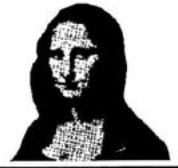


Renaissance News



Volume 2, No.12

P.O. Box 1263, King of Prussia, PA, 19406

December, 1988

Disney dispute leads to law suit

A very important legal battle is shaping up on the West coast. A crossdressed person was ejected from Disneyland after being discovered in the ladies bathroom. She carried a letter from her therapist explaining her need to dress in public, but officials paid no attention and denied her membership privileges. She plans to sue Disneyland and has support from Drs. Paul Walker and Richard Green. Dr. Walker is former head of the Harry Benjamin Association, and Dr. Green is co-author of "Transsexualism & Sex Reassignment" with John Money.

ETVC has started a defense fund to help our sister defray her legal costs, estimated at about \$5000. As we feel a special kinship with our sisters at ETVC, and since this is an opportunity to show our unity as a para-culture, it would be great if Renaissance members could help out with a donation of any size. Make donations payable to the "ETVC Legal Fund", c/o Box 6486, San Francisco, CA 94101.

Further details are sketchy at this time, but it is hoped that one of the principals will fill them in for the next issue.

Multi-exposures for Renaissance

In the broadcasting industry, November is known as a "sweeps" month. And now that term applies to Renaissance too, for last month Renaissance members appeared on broadcast or cable television programs shown across the nation on four consecutive week days. In addition, Renaissance and TransPitt in Pittsburgh cooperated on television another show in the Steel City that was broadcast over parts of three states.

Renaissance Director of Outreach and Public Affairs, Paula Jordan Sinclair, said that television producers are looking to boost their viewers in November because that is one of the months when audience ratings are calculated. "This", she said, "explains TV's great interest in TVs."

The crossdressing sweep began with Paula's return to The Morton Downey Jr. Show as one of six "all-star" guests. These were the

guests who during the past year had generated the most calls and letters from viewers. Because this show was even more of a circus than the Downey program usually is, Paula did not represent Renaissance on the air. The program was aired twice last month. A week before the program was taped, Paula and Angela Gardner did represent Renaissance at Downey's first anniversary party held in Lower Manhattan where they chatted with celebrities and broadcasting executives, and were photographed by a German television crew.

A few days later, five Renaissance girls, Michelle Douglas, Teri Kay, Berré Lyndon, Angela and Paula taped a Donahue show on crossdressing fashions. Donna Miller and Eric Lee went with the girls to Rockefeller Center and helped with hair and makeup.

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Professionalism and credibility winning public acceptance

Renaissance is making great strides in the areas of public awareness and acceptance for transgendered people. This fact was brought home recently while dealing with several large, well known organizations.

First case in point: the cartoon that was printed on the front page of last month's newsletter. A lot of other newsletter editors just copied it without asking for permission from the legal owner. Why? Probably for two reasons. First, "everyone" assumed the legal owner would turn them down. Second, they might be too embarrassed to tell the legal owner where it will be used. Yet a simple, straight forward letter to the cartoon editor on Renaissance letterhead, a sample of the front page and a phone call to follow it up was sufficient to receive this reply from PLAYBOY, "We are pleased to grant a one-time, nonexclusive, license in the English language to The Renaissance Education Association, Inc. to reprint the cartoon within your newsletter entitled *Renaissance News*."

Next case in point: the phone company. In the past several months Renaissance has been the subject of two extensive newspaper articles and a feature article in *Philadelphia Magazine*. The Board felt it was time to get listed with Directory Assistance. When the phone company was contacted

continued on page 6

Election Results: 1989 Officers

Managing Director:

Alison Laing

Executive Secretary:

Susan P.

Executive Treasurer:

Charlene G.

Co-Directors, Outreach:

Paula Sinclair

JoAnn Roberts

Co-Directors, Membership

Trudi Henry

Beth Marshall

November meeting notes

The last regular meeting of 1988 was the largest yet. The official head count was 90 attendees. Several guests were present.

Beth D. is a local editor and writer who will be doing an in-depth article about us. Patti M. is a nurse and grad student who is interested in transgender people and behavior.

Two Melissas visited with us, as well. Melissa Foster is associated with the publication *TV/TS Girl*

Talk. The other, Melissa Davis, is the new president of the Delta-Chi group in Arlington, VA. Donna from Sigma Nu Rho Tri-Ess in New Jersey was also present.

The seminars, *Feminine Comportment* and *Shopping Smart*, were both well received. Thanks to Angela, JoAnn and Paula for their time and effort.

A special support group for addictions recovery is underway.

The meeting ended at 12:30AM.

Deadline extended for Xmas party

Alison has extended the registration date for the Christmas party has been extended to Dec. 9th. Anyone wishing to attend must register and prepay by that date.

Alison also informs us of a planned "Pollyanna" exchange. If you wish to participate, please bring a gift for exchange. The cost of the gift should be between \$5 and \$10.

Pen Pal project: write to a sister

For those of you who are unable to attend Renaissance meetings or social functions, but would like to have a more personal contact, a "Pen Pal" clearinghouse is being established. Its purpose will be to provide a method for matching members who come to meetings with those who cannot, and to set up a correspondence between

them. If you are interested in participating and would like to correspond with one of the active members, send some general information about yourself and your interests, along with a name and address that can be used by your Pen Pal, to Alison Laing, c/o Renaissance, Dept PP, Box 1263, King of Prussia, PA 19406

And, don't forget about...

- Christmas Party, Dec 18th at the Great Valley Inne, Malvern, PA, \$25 Full members, \$30 Associate members. Starts at 7:30 PM. Reservation deadline extended to December 9th.

- The PCHA Food Bank: Joanne [redacted] reminds us that the Food Bank would like food and

basic toiletry items. Please, no clothing, they have no space to store it.

- *The Transsexual Phenomenon* reprint is now shipping. Prices to members are: Regular Edition, \$28.50 and Deluxe Edition, \$33.50. Both are available from the office now. Supply limited.

Renaissance News

Staff

Senior Editor: JoAnn Roberts

National Editor: Paula Sinclair

Overseas Editor: Trudi Henry

Photo Editor: Angela Gardner

Admin. Assistants: Susan P.,

Beth and Rachel M.

Copy & Layout: Creative Design Services, King of Prussia, PA.

For the latest information about events call: (215) 640-9449, 24 hrs. a day.

Business Report Thru Nov. 19th

November Attendance: 90

Paid Members: 230

Starting Balance: \$1589.26

Income:

Dues & Donations	\$486.00
Publications	49.75
Advertising	40.00
Xmas Party	25.00
Benefit Tix	406.00
Subtotal	\$1006.75

Expenses:

October Meeting	\$74.85
Newsletter	313.38
Benefit-Towpath	1050.00
Operations/Office	397.97
Xmas Party Resrv	200.00
Subtotal	\$2036.20

Ending Balance \$559.81

Coming Events:

December

18th Annual Xmas Party
Great Valley Inne
7:30 PM Cocktails
8:30 PM Dinner

January

21st Meeting K of P

February

4th So. Jersey Chapter
Planning Meeting
18th Meeting K of P

Opinion - International Forum - Information

The Phoenix Society...a report on South Africa by Thelma

If the proliferation of clubs and societies catering for the needs and interests of transgenderists throughout the world is any indication, crossdressing, in all its aspects, is on the increase. Or, is it the fact that acceptance of the transvestite and the transsexual is gradually becoming more widespread with the growth of desktop publishing and greater ease of communication, among other factors. Is the world at large becoming more informed and many of the countless crossdressers starting to become visible and emerge from the loneliness of their closets?

This would appear to be the case in the experience of the Phoenix Society here in South Africa, which was founded six years ago by our President, Marlene. Through her dedication and, in the beginning, single handed efforts, it has grown from a handful of members, survived the hazards of infancy, and is flourishing with an active south African membership in excess of eighty and a significant number of overseas members in Britain, N. America, Australia, and Malta.

Eighty may not sound like a large number compared with some of the TV groups in the USA and in Europe, but it should be remembered that South Africa is a large country, geographically, with a small and widespread population comprised, to a great extent, of a macho oriented and somewhat Calvinistic society. Even so, we are well aware that Phoenix represents but the tip of the transvestic iceberg.

Phoenix is a self-help support group and welcomes persons involved with all levels of transgenerism. A short while ago our first female-to-male transsexual, soon to undergo reassignment, became a member of the Society. Perhaps we are strangely fortunate in not

having club premises of our own and have avoided, to any great extent, the pitfall of contempt and intolerance between transvestite and transsexual, extrovert crossdresser and closet queen, that I could not help but be conscious of when I lived in Britain. Meetings and social events do take place from time-to-time in the main centers, Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg, most often in the home of one member or another. These gatherings rarely consist of more than a dozen people, to a large extent because of the distances and time involved.

Education has always been of prime importance to the Phoenix Society, not only of its members, but the public in general as well, in the belief that the better we know ourselves—the better we are able to understand our condition and cope with the world at large. Thanks largely to the efforts of Marlene, and more recently Joy, Phoenix has enjoyed a great deal of favorable publicity in the way of feature articles in some mass circulation family magazines and national newspapers. A great triumph, in light of the fact that transvestism and transsexuality were almost unmentionable subjects in the media, a few years ago.

One sad disappointment was when the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation produced a sixteen minute television feature on Joy, our membership secretary and one of our transsexual members, who has had the courage to live her life as a full-time female, and in doing so went through a great deal of trauma and lost her job for eighteen months. The film was scheduled to be screened in the Sunday evening peak hour program "50/50" and was canceled by the "powers that be" at the last moment.

The present major project at

hand is the publication of a book, written and compiled by Marlene and Joy, titled "The Transgender Phenomena". It will endeavor to explain all aspects of transgenderism in the hope of bringing some degree of knowledge and understanding to the public at large. It is intended to distribute this volume free of charge to medical doctors, judges and magistrates, editors and 'agony aunt' columnists, psychiatrists and psychologists, educators, etc. throughout the country. We find that ignorance of the subject outside our own community, even on the part of the medical fraternity and those in authority, to be alarming. We hope that this project will do a little to help alleviate the situation.

I sincerely believe that we, the transgenderists of the world, are, to borrow Phaedra Kelly's phrase, "a Nation Within Nations" and as such, are able to rise above national boundaries, prejudice and politics. As you see, the Phoenix Society is alive and well, flourishing and trying to do its share to benefit and bring about understanding on behalf of all transgenderists, whoever and wherever they may be.

My love to all my dear sisters, known and unknown - everywhere. Thelma.

Friends of Dr. Bob & Bill W.

Are you interested in starting a support group with other sisters who are in recovery? If so, I would like to hear from you.

I've been in recovery for seven years and I feel the strength from a support group can be very important, especially when out in public.

If you are interested please contact me, Vicki [REDACTED] through the Renaissance office or at the next meeting.

Paula • The NewsQueen • Sinclair

What is it about transvestites and female impersonators that is so popular? The newspapers are simply full of articles about men who want to get in on the act...

The big story is about television's first transvestite character, Bunny/Bonnie on the soap opera "Santa Barbara." Bunny, a newcomer to the show, is a reformed gangster. According to the plot line, Bunny once had to don woman's clothes in order to avoid a mob hit. When he arrives in Santa Barbara he discovers that he really has a fondness for drag (who can blame him?) Early last month, Bonnie made "her" first appearance. There is no indication from the show's producers as to how the writers will ultimately develop the transvestite twist. But one of those supermarket tabloids says that Bunny will be sent to a shrink.

Joe Marinelli says that at first it was "weird" playing a woman, but "now its wonderful." Off camera, the reaction of other cast members varies greatly. "Women on the set treat me like I am in a wax museum. They come up and feel my clothes. The men just laugh."

Marinelli says that Bonnie "is wild with flowing red hair. She's a tease, but she's always a lady."



Marinelli as "Bonnie"

If the idea of a man dressing like a woman while on the lam sounds familiar, it could be because that was how Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon escaped the mob in Chicago in Billy Wilder's comedy "Some Like It Hot." And here's good news if "Some Like It Hot" is your favorite film: MGM/UA has recently released it on video.

♣ ♣ ♣

Maybe someday they will make a movie about Michael Grubs, the 1989 Rice University homecoming queen. However, Grubs has relinquished his crown last month in Houston. The 19-year-old student abdicated in favor of Nancy Jones who was his first runner-up according to student votes cast earlier fall.

Grubs made his reluctant decision because, he says, the rules for the Cotton Bowl Parade (in which the Rice queen is scheduled to appear) discriminate against male queens. Instead, he will serve as Jones' escort.

Here's an important note: The election of Grubs by the Rice students as their homecoming queen says more about their opinion of homecoming than it does about their notions about gender roles. Previously, the students elected a dog and a refrigerator as homecoming queens.

♣ ♣ ♣

But then, you never can tell. Sometimes support comes from the strangest places, like the *Weekly World News*, another of those supermarket tabloids that wrings every ounce of shock value from reports about transvestism and transsexualism. A couple of months ago, the editors made a big deal about the Atlantic City transvestite who had opened her home to an infant with AIDS.

We were frankly surprised by a recent letter to the editor and its response from the WWN staff. The

letter was surprising, as all letters to the editor of that publication are, because we didn't know most readers could write. As could be expected, the author of the missive criticized the child welfare agency for giving "a degenerate like that a poor defenseless baby to raise." Crossdressing, the Texas letter writer said, "is a sin against God, and anybody who would place a defenseless kid in a perverted home like that should be fired—and then shot."

The editors replied that "at least this 'degenerate' had the decency to open his heart and home to a kid with the world's most terrifying disease. Would you?"

♣ ♣ ♣

And speaking of breast implants (look, some items just can't be linked; so sue me), a panel of advisors to the Food and Drug Administration last month did not ban silicone breast implants, at least not immediately. But the panel did vote to collect additional data over the next two months, data that one witness told the panel was being kept from the public pending the outcome of a malpractice suit.

The panel examined the results of one experiment conducted by Dow Corning, the leading maker of silicone-filled implants. Small blobs of the silicone gel were injected under the skin of 200 rats. Between one fifth and one quarter of the rats, depending on the rat's age and the type of gel used, developed cancer that was fatal to most of the rats. Even though the implants used in humans consist of a bag filled with the silicone gel, small quantities of the gel sometimes leak from the bags and migrate throughout the body.

The panel also heard from women who described the suffering they had endured as a result of

continued on page 7

Multi-exposures

Also on the show were three female impersonators from Los Angeles who specialize in high glamour drag—Dahlia, Melody and Tiffany. The cast was completed by three Big Apple crossdressers, Mistress Antoinette of Versatile Fashions (Box 1051, Tustin, CA 92681), and several of her associates. In addition to the more than a dozen crossdressing models, the show also featured the transformation of a male model and Phil in modified drag (a skirt and blouse paired with male penny loafers and a cardigan sweater).

Two Renaissance members—Teri and Robin Dormer—and two friends of Renaissance—Coco and Amanda Winters—appeared on "People Are Talking" from WWOR in New York. They were on a regular segment of the program called "Girl Talk" where co-host Renee Hambley asked them about the process of looking like women. The program is carried by many cable television systems across the nation.

Renaissance Managing Director, JoAnn Roberts, her daughter Anna, and Paula rounded out the sweeps month with an appearance on "Pittsburgh's Talking," hosted by Ann Devlin, formerly of Channel 10 in Philadelphia. The show also featured a telephone interview with the wife of a transvestite that was arranged through Sheila Kirk, President of TransPitt.

Video tapes of all of these shows, and the many others that members have appeared on, will soon be available in the group's library.

February is the next sweeps month for television, and plans are being made to reach out to other markets, Paula said. She added that there are plans for a return appearance on A.M. Philadelphia.

N.B.: We regret the typographical errors in the editorial from Roni L. of NWGA last month.

On The Town with Alison

Living the fantasy at Fantasia Fair

You would think after attending Fantasia Fair three times, it would begin to lose some of the trill, glamour and joy that I experienced the first the first time; such is not the case. It seems, each time, better than the last. This may be due, in part, to the Fair becoming better every year, or it may be that I am learning how to pace myself to get the most out of it. In any case, FanFair is one FANTASTIC event.

The fair could be described in detail with the hundred or so scheduled events over the ten day period (it begins on a Friday and concludes the the Sunday of the following weekend). There are breakfasts, luncheons, banquets, cocktail and pajama parties, a fashion show, a follies, and a costume ball. You can attend special church meetings, a church supper, and regular church services. You can join the gang for a "Whale Watch" (I saw a dozen!) or "Go Fly A Kite" on the beach. There are seminars and classes on every aspect of the CD/TV/TS/TG scenes, from makeup and speech to lifestyles and surgery. Each year these are new and different. The program is extensive, diverse and exciting. Betty Ann Lind of the Outreach Institute and her staff are to be commended.

There is yet another piece to this picture that makes the fair so wonderful and that is the Provincetown environment. Besides

being a quiet Portuguese fishing village and artist colony (with a significant overlay of tourist gift shops, restaurants, and lodging), this town has developed a culture of caring, sharing and acceptance, so that people from all walks of life feel welcome and comfortable. As one person put it, "P'town is a place where closets are for hanging clothes and not to live in."

To me, P'town is friendly innkeepers, bartenders, shop clerks, waiters, and a church filled with hugging where it is hard to sit through a service with dry eyes. P'town opens it's heart and it's arms to those who are suffering (PWAs) and who are oppressed by social discrimination (gay, lesbian, TV, TS, TG). You may get an occasional snicker from the high school brats that hang out by the Town Hall, and once in awhile a tourist will do a double take at the six foot tall blonde in four inch heels and a Shirley Temple pinafore. Generally, however, we can dress pretty much as we please. I cannot believe it but I've taken to wearing jeans, sweaters and docksiders for daytime and full glitz for the night. At the parties, of course, you can go as wild as you like.

If you want the ultimate combination of freedom to be all you want to be, yet feel safe (and welcome), give P'town a try. They're taking reservations for next year now and I've already registered.

(Editors Note: The Fantasia Fair, held each October in Provincetown, is in its fifteenth year. It was started by the Human Achievement and Outreach Institute as a means for people to experience their feminine sides in an educational and social setting. Fantasia Fair holds a special place in Alison's heart; it's where she was 'born'. Alison has attended the '86, '87 & '88 Fantasia Fair and the '87 and '88 Tiffany Spring Outing in Provincetown and was awarded Ms. Congeniality this year. She has been very active as an MC for the Follies, a House Mother, Assistant Registrar, Follies Performer, and a Panel Discussion Member.)

Public Acceptance

they were extremely helpful with getting the listing on the system as quickly as possible, within 48 hours. They had no problem with the subject matter, although it was necessary to verify the non-profit status.

Final case in point: the United Way. Nestled between the white and yellow pages of the phone book are some blue pages that list local public organizations and government services. The phone company has the United Way handle these listings for them. Renaissance contacted the Philadelphia United Way to see about a listing. The woman who handled the call was familiar with Renaissance via the listing in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and it will now be listed in the white, yellow and blue pages, as each section comes up for revision. In addition, the United Way provided information on how to become listed with them as a donor

option organization. That means a contribution could be made to Renaissance through the United Way via a payroll deduction program at work! Once again, verification of non-profit status was required.

One might expect such large, mainstream organizations to take exception to an organization for "perverts and weirdos." Such has not been the case. Each of these steps is a small one in itself, but, taken as a whole, it shows a level of credibility and acceptance that some in this community would believe impossible. And, indeed, would have been impossible without the proper groundwork laid out one step at a time.

Renaissance is working for you, building a reputation that is solid and well respected in the Delaware Valley. More steps will be taken, one at a time, and more doors will be opened. Fiat Lux!

Keep Gift Moving- II

Do you remember the editorial with that title? Basically, it urged us all to pass along the gifts that we've received from others to our new sisters. At this time of the year we have an opportunity to "keep the gift moving" along to a much wider range of people.

My wife and I were discussing Christmas presents for family members. We've decided not to buy presents for any of the adults. Instead, we're going to make one large donation to a local charity, in their names. Think about the time and energy you'll expend on shopping, not to mention the money. Ask yourself if your efforts wouldn't be better spent helping the less fortunate.

Even if you decide to buy presents anyway, give some thought to what else you can do. How about clothing for the homeless or food for PWAs? Keep the gift moving. The payback is incalculable.



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Chapter News & Notes

New Jersey

South Jersey: Tina Louise, from Glasboro, will hold a planning meeting at her home on February 4th. See Tina at the KofP meeting or contact the office.

Ohio

Columbus: Mikki is looking to start a chapter in the area.

Pennsylvania

KofP: Teri Kay, et al., will take over the operations of the meeting in King of Prussia. Everyone is welcome to attend this open meeting.

Harrisburg/York: There has been some interest expressed for a chapter here.

Reading: Susan [redacted] Box 299, Oley, PA 19547. Susan has a

meeting location and is ready to start building her organization.

Vermont

Burlington: Michelle [redacted] Box 362, Jericho, VT 05465. Michelle, a former member of the King of Prussia group has found 25 sisters in her area! Great job Michelle! She needs a meeting place to get things moving. Any offers of assistance will be greatly appreciated.

If no address is given for an organizer, write or call the office.

Anyone interested in forming a chapter should write to the office for an information packet.

(Ed. note: This space will expand to fit the news available. Chapter leaders, please let us know about your activities.)

NewsQueen

complications from the implant surgery. These included reports of fibrous tissue growth around the implants which can cause a painful hardening of the breast.

Implants have been in use for 25 years. More than 2 million women, and an unknown number of men, have received them. New implant surgery is performed at the rate of 130,000 per year.



And now, speaking of breast

implants, there was no evidence that Vickie Vincent of Kansas City, Mo., even knows the name of a plastic surgeon. You see, Vickie was crowned Miss Gay America for 1989 at the conclusion of a three-day pageant in Dallas. But judging from the photos, Vickie and the other contestants all know a good lip gloss supplier. Brandi Alexander of Lexington, Ky. was first runner-up, and Sweet Savage of San Antonio, TX., was the second runner-up.

Although Miss Sinclair claims to read several newspapers each day, she is finding that it takes more and more of her time to follow the example of Joe Marinelli and be a tease and still remain a lady. So help her out. If you see an article about crossdressing, clip and send it to her in care of Renaissance.

The Psychological Resource Center

Clinical and Consulting Psychology

Richard A. Friend, Ph.D.
Director of Human Sexuality Services
215-925-5260

Benjamin Franklin Business Center
834 Chestnut Street, Suite 311
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Reader Responds To "Heroes"

Dear JoAnn

I received the latest newsletter and was impressed by your brief commentary on "Heroes". Our country and sub-set of the population needs the philosophy you have presented. To compliment your commentary, I recently heard the following on excellence:

"The pursuit of excellence is an attitude. It involves wisdom and sound judgement. It is a lifetime, career-long commitment. It is a way of life. It is doing the job (your objective) right the first, every time. It is inner-directed, not the result of external pressure. It is our own self-worth — who we are — and the pride and the satisfaction that comes from being the right kind of person, not just in doing the right things."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all our sisters, and the whole world, lived by your cited quote "you are what you do when it counts.", or the above tract on excellence, as a way of life.

Sincerely,
Lisa [redacted]

"TS Phenomenon" Now Shipping

The Outreach Institute has informed us that pre-publication orders for Dr. Harry Benjamin's "The Transsexual Phenomenon" are now being filled.

Anyone still interested in purchasing a copy of this milestone work in gender issues, should contact the Outreach Institute, Box 368, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215. Deluxe editions are \$39.95, Regular Editions are \$34.95. Add \$3.50 postage & handling.

Members of Renaissance are entitled to a special discount on the book and should order their copies through the Renaissance office. See page two for prices.

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