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Buffalo Belles

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BUFFALO BELLES

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NU PHI CHI

MARCH, 1997

SISTERS IN CHARGE:

JEAN
PATTI
KATHY

Dear Sisters,



Our February meeting was a delightful affair! For the first time in a couple of years, old man winter was on hiatus. With

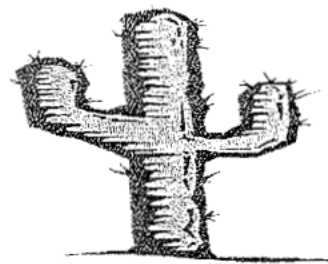
temperatures above freezing, it sure beat last years 10 degrees with 6 inches of snow falling during the night. The year before was almost as bad.

We had the pleasure of welcoming two new sisters to our little sorority. Making their debuts was Miranda and Sharon. We also gave a warm welcome to Bernadette, whom was in town from Pennsylvania and paid us a visit.

Our warmest welcome was reserved for Dorothy, the wife of Alicia! She joined with us with much trepidation. Unfortunately, for the first time in a few months, no other wives were present for her

to talk with. However, as the evening wore on, she did seem to loose the look of a rabbit who has just fallen into the fox's den! Hopefully this will not be the last time we see her at a meeting.

We had a special evening in store for us. The Cactus Kickers came to give us line dancing lessons. This turned out to be one of our most fun times we've had in quite awhile.



Tye, Dennis, and Phill were the most patient of teachers you could want. It only took them an hour to get it straight in most of the girls minds what left is. And right. Clockwise/counter was a concept even harder to instill into the girls. Especially for the younger gals, who have only known digital watches!

In spite of the confusion, after some time we seemed to actually go through all the steps in a semblance of order. A few fewer hip checks were thrown, the wall wasn't kicked, nor your neighbor and we made it through a number. But then they took the brick off the turntable and brought it up to the regular pace and...

It should be noted that the only two girls whom didn't participate, were our two debutantes! I guess just coming to your first meeting was already stretching your limits. They still held on to some resemblance of dignity and decorum in their lives. So be warned you two,

ATTENDEES

PATTI	JEAN
ANGELLA	KATHY
CAMILLE	COLLEEN
JANICE	ALICIA & DORTHY
DANA	ALSO VISITORS
RENE K	BERNADETTE
SUSAN R	TYE
SHARON S	PHILL
MIRANDA	DENNIS

ee how far you can still fall by associating with the likes of us!

So what do we do next? Do A Chorus Line? Or Polka Night? Is your pass de deus up for ballet night?

For those who wish to try some more of this line dancing stuff. The Cactus Kickers have an open night on Wednesdays

at the Stage Door on Allan St. If you are interested, drop on by from six to ten.

We didn't have time for a business meeting to be held. Even the pizza was rushed by the dancing.

Before all to soon, it was time to call it a night. Some of the girls continued on at the local establishments, but for most it was homeward bound. But for all, it was a great night!

ALTERNATIVE MEETING ROOM

We used the alternative meeting room for the February meeting, as was on the hotline. There are a couple of ways to get into this area besides the fire escape or using the regular doors. Directly below the fire escape, is a set of doors for first floor. Just follow the hall way down to the end and you'll come upon a stairway that will take you up to the stairs that lead up to the second floor and the meeting room and changing area and bathrooms. This will enable one to avoid the treacherous fire escape. When we meet there, the lights will be on and the door unlocked.

Also one can park along the driveway as it goes past the meeting location and come in a set of doors that are nearby the stairs just mentioned. This could also be handy in the unlikely event that we have inclement weather, as it is much closer to

the door from parking than our usual lot and long walk.

For those who have been to a meeting, this should all make sense. Just a hint for those who might wish to avoid meeting the "normal" folks who you might have to pass by if you came in our regular way when there is another event going on in the building.

MEETING TIMES are being tightened up a bit. The pizza will now arrive at 7:30, business meeting at 8:00. Event to follow. Please try to arrive at the meeting between 6 and 7 so we can get a head count for the pizza order.

We seem to have gotten quite lax on the starting time and girls drift in all night long. Certainly if you have to work etc., and can't come till later, DO COME! But many don't (like me) have an excuse for their lateness. This way we can be finished by 11 and still have time to go out on the town at not such a late time.

DUES ARE DUE!!! THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES BY OR AT THE NEXT MEETING!!

The drop list will be compiled at that time. If you look at your mailing envelope, you will see if you owe or are paid up.

If you are not renewing with us, could you let us know why? If we have failed you in some way, let us know! Each year we seem to loose about ten girls, but gain 20 new ones through the year. We all know why most stay on, it is the ones we loose that cause us the concern. If you are dropping out on us, we'll miss you.

UP COMING EVENT: The Xpressions Group of Toronto will be doing their annual Spring Fling at Niagara on the Lake on April 3-6. This, along with their Christmas party held there are really fun events. The cost is reasonable, the distance not to far. Probably 8-10 of our girls have attended these events in the past and had a great time.

BUFFALO BELLES

If interested, contact Xpressions in Toronto or call the hotline and we will try to get you the info. We haven't received a brochure for this as of yet and don't have more details available at this time.

MARCH MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED to be a showing of the movie "Just Like a Woman". Check the hotline for room location and any changes. Also we will be doing another of our off site, weekday meetings at the Stage Door again. See you there, sister!

SOMETHING REALLY STUPID GOING ON down the I-90 a couple of hours away. No, not in Albany (like what's new about that!) but the other direction and over the state line. Those marvelous girls of the Erie Sisters have split into two 'rival' groups. Add Gemini as the newest CD group on the scene. They claim that they have taken over the running of the Riverside Weekend in November and will be a more "open" group than the Erie Sisters.

How such a fine group could come to such a

stage of inflated, petty-male ego driven BS is beyond me! It seems to me that all parties involved have lost sight of the common purpose we all should be serving. Spending their energies on such ridiculous infighting among our selves will serve no purpose at all! We have enough problems of our own, with out having them with each other.

We must stick together, not tear each other down. If our group ever falls to such a point, I hope we can recognize what is happening before it comes to such a stage.

I just hope all of this doesn't end up ruining the Riverside Weekend event, which is the finest I've ever attended.

Kathy



THE GIRLS AT THE CHRISTMAS MEETING



- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. ALICIA | 8. JOY |
| 2. DANALYN | 9. KATHY |
| 3. Camille | 10. SHARON |
| 4. COLLEAN | 11. CRYSTAL |
| 5. KATHRYN | 12. JANICE |
| 6. JEAN | 13. PATTI |
| 7. ANGELLA | |

Dana L. (Dana Lyn) DeWitt
3840 E. Robinson Rd., Apt. 234
Amherst, NY 14228

January 5, 1997

Dear Kathy,

Missed you're presents at the meeting last night.

Thank ewe fore the love lei Christmas card.

Eye hang my head inn shamel! Aye did knot catch the miss spelling of Amherst. Enclosed is won (1) noodle. U may whet it and administer lashes as kneaded (as per Dear Abby).

I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC,
It plainly marks for my revue
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this letter threw it,
I'm sure your please too no.
Its letter perfect in it's weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.

(From Readers Digest)

It really works! The spell checker shows no errors!

Seriously, thanks for your thoughtfulness with the Christmas card.

HOW TO WALK GRACEFULLY

An ungainly gait can spoil an otherwise gorgeous girl's impact... so if you waddle, weave, shuffle, mince, march, bob, or strut, learn to glide with queenly grace! Here's how:

A graceful walk is actually good posture in motion; the traditional training method is to practice with a book on your head. Now, balancing a book (or anything else) on top of your head forces your body into proper alignment - and that is the foundation of both good posture and an attractive walk! Here's how your body should shape up when alignment is correct: rib cage vertical, not tilted forward or backward... pelvis straight (if you had a tail, it would hang straight down, not tucked under between your legs!)... knees and feet pointing straight ahead. A plumb line would fall just in front of ankle bone, just behind kneecap, through center of hip joint and middle of waist, shoulder, ear lobe. (If you'd like to check yourself out, you can hang a tape measure down a full-length mirror and see.)

When you walk, your footprints should look like this: Feet are turned out just the tiniest bit and placed in almost a straight line - only an inch or two apart. The length of your stride is determined by how tall you are and how long your legs are. (Average stride is about one foot for women.) If you are long-legged and take small strides, your walk may be of the mincing variety... like a goose, it looks silly! Conversely, if you're petite and have a long stride, you may look like a drill sergeant pompously marching along, and you need to shorten your stride a bit. In doubt about your footprint pattern? Try walking barefoot in wet sand.

How your body's weight is distributed when you stand or walk is vital. The Mensendieck method of body mechanics advocates training muscles to automatically maintain the "balanced standing position". Weight is not on heels, but on the "inner margin ball" of the foot, just behind the big toe. Place your feet in a parallel position, tighten buttocks and inner thigh muscles, lower the shoulder blades and stretch the spine, pulling your head back and up (never let your head poke forward like a turtle). There! That's the balanced standing position, and, once in it, your figure will look its very best! Now, relax a bit (but keep your weight on the inner margin ball of your feet), and start walking slowly. Swing legs from the hip socket (without twitching derrière at every step!) and keep your body aligned: shoulders level, head up and back, shoulder blades lowered, rib cage vertical. With each step, your heel hits the ground first... then weight instantly rolls forward along the outside edge of foot onto the big toe - with which you push off for the next step. This shift of weight is done smoothly, with a continuous, fluid motion.

Now that you know what to do, here are some don'ts: Don't toe in or toe out... shift hips from side to side... take giant strides or tiny baby steps... lead with your head... swing your shoulders... bob up and down.

That's all there is to it! Happy walking... You never looked better!

For Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, shown with her new husband, being 6-feet tall is not a fashion dilemma.



women usually are afraid to wear heels," said Mrs. Aldridge, who stands 5-foot 9½ and often wears two or three-inch heels.

- Take advantage of your height.

"We have a black knit dress with a short jacket in this season. It is straight with a long slit up one side and it is very long. It comes up just a couple inches above the ankles. A short- or average-size person couldn't carry it off. It is so plain, it's dramatic," Mrs. Aldridge said.

Finally, remember that you will make an impression.

In an article in Newsweek, one woman interviewed said she still remembers her initial encounter with the former Carolyn Bessette:

"I remember what she was wearing the first time I saw her: penny loafers, no socks, black leggings, a white T-shirt and a jacket... she looked fantastic. You wanted to look like that.

"You would spend thousands of dollars on clothing you didn't need to look like that."

At 5-foot-10½, she describes her style as "classic," but she occasionally goes for something funky or glitzy.

She finds that men's jeans fit her better than women's — her inseam is 33 inches — and that in regular women's sizes, designer-label clothes tend to be cut longer.

What works: "I am short-waisted so I wear a lot of short jackets, or very long blazers. They cut me at a better place. I wear a lot of black. I usually don't wear much color, but I do like some brights — especially hot pink.

"I usually look for cuffed pants so I can take the cuff down if I need to. I also buy my pants a little big so that they are longer."

What she avoids: "Anything fitted. And I don't like stripes. They make you look longer. I really avoid skirts, and I wear nothing short. I may wear a longer dress in the summertime."

What about shoes? "I have no problem with shoes because I wear a straight size (9). I never wear heels; if I have to get dressed up, I may wear a small-stacked heel."

Whatever the style choice, fashion experts stress one thing for tall women: the right fit.

When you're 5'10" or more, what do you wear?

By SUSAN MARTIN
News Style Writer

Look up: tall women are in the news these days. The fashion-conscious Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, who married John F. Kennedy Jr. in September, is 6 feet tall. So is actress Uma Thurman. Nicole Kidman measures in at 5-foot-10, as does Princess Diana. It's trendy to be tall.

"I always complain when I'm in the mall shopping for clothes, but I'm glad I'm tall," said Josie Lehman, a college sophomore who stands about 6 feet tall and plays on the University at Buffalo's women's volleyball team.

But tall women are in a minority. About 40 percent of all women are under 5-foot-4, according to the U.S. Statistical Abstract. Seventy-five percent are under 5-foot-6, and 99 percent of all women are under 5-foot-11.

As Andy Rooney once pointed out in his column: There are very few 6-foot women.

Fashion-wise, being tall has its pros and cons.

Being tall often means you can get dramatic in your dress. Big, bold jewelry often looks better on tall women than short, for example. So do longer hemlines, some tall women say.

"I think really long dresses and skirts look better on tall people. I just think when you're taller, you can pull off outfits that shorter people probably can't. You're taller, so it's like you have a presence," said Lisette Prinzing, a 6-foot-3 junior center for UB's women's basketball team.

At the same time, some trends are better off avoided. The miniskirts and the baby doll dresses so popular a few seasons back spelled disaster, for example.

"They made your legs look like they went on forever," said Miss Prinzing, whose hometown is Milton, near Poughkeepsie.

Furthermore, buying fashionable shoes in sizes 10 and larger can be a challenge. Tall women may end up buying men's jeans. And, if they shop in the regular sportswear department, tall women often find sleeves too short and the clothes ill-fitting.

Miss Lehman, who's from Honeoye, said she always has trouble finding dresses. Cocktail dresses are way too short. And for her high school prom, she ended up having her dress made.

Like other tall, working women, Judith Klepfer, who is in her 40s and works at Eddie Bauer, Eastern Hills, has learned what's right for her and what isn't.

Clement

Clement
10400 Rio Hondo Parkway
El Monte, CA 91733



"But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions,
think"

Lord Byron

29 January 1997

Dear Friends,

My name is Ted J. Clement, and I am a graduate student at *Saybrook Institute Graduate School and Research Center* in San Francisco, CA (1-800-825-4480). I am beginning a research project that will start to answer long-asked questions in the transgendered community.

Enclosed is a copy of the text announcing my research and my need for assistance from your membership, clients, or other contacts. I hope you will post, print or otherwise disseminate this announcement to your membership as soon as possible. I anticipate beginning the bulk of the work (the questions/answers and interviews) right away and completing the work by the end of 1997, so your assistance is vital.

If you require more detailed information about the study, verification from the school, or any other additional information, please feel free to call or write and ask. I truly appreciate your assistance in this important study which would not be possible without your cooperation and participation. I look forward to sharing the results of the study with you in the near future.

Cordially yours,

Ted J. Clement, M.A.
10400 Rio Hondo Parkway
El Monte, CA 91733-1354
(818) 444-4354
E-Mail: tedclem@ix.netcom.com

Call for Assistance with Research Project:

"What are the effects of disclosure of crossdressing behavior of the male parental figure on the maturational development of children in that family system?" "Should I tell the kids about my crossdressing, should it be kept a secret, or should I abstain from crossdressing until the children have left home?" This research makes no judgment about the matter but instead will try to learn about the actual experiences of the young people in a family with a crossdressing father. The goal is to talk with adult and adolescent children who have emerged from that special family system to glean what they felt and thought the experience meant to them. The attempt will be made in this manner to help determine what those effects are.

The researcher needs to talk to the children of crossdressers (of all sorts; TV, TG, TS) who are between the ages of 16 and 25 (though younger and older children of crossdressers will be considered as well). Parents of those children under the age of eighteen will be provided with parental consent forms. This study will consist of a few questions that the child will be asked in an open-ended manner in an in-person interview setting and completing a simple form.

The participant criteria is as follows: your child is between the ages of 16 and 25, has known about and experienced your crossdressing behavior (around the house or in public), and who would be willing (without parental coercion) to share their experiences with me.

It is hoped that individuals and groups will volunteer to assist with this study so that a foundation for further study may be laid and definitive conclusions arrived at. The pilot study, which will require participation of several children of crossdressers is slated to begin in 1997. If you are such a parent or know of a crossdresser who is a parent, please contact me at:

RESEARCH PROJECT

Ted J. Clement, MA
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EL MONTE, CA 91733-1354
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-OR-

E-Mail at: tedclem@ix.netcom.com

Basic Human Rights For All Transgendered Persons

Melissa [redacted] NC-4303-D

Like many of you, I spent many years hiding inside my own home. The years were not wasted, in that I spent many hours reading everything I could find about gender issues. Those of you who have attempted to take this route know that most public libraries are not exactly well stocked in this topic. So I turned to my personal computer and the various Bulletin Board Services (BBS). After many hours and the help of dozens of very nice people I realized that we, the members of the Gender Community, were, and are, being denied many of the rights that the non-Gender Community take for granted.

Not being an author, my anxiety level was pretty high about writing this article, and I procrastinated as long as I possibly could before I started decided that I couldn't wait any longer. To expedite my research I turned to the Internet where to my surprise I was able to find literally hundreds of examples where Transgendered/Transsexual persons had suffered from insensitivity. I've been able to find either a newspaper article or an eye witness to the event to provide credibility to what I found. The eye witnesses did confirm, via email that what I found was true and several gave me additional information. This is not a fictional story to fill space in the *Femme Mirror*, these are real people that suffered real injustices.

In many states there are not any specific laws against crossdressing, transvestism, transsexualism, etc., as a matter of fact my chapter has a letter from the North Carolina State Police stating that for North Carolina. What the author of the letter failed to state was that there are a myriad of laws that fall under the general category of "moral intrepitude" that can be used to arrest us, incarcerate us, evict us from our apartments, and even support our employer when our employment is terminated.

I discovered the above about North Carolina by accessing the North Carolina Legal Library through the Internet and searching for court cases under various topics. Those cases that did contain a reference to crossdressing, transvestite, etc., were actually about other crimes such as shoplifting, robbery, prostitution, etc., because the defendants were convicted for other crimes, I almost gave up, I then tried to search on the word moral and up popped "moral intrepitude".

It seems that the North Carolina "moral intrepitude" laws are so vague that almost anyone could be charged because they cover areas such as public displays of affection between adults, sexual intercourse between unmarried men and women, etc. A few years ago a teenage girl was arrested for displaying her navel. She was wearing a pair of jeans and a crop-top tee shirt.

Earlier this year Sharon [redacted] was terminated from her job at Fayetteville State University (Fayetteville, NC) when it was discovered that she was really a male. She has lost the two appeals that were listed and I have no idea if she is attempting a third or not. Her address was not available.

I started with the legal aspect of the lack of our rights to make you aware that we are not as secure as we think we are. I live in an apartment and I'm sure that some of my neighbors know about Melissa, if they wanted to complain to the property manager I could be legally evicted with no recourse available to me. I will be the first to admit that most police departments and District Attorney offices have too many real problems to deal with, without going around arresting crossdressers. Unless there is a Barney Fife on your police force, you are probably safe, but the laws do exist in North Carolina and I would imagine in every other state as well.

There are a few things that you can do about these type laws, but it requires you to step forward as a Transgendered person. The simplest action is to go out more often, go shopping, go to a movie, take a walk, anything that will let people see that we are not nearly as decadent as many believe. I've set a goal for myself to go shopping at least once a week as Melissa, it may be as simple as buying household items or to buy a new outfit. Each of us needs to get out and let the world see that we are simply normal everyday people the same as they are.

If there are laws that specifically target crossdressers, transvestites, etc., you could take the approach that the laws should be applied to women who wear slacks with front zippers. For those areas that have laws denying men access to the Ladies Room, you could insist that the male maintenance worker or janitor be arrested for violating the same law that denies your femme self access. You would accomplish bringing the absurdity of the law to the light and either the law would be changed, repealed or women would be hired to perform those tasks, which would require doubling maintenance and janitorial staffs because the women would not be allowed into the Men's Room.

Earlier I mentioned discovering hundreds of examples of insensitivity toward the CD/TV/TG/TS community. I'll only present three separate incidents in different parts of the United States, two of which ended in the death of an innocent person.

On August 7, 1995 there was one on many traffic accidents in Washington, DC, what made this particular accident was not that one of the victims died, but the way in which it quickly turned into a demonstration of intolerance and disrespect for human life.

Tyra [REDACTED] a 24-year-old male who had been living as a female since she was 14, was a passenger in a car that was broadsided by another car at a 4-way stop. By the time the emergency personnel arrived, Tyra and her companion had been removed from their vehicle. A male firefighter began working on Tyra when he cut open her pants leg and realized she was actually a male. The firefighter stood and was reported in the Washington Post as saying "this ain't no bitch" and moved over to where other firefighters were standing. The group of firefighters began making comments and joking about Tyra while she lay there semi-conscious and gasping for breath without any assistance from the emergency personnel at the scene.

Only after the crowd began shouting at the firefighters to help Tyra did two other firefighters begin to treat her injuries. She later was transported to DC General Hospital where she was pronounced dead.

My next example of insensitivity is about murder of Brandon Teena, the F-M transsexual in Humboldt, Nebraska.

From all accounts that I could find about Brandon, he was a very likable person and didn't hide his true sex from any of the women he dated. On reporter described him as the Don Juan of Humboldt, Nebraska. Brandon was arrested on a check forgery charge and it was discovered that he was both biologically and legally a female. Humboldt, being a small town of 5, 200, the word quickly spread and two of Brandon's male friends raped him at a Christmas party in 1993. Despite threats that he would be killed if he said anything, he reported the rape to the local police.

However, charges of rape and assault were not filed until after Brandon's murder despite the fact that his sister called the sheriff four days prior to the slaying to ask why the two had not been arrested even though Brandon had identified them as his attackers. The sheriff responded, according to Tammy Brandon, that "he didn't need [her] doing his work", the sheriff, who has been quoted as stating of Brandon Teena that "you can call it *it* as far as I'm concerned", claimed that he had been pursuing the rape charges at the time of Brandon's murder. (If you believe that, I've got a bridge in Brooklyn I'll let you have real cheap)

The two rapists and a third male were arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to death for the rape and subsequent murder of Brandon Teena. Local authorities have denied that their outing of Brandon had anything to do with his rape and murder.

I admit, these examples were rather depressing, believe me, they were not the only ones where innocent people died or where murdered because of someone's insensitivity. I didn't write about these people to scare you from ever going out again, I wrote about them in a hope that their situation would make you realize

that we need to do something, and do it quickly. We all know that we cannot hide, we are the way we are. We can do something about the insensitivity of the police, fire and EMT departments! If a chapter hasn't already done so, it would be an excellent project for a chapter to develop a sensitivity training session for these departments, and I truly believe they would welcome your participation. However, in doing this you do not want to ignore a major player, the Gay/Lesbian/Bi community.

Benjamin Franklin once said, "We should all hang together, or surely we shall hang separately", this pretty well describes our situation in relation to working with the G/L/B community. We need each other, not only to develop a sensitivity training session but to go beyond that and show a unified front to the world in general. In February 1997 an historic event will occur on a national level, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP) will be jointly lobbying congress for human rights for all aspects of our community. Phyllis Frye, the founder of ICTLEP, said "Until we have aaaaa-lllll-lllll, yes all, aspects of our community represented, we are fighting for freedom without only some of our troops". She said it so much more eloquently and in fewer words than I, but the point is, we ALL must get involved!

There have been many wonderful sisters that have come before us and broken down barriers and opened doors so that we can enjoy what we have today. What I'm challenging you with is to step forward and join their ranks and help make this an even better world for our sisters that are being born today as you read this.



JAMES P. MCCOY/Buttalo News
Paul Pigeon, who is white, and Diana R. Wells, his African-American transsexual girlfriend, say they have been persecuted since they fell in love 18 months ago.

Non-traditional relationship causes stir Love for transsexual blamed for harassment by co-workers

By LOU MICHEL
News Staff Reporter

This is a love story, though not a happy one.

It's about two people who say they care deeply for each other.

It's also about another group of people who have no tolerance for the couple's interracial, non-traditional relationship.

Paul Pigeon, who is white, and Diana R. Wells, his African-American transsexual girlfriend, say they have been persecuted since they fell in love 18 months ago.

At the Cheektowaga warehouse where Pigeon, 34, worked in maintenance until he recently transferred, co-workers used black and red markers to write racial epithets and draw obscene pictures of the couple on the walls, the couple stated in a police report.

Last spring, another incident was even more serious.

At 2:25 p.m. March 19, Cheektowaga officers received what proved to be a false 911 call of a black woman threatening a truck driver with a gun outside the warehouse on Allied Drive.

"I had gone to the warehouse to get Paul at the end of his shift, and the police surrounded my car and told me to get out with my hands up," Ms. Wells said. "They searched the car, my purse, coat and made a complete spectacle out of me."

"Workers from the warehouse were out in the lot watching and laughing. The police wouldn't let Paul come to the car. He was telling them I didn't have a gun."

"When the officers realized that was true, they were very apologetic and asked me if I had a problem with anyone at the warehouse," said Ms. Wells, 40, who underwent an operation in 1979 to have her gender changed to female. "They later listened to the 911 tape and were able to identify the warehouse worker who made the false report."

A charge of third-degree falsely reporting an incident was filed against an employee a few days later, and the case eventually was adjourned in contemplation of dismissal in Cheektowaga Town Court.

But the involvement with police and efforts by Pigeon's employer did little to frighten off the couple's harassing critics, according to Pigeon.

"Every time Tops removed some of the drawings, there would be new ones the next day throughout the warehouse," he said. "And we're talking about life-size drawings of me having sex. Words like 'Pigeon you nigger lover' and 'Pigeon is a flaming fag' would be written on the walls. Workers also used the warehouse intercom to call out my name and make sexual sounds."

He said he is seeking a divorce from his estranged wife so he can marry Ms. Wells.

David R. Whipple, senior vice president of human resources for Tops, said numerous efforts have been made to stop the harassment, including meetings with all the parties.

"Tops has taken appropriate steps to ensure that our work

place is harassment- and threat-free. Appropriate discipline was taken against some employees when it could be determined that they had participated in some of the alleged harassment," Whipple said. "Tops is continuing and will continue to provide for a work environment that is harassment free for all of their associates."

A Lackawanna native, Pigeon, who is the father of two young children, says he never imagined he would find himself in this type of a romance. He and Ms. Wells met at a Buffalo bar in 1994.

"About a month after Paul left his wife, we were introduced by a mutual friend," Ms. Wells said. "Paul said I was very attractive, and he asked if he could buy me a drink. I said sure."

A native California who was raised in New York City, Ms. Wells moved to Buffalo in 1983.

Pigeon, a 13-year Tops employee, says his relatives and neighbors generally accept his relationship.

"This was love at first sight for Diana and me. It just happened," he said, adding that all of his past relationships have been traditional.

If the harassment continues in Tops' new Lancaster warehouse, where Pigeon now works, he and Ms. Wells say they might file a civil lawsuit against the co-workers.

"We want to be treated like everyone else. We want to be left alone," Ms. Wells said.

Is it reasonable to have that expectation?

"I don't see why not," Ms. Wells said.

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Be All '97

Whose Job Is It?

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.