Not only can you have a great time at these functions, but it gives us a wonderful chance to teach other people about us. Get involved in some of this stuff, it will greatly enhance your sense of femme self because it goes beyond the little fantasy illusions and really allows you to express your nature in an accepting, public environment.

Outside Issue 3

I imagine all of you realize that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Colorado's Constitutional Amendment 2 this past week. This was the template legislation for Cincinnati's Issue 3. Though neither of these were transgender inclusive or exclusive (we don't really exist yet you understand), we rejoice with the GLB community in this victory and hopefully I don't have to explain to you why.

Although the Court would have made a decision on the Issue 3 ordinance by this writing, public disclosure of that ruling follows a week later. The expectation is that they will toss it back to the Circuit Court of Appeals and tell them to reconsider their ruling upholding it (i.e.,

"Come up with the right answer this time"). Both laws were simply vehicles of bigotry and hatred that allow for true discrimination.

When the Colorado news was announced, local proponent of the Issue 3 "No Special Rights" organization, Rev. R.J. Smith had a sound bite. He basically lambasted the court saying it was a "travesty of justice", "the people have spoken", "I thought we were a democracy", etc. Rev. Smith, an African-American minister, besides being cliché-ridden, needs to understand that certain basic human and civil rights in this country are simply not open to populist vote. If they were, the black civil rights movement would still be in the stone age considering the fact the black population of this country (and Cincinnati) is only around 14%. About the same percentage of gay, lesbian and TG if added together; we won't even add in the bisexual component for fear we would become the majority. It all smacked of that special brand of hypocrisy with a side order of "I've got mine, too bad for you."

Of course, Smith would probably say the two minorities are not synonymous - one is a race issue and the other is a "moral" one. You only have to go back to my childhood to find public writings and proclamations that the Black race is "a lesser race, an immoral race." Unfortunately, there are still people around that feel that way. I was discouraged a couple weeks ago when I turned to page 2 of the Sunday Enquirer. There was a long article on the apparent

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Trans-A-Jennda

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systematic burning of black churches in the South. The difference between now and 40 years ago is that it is now not condoned by the various governmental bodies. Yes, things get better. Yes, legal protection will be available. And yes, there will always be people out there who need someone to hate.

Your Sunday Best

Anne Johnson of IXE in Indianapolis requested help from our group in supplying assistance for a workshop regarding transgender individuals given by a TG divinity student during the Unitarian Universalist general assembly in Indy this June. The student, Laurie Auffant, will give her panel discussion on Sunday, June 23rd. Those of you who know churches realize that the Unitarian Universalists are liberal and friendly. They are based on the open minded pursuit of the truth. I asked Anne for clarification of what type of help is needed but let me know if you are interested in going and helping out.

My final note is a sad one. **Dr. Bonnie Bullough**, noted sex researcher, historian and author passed away April 12 of pneumonia from her battle with interstitial lung disease. She was 69 years old. Dr. Bullough was the spouse of Vern Bullough and together are longtime friends of our community. She had several books in press and one pending manuscript at the time of her death. The Bulloughs co-authored *Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender* which is a culmination of three decades of research of transgender history, behavior and education. ♥

Up the Street & Around the Corner

(Continued from page 3)

am angry with myself for hurting so many people that I love. I am angry with myself for losing my family, whom I love more than life itself.

I am angry at my God for allowing me to be born with female gender and male anatomy. I am angry at my God for not removing this cup and forcing me to drink from it. I am angry at my God for guiding me to this path.

If I have learned anything about anger it is that you must put it behind you. Get past it. I can replace the anger with gratitude. I am grateful to Mary, because she pushed the issue, and it resulted in my moving forward. I couldn't leave Mary and the kids, but with that choice made for me, it was easier to be myself. I am grateful that this union has produced two wonderful and precious children whom I love beyond measure. Jeni and Harry are very important to me and I couldn't imagine life without them. I am grateful that God blessed me with friends like Nikki who traveled from Columbus just to be with me. That God blessed me with professionals like Dr. Springer who just lets me talk, to ramble, to unburden myself. I am grateful that I found the courage to be.

The Sunday immediately before my divorce I went to MCC hoping to talk to Reverend Bonnie, but

she was away at the District Conference. God intervened and steered me to **Heather Cox**. At the time we talked her words were not very comforting, but as each day passes since Tuesday, her words are making more sense to me and more comforting. Heather seems always to be there when I need encouragement. I thank God we are friends.

I almost chose a different topic for my column, but "Up the Street and Around the Corner" is about my life. I seem to share with you not just what I am doing, but we share my hopes, my dreams, my beliefs, the good times and sometimes my pain.

If you are struggling with the loss of family or relationship, it is easy to give up and even end your struggle. I know during these last few weeks an overdose was very inviting, but don't. God will take care of you. Neither you nor I know what lies ahead, maybe even more pain, but what lies ahead is also God's plan for us. The purpose for our journey is ahead; we need to find it. When I started my journey, it was to become a whole person. That goal has not changed. You and I need to remember that when we came into this world it was not without pain, as we are reborn we must bear our labor pains.

Until next time, may God bless and keep you in His love. ♥

Publication Notice

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Kristine on Hair Removal

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- ing. Use hair conditioner on legs for shaving over bar soap.
6. If you use a razor specially designed for women, it will have a guard bar and cartridge design to emphasize safety and cut prevention over the closeness of the shave. Also, the angle of the handle is gender-specific, as men tend to shave down the face and women pull the blade up the leg. Always use a sharp razor for a close shave and a smooth finish. Gillette's Sensor Razor for Women has a flat sure-grip handle that is easy to grip when wet, has ultra-narrow twin blades mounted on springs, with a pivoting head and is a joy to navigate around ankles and curves around the knees (underarms, too). It also has the exclusive "lubra-smooth" strip, which allegedly delivers aloe and other moisturizers, to leave the skin satiny soft. Another good razor for legs with a moisture strip; Schick Personal Touch Razor or the Schick Silk Effects Razor.
 7. Pressing hard will not increase the closeness of the shave; it will only increase the likelihood of cuts. Let a sharp blade do the work. Overzealous shaving with a too-dull blade is also the best way to cause razor burn. You've got lots less nerve endings on the legs than the face, so you're less likely to detect a worn out blade.
 8. Rinse the shaved area with cold water, which helps to reduce redness and irritation.
 9. Don't towel dry or touch the blades-rinse and let them air dry. Touching the blade with anything only dulls the blade

and shortens its useful life.

10. Shaving removes a layer of skin, making it more vulnerable to sunburn, so shave the night before heading to the beach or pool. Remember to liberally use a high SPF sunscreen on the shaved areas
11. For cuts, apply clean tissue with constant pressure first to stop bleeding, then apply a styptic pencil or antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or Polysporin. If redness persists for more than a few days, consult a dermatologist. You may have folliculitis, common bacterial infection of the hair follicle.
12. For razor burn or dry itchy skin patches, apply Cortaid, or another over-the-counter cortisone cream after shaving. For shaving the bikini area, you may want to apply a thin layer of Cortaid before shaving to minimize chances of irritation or infection.
13. Legs will look great and more likely stay free of skin problems if they are moisturized daily (especially after shaving) with a moisturizer/body gel and exfoliated weekly to remove dead skin and revitalize the skin surface.
14. Don't apply self-tanner to shaved legs for several hours after shaving, or streaks and stripes may be the result.

Shaving Underarms

To shave underarms without irritation, follow these guidelines. Remember that preparation of the skin is essential.

- Unlike the hair on your legs, underarm hair grows in many direction and may require a va-

riety of directional strokes for removal. The down side is that the more directions you shave in, the greater the potential for irritation. Therefore, try to shave against the direction of the greatest hair growth.

- Don't apply deodorant, antiperspirant, or anything else except moisturizer to the newly shaved underarm for at least 30 minutes or you will regret it.

Electrolysis

Electrolysis works with the insertion of a fine probe into the hair follicle, going down alongside the hair toward the root (the follicle is a natural opening, like a pore, so there is no puncture of the skin surface). After insertion, an electric current is sent through the probe to destroy the hair root, and the hair is removed with a tweezer. While the insertion of the probe is painless, as you might think, the electric current may be uncomfortable. It is a sensation slightly more intense for most than you would feel when pulling eyebrows out with a tweezer. The treatment is especially painful over bony areas or near orifices. The area treated will often remain red and puffy for at least an hour after the procedure.

For a small area like the upper lip, the first step is to go for treatment once a week for a month; this will remove all the hair that is visible on the surface. Since hair grows in cycles, you will need to go back at least every week or two for a minimum of a year to catch and permanently remove the new, regrown, or dormant hair. The

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Kristine on Hair Removal

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leg and arm hair removal would take longer, depending on the density of hair. Often electrolysis is used to thin the arm hair out, not to remove it completely.

Electrolysis treatments (which last 15 to 60 minutes) can cost from \$15 to \$70 per treatment (typically it's about a dollar a minute). For your own protection, you should insist that the electrologist use a pre-sterilized, disposable probe and fresh rubber gloves for your treatment.

To find an electrologist, check with friends in your support group or ask for a referral from a dermatologist, plastic surgeon, endocrinologist, or other physician.

Depilatories

Sally Hansen's Gel Hair Remover does not have the bad odor of the past products and has two preparations: for fine, light hair and for coarse, dark hair. Nair Lotion Hair Remover is a good product and retails at \$6 for 8 ounces, which is about enough for two full leg treatments. Usually, you just apply, wait and shower the hair off.

The advantage is no danger of infection and no ingrown hair problems. The drawbacks are that some depilatories smell of a sulfuric odor unless the formula contains a fragrance to mask the smell. Chemicals strong enough to break down the composition of may cause some users may experience irritation, so test the product on a small area before using. The preparations are messy when used on large areas like legs. And finally, the removal only lasts 4 to 14 days depending on the rate of re-growth.

If you are using a depilatory, bleach or wax, do not use anything astringent or abrasive (like a loofah or exfoliating scrub) for 24 hours before or after the treatment.

Waxing

Waxing used to be solely a salon procedure, but now is a do-it-at-home proposition. Now, even some of the waxes can be heated in the microwave (look for Zip's Microwaveable Hair Remover). Obviously, it is cheaper at home; a salon charges \$25 for a lower leg waxing vs. \$5.75 for Sally Hansen Professional Wax Remover. Waxing is not recommended for the face unless the facial hair is fine and light.

As with the other methods, you must prepare the skin. A dusting of talc or bath powder before waxing will shield the skin and ease the application. That is especially true in damp areas like the underarms or bikini line. Do a patch test to determine the skin sensitivity and the wax temperature. The wax temperature should be warm, not hot.

Apply the wax to the skin with the direction of the hair growth. Keep the cloth strips you apply over the wax six inches or shorter so you can manage. After the strip has fixed to the wax, pull against the growth of the hair. Never, never re-wax or re-pull an area; if you miss a few hairs, tweeze or cut the hair.

The pain factor is much like pulling off athletic tape. While it is messy, there is no stubble afterward. Also, it usually takes a week to a month for regrowth. Most aestheticians insist on at least one-quarter inch of growth or they cannot wax the hair.

Bleaching

One easy way to effectively lighten the arm or other body hair is by use of hair bleach. The leading brand is Jolen Cream Hair Bleach, which costs about \$7 for one ounce of the product.

That will give enough for roughly 2-4 arm treatments.

The bleach lightens the hair by chemically lifting the pigment to more closely blend with the natural skin tone. Since bleaching alters the structure of the hair shaft by penetrating the cuticle, the hair tends to become coarser over time. Sensitive skin may burn, so test the product on a patch of skin. The solution needs to be rinsed off after a certain time, and will burn the skin if left on too long. The results will not be good on coarse hair, curly hair or where the skin is very dark. Regrowth of darker roots generally occurs within a week. ♥

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"Cutting Miss Fischer's"
an X Dressing Phile by Kristen

My first recollection of her was when she breezed into the classroom when I was in the sixth grade. She was slender and alert; short dark hair and her looks were along that border of pretty and plain, what I now call "librarian good looks."

Miss Fischer was our new teacher that year and she quickly made fans of us all. Her natural exuberance about knowledge was infectious. Her bouyancy was tempered with a professional crispness that gave her almost a military bearing.

"Miss" was the title she carried with her although she was married. In fact, her daughter, Christine, was in the grade ahead of me. One could tell Christine was destined to be prettier than her mother. She was tall for her age but held herself chin up unlike the slumping girls embarrassed by their precocious height. They were afraid boys would shun them, squeamish of a girl towering above their tiny penises.

Christine and her mother had a wonderful relationship. You would see them walk to and from school together laughing and talking. Christine would share with her friends all the little instructions and wisdom about life that her mother told her. It was as if we were all her children and I thought myself to be one of her favorites.

We all admired Miss Fischer. The girls modeled themselves after her and the boys fought fantastic duels for her affection in the schoolyard. Secretly, I, like the girls, modeled myself after her also. For years I had wondered what it would be like to be a girl. Now I was starting to wonder what it would be like to be a woman; a noble woman that people respected and admired like Miss Fischer. I wondered what it would be like to be a wife and a mother someday. I wondered what living with Mr. Fischer would be like and what they did at night in bed.

It was what happened to Mr. Fischer and Christine that brought Miss Fischer and I together in an uncommon bond. If not for a mere accident, my life would be totally different. Yet, I can't imagine my life being anything but what it is.

America then was without the everyday paranoia we have now. Unfortunate things did not happen in Midwestern suburbs. Life was more fair. But Miss Fischer's idyllic picket fence life ended halfway through the school year when a drunken man ran over her husband and daughter a hundred feet from their front porch bringing home a carton of milk and half a pound of pickle loaf. Christine was killed instantly and Mr. Fischer lasted a few days in a coma. The entire school went to their funeral. Miss Fischer stood stiff in black until she fell to tears when the pallbearers picked up the large and the small caskets and turned away down the aisle. As if by cue upon seeing her cry, most of us children began to cry also.

She only took a week off. When she returned she tried to act as if nothing had changed but her grief hung thickly in the air. It was difficult to learn anything through that sorrow, and although already a good student, I tried even harder as if my extra effort would somehow soothe her loss.

She lived in our neighborhood and in the following weeks my parents had her over for dinner often. They soon became friends, especially she and my Mother. But not cheerful, laughing good friends. We respected her grief. We realized her grief was the only thing she had left with her family and we didn't wish to deprive her of that.

Sometimes after school you would pass by her room and see her staring blankly out the window or sitting at her desk looking at an empty row of school desks. I always wanted to go in and comfort her but hesitated, then turned and left.

One day, in mid Spring I passed by her room and noticed her sitting in one of the small student desks looking over to the next desk which bore an open book. She looked as though she was tutoring a student who just happened not to be there. I hesitated again but this time I entered the room, set down my book bag, then silently moved towards her and sat

down. I said nothing. I didn't have the slightest idea what to say, I just wanted to help her in some way.

We both sat there in a long silence. I wasn't sure if she even knew I was there. I started to get a little nervous that she might do something "crazy" in front of me. But after a moment she softly said, "Christopher?" And I said, "Yes."

"Christopher. You're old enough to cut grass aren't you, Christopher?"

"Yes, Miss Fischer, I cut our grass all last summer."

"As you know, Mr. Fischer is gone," she said quietly. "And I need someone to cut the grass. I'm afraid it's an art I've never learned. Would you be interested?"

"Yes, I'd be happy to." I was joyful that there was something I could do for her but I suppressed it from entering my voice. "And you wouldn't have to pay me or nothing either."

"I wouldn't think of it. Would you be able to get to it this week? I'm afraid I've let it go too long already."

I cut her grass every week for that first month. She always brought me a cold soft drink halfway through the job and afterwards she would serve us milk and cookies or cake on the porch. Things were different all of a sudden. We talked for an hour each time. Soon, we began laughing together. She showed me her house, her pet birds, even Christine's unchanged bedroom. Eventually, she began to address me simply as "Chris" and that made me feel close to her.

School had let out and I really began to look forward to cutting Miss Fischer's lawn to make up for time I didn't see her in the classroom. Then one day she came out of the house and said she had just gotten off the phone with my parents.

"I asked them if you could stay for dinner, would you like that?"

"Sure! That would be great." I said.

"Good. You finish up and you can take a quick shower when you're done. Okay?"

I quickly cut the remainder of the grass and put the mower away but then I got a little nervous about the shower idea though I knew I was stinky and sweaty.

"There's a fresh towel on the sink, dinner will be ready in a little while." Miss Fischer said to me as I entered.

When I was drying myself off after the shower she knocked on the door. "Chris? Just leave your dirty clothes in the corner and I'll wash them while we're eating. There's a robe hanging on the door and I set out some clothes in Christine's room for you. I'll be in the kitchen."

"That's all right, Miss Fischer, you don't need to do that."

"I wouldn't think of you getting back into those clothes. Hurry now. I'll have dinner ready soon." Came her reply.

The robe was hers. It smelled sweet like her. I felt strange putting it on and then I wiped the steam from the mirror to look at myself wearing it. I slowly opened the door and walked to Christine's bedroom where I expected to see a T-shirt and shorts of Mr. Fischer's. What I saw was Christine's school uniform nicely laid out on the bed. I was stunned.

It wasn't like the thought of wearing girl's clothes had never occurred to me. I'd been trying Barbie's clothes on my sister's Ken doll for a couple years now and occasionally snuck into something of Mom's. But I never considered doing it in front of anyone. I approached the bed and felt the crisp, white, embroidered blouse. Then I picked up the short, plaid pleated skirt. I set those down and examined the white tights before I was startled with a knock on the door. Miss Fischer entered.

"Hurry, dear. Dinner's almost ready. Is something wrong? Oh, I'm sorry, how stupid of me. I forgot." She walked to the dresser, opened a drawer and pulled out a pair of satiny panties. She held them out to me.

"Are these okay? Now hurry, Chrissy." And she left.

(Continued next month)