

Renaissance News



Volume 7, No. 4

Vision - Integrity - Quality

April, 1993

IFGE Takes Philly by STORM!

The caravan of IFGE leaders, along with their office equipment, book store and conference materials, left Massachusetts in the wee hours of Saturday morning arriving just hours before travel in the eastern U.S. was shut down by the blizzard of '93. Attendees were stranded and delayed *en route* all over the continent. But while it was cold outside, the warmth of the hotel staff and the friendly welcome extended by the Renaissance volunteers melted the ice, creating an environment that is being billed as the best IFGE Convention ever.

Unfortunately, Sunday's Museum tour, brunch and trip to Atlan-

tic City were canceled, but things were back on track for Thursday evening's Night on the Town, where Renaissance ladies guided over 90 out-of-town guests to eight different Philadelphia restaurants followed by a rendezvous at the Two-Four Club. The real show, however, occurred on Friday evening when over 35 Renaissance members, partners and friends led by Angela Gardner, produced an incredible Chez Renaissance Casino night. In addition to providing entertainment for the convention attendees, we raised \$2,500 for the Make a Wish Foundation which grants a last wish to a terminally ill

child. (Casino story on page x.) The convention daily newsletter, Philly News, wrote: "The Renaissance group provided one of the most spectacular events ever held at an IFGE Convention with gaming tables, music, hostesses, drink servers and floor staff equal to some of the finest casinos in the world."

The convention was welcomed to Philadelphia with a signed letter from Mayor Edward

Rendell and a special greeting from him at Thursday's luncheon conveyed by Mr. Kevin Vaughn, Executive Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights.

Renaissance was featured in the convention programs and activities other than the social program as well. JoAnn Roberts was the keynote speaker for the Thursday luncheon with a powerful presentation on "Gender Roles and Gender Rights." As was evident from the local press activity, JoAnn was also quite successful in her role as local publicity chairperson. She also arranged for a well attended special professional program.

Alison Laing led the Congress of Transgender Organizations in a meeting that included the endorsement of the Bill of Gender Rights and the establishment of a Political Awareness Group. Evelyn Kirkland led the spouses/partners program as

(continued on page 16)



Debbie Galbraith (l.), director Make a Wish Foundation, collects Casino Nite winnings from Alison Laing.

Photo by Dawn

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Chapters & Affiliates

New Jersey

South Jersey: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc. 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 435-5401 or write Renaissance SJ, PO Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Chapter leader - Terri [REDACTED]; Assistant Leader - Phil [REDACTED]

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Meets on third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, PA. Doors open at 8:00 p.m. Write to Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020 or call (215)630-1437. Chapter Leader - Maryann Kirkland

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at The Greens at Westgate in York, Pa. Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or call (717) 780-1LSV. Chapter Leader - Yvonne [REDACTED]

Affiliates

MOTG: PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701

American Educational Gender Information Services (AEGIS): PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 939-0244

Renaissance News

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the gender community and the general public.

And, don't forget about...

Articles, opinion pieces and letters to the Editor are always welcome at the Renaissance News. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to Renaissance News, P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Complimentary and irate letters to the Editor may be sent to the same address.

Significant Others who have article ideas or opinions they would like to share should send their ideas to Evelyn Kirkland, c/o Maryann Kirdland, P. O. Box 1242, Newtown, PA 18940.

Background Papers are available for \$1 each plus \$.25 postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing, 2-Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing, 3-PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others, 4-The Matter of Children, 5-An Annotated Bibliography, 6-Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View, 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics, and 9-Understanding Transsexuality.

Pen Pal Program: If you would like to be a pen pal contact Maryann Kirkland at P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Attn: Dept. PP.

If you are a transfendered person with children and would like to network with other transparents, contact Elsa Larson at: Transparent, C/O Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

For TS information and peer counseling in South Jersey call Kelly Harris at 609 641-3782.

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Events Calendar

April

3rd - Annual LSV Dinner Social in Victorian Ballroom at Bube's Brewery in Mt. Joy

17th - GPC Marsha Hershman, "Gender Differences in Voice and Speech"

May

15th - GPC Dr. William Stayton, "Sexual Lifestyles"

Chapters wishing to have their programs listed should get them to the Newsletter at least one month in advance. Two is better.

ROGER'S NOTEBOOK (#66)

by Roger E. Peo, Ph. D.

This is one of Dr. Peo's columns that ran in other newsletters before we started to carry it. We will run a few of these older columns from time to time.

As a therapist I work with clients who are struggling with gender issues, so it is important to have many ways of interpreting the social patterns we call masculinity and femininity. Last month I mentioned the current men's movement and speculated on what it might say to the people of the transgender community and what the community could say to them. The next few columns will expand on that and other related themes.

One of the better known books in the men's movement is *Iron John* by Robert Bly. In this column I set the stage for future columns with a "book review" on *Iron John*. I am only extracting ideas that seem pertinent to the transgender community, not everything the author has to say.

First, a bit about Robert Bly. He is a poet, storyteller, lecturer and translator. Though the book jacket does not say it, I would call him a theorist and thinker. I guess that he is presently in his 60's. His

writing style is complex because he draws on his knowledge of gods and goddesses from Greek and Roman cultures and expects the reader to have equal familiarity with them.

The original story about Iron John is found in a fairy tale recorded by the Grimm brothers in the early 1820's. Bly uses this story as a framework for his book. He expands his ideas by drawing on mythology from many cultures and interleaves these stories with the tale of Iron John. He asserts that myths and legends were the way people organized their understanding of their culture. Bly says these stories provide a pattern for passage through the various early stages of life. The main theme of the book is that we, as a culture, have lost touch with and/or rejected our ancient heritage. Without the "maps" provided by the myths we get "stuck" at some stage and feel much pain as a result. As I read this book, I was reminded of an earlier book, *Passages*, by Gail Sheehy who also describes stages of individual development. The difference is that Bly focuses on early development through adolescence while Sheehy describes stages in adulthood.

Bly believes that following the mythological patterns provides a *guided* pas-

sage through the critical early and adolescent stages of life. These culminated in the adulthood passage rites which provide a formal transition to the adult world. His book describes only the male growth and life stages. While Bly believes that women have similar stages, he does not write about them because he feels that a man can not adequately experience or understand the woman's experience.

One point that Bly makes over and over is that in our culture, older men no longer provide guidance or initiation "rites" for the young male. He traces this change to the Industrial Revolution. During this transition the close relationship between the father and son, found in a farming environment, was dissolved. The father left for the factory and the son no longer knew what his father did or how he acted. This social and economic separation of the father and son left the son without a model. It also left him without an initiation path into manhood. More importantly, it deprived him of a way to break the ties to his mother. Bly argues that without this break, the boy never matures into a man.

In the next column, I will relate Bly's thoughts to some feelings I have heard in the transgender community. For those of you who are interested, I highly recommend *Iron John* as a way to gain a new perspective on masculinity and its relationship to femininity.

You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445; Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential.

This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. Others must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of such a reprint should be sent to Dr. Peo.



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Re-Beat-Minder

by Angela Gardner

News flash! The Renaissance News has learned that the new Attorney General of the United States, Janet Reno, is a male impersonator. Although a genetic female, Ms. Reno has been using her large size to work a side career as a male impersonator in a *La Cage* type show in Miami where her main career as District Attorney has gained her most of the limelight.

Asked if she will work as a male impersonator in a Washington area club Ms. Reno replied, "I probably am not going to have time for stage performance anymore but I may start coming to the office in three piece suits just to satisfy my urges."

Okay, April fool! Not a word of it is true. The following tidbits are all legitimate.

SPY'S COVER GIRL IS

JFK

The March issue of Spy magazine features a uniform clad JFK in a seductive pose with dark lipstick and nail polish. (They match.) Large letters across the cover ask the question, "Was JFK a drag queen?" The article looks at

homoeroticism in the Navy and they picked JFK since she, I mean he, was out in that PT boat with all those other sailors.

I have known more than a few crossdressers who spent time in the Navy so who knows? Pick up a copy of Spy if you want to gather more intelligence on this case. Be sure to pack your shoe phone, (that spike heel could damage your ear drum so be careful) and don't forget your trench coat and dark glasses.

NOSE FOR NEWS

Jennifer Ann [REDACTED] has sent us some information from the Florida Times Union newspaper on who has the keener sense of smell, men or women. According to the paper's Fashion Q & A column, women have the sharper sniffer. It seems they acquire it rather than inherit it. Women use their olfactory sense more often than men. Cooking, flower arranging and picking out perfume in department stores are all uses that tend to bring women (and we can infer, crossdressers) to higher scent awareness.

We also learn that over fifty everyone's schnozz begins to lose sniffing power. That's why older scent wearers may smell like they took a bath in their favorite aroma. If your proboscis is over fifty, be careful with that Giorgio!

NAVEL BREASTS

Gee, I mentioned the Navy just a minute ago and here it is again. What? Oh, sorry. This item is about that part of your anatomy that's an inny or outy, not about outing Navy guys who wear lip-stick on shore leave.

It seems the latest method being used to help shore up the sagging breast prosthesis biz is insertion of the implants through the navel. The novel navel site was developed just eighteen months ago and allows a surgeon to augment a chest without leaving any visible scars.

At first mention it sounds about as difficult as sucking a football up your nose and about as painful. Ouch! A three quarter inch stainless steel tube is inserted into the navel and is tunneled up beneath the rib cage skin until it reaches the bottom of the breast. A deflated

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silicone bag is pushed through the tube until it is in the breast area and then it is inflated with salt water pumped through a plastic line inside the tube. The line is pulled out, the tube is withdrawn and the incision is closed. It takes less than an hour and costs about four thousand dollars.

Now this is just my opinion, one successful drag queen's opinion, but I don't think I'd like a stainless steel tube pushed under any part of my skin. Of course you don't have a visible scar and that would certainly be helpful when you were denying your boob job on the beach. I guess it all depends how important those big babies are to you.

HIGHER HIV RISK IN TV

HOOKERS

Alive and Kicking, a magazine for people with the AIDS virus printed the results of a survey done in the Atlanta area involving TV prostitutes. Of fifty three male transvestite prostitutes studied, 68% were HIV positive, 81% had syphilis and 80% had hepatitis B. Earlier studies done in Brazil and Israel had indicated a very high rate of HIV infection in TV hookers and the Atlanta study seems to bear this out.

Ninety five percent of all hookers surveyed said they used condoms with their clients. Now, I wouldn't suspect any of my genteel readers of availing themselves of the services of these ladies of the evening but, WATCH IT! It's not fun having to print things like this in my entertaining and witty column and I sincerely wish we didn't have to worry about AIDS and syphilis or other disgusting ways to die. We do have to worry about these things though so until we arrive in some utopia without sexually transmitted diseases I have to continue to bum people out with these little doses of reality. If you are going to have sex and you're not monogamous with some one who's test results and faithfulness you are sure of, I mean SURE of... wear a condom. Now back to the fun stuff.

DQ ON ET

Entertainment Tonight did a feature story on drag model and dance music chanteuse Ru Paul. Now when I was a little drag queen I had no idea that I'd be able to see something like this on my television when I grew up. Mary Hart and John, "My wife and I didn't have sex till after the wedding" Tesh actually gushed over the tall (6'7")

and sultry singer. The piece included interviews with Ru's fans and home video of the tall drag artist dancing with her father at a family reunion.

Her Tommy Boy Records release is titled, "Supermodel (You Better Work)" and that's just what Ru Paul has done. It's taken her ten years to work her way up from New York club "celebutante" to hot pop singer. The ET story told all about it and went out of the way to say what a nice person Ru Paul is.

Congrats to Entertainment Tonight on presenting a solid positive story on a major figure in the drag performance world.

Sassy Magazine has a hot photo of Ru Paul and some more info on the crossdressed songstress in a recent issue. Get a copy off your teenage daughter and check her out.

COURIER POST COVERS

THE CD SCENE

Terri [REDACTED] is becoming a great stringer for the Renaissance News. She shipped us the Sassy article on Ru Paul and she has sent along a slew of clippings from her local paper, The Courier Post. That paper had four transgendered articles

AB COUNSELING

Murray D. Gegner, Ph.D.

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in a two month period and yes, we're going to share them with you.

First was a letter to Dear Abby about an orphanage that dished out "petticoat punishment" to one of their children sixty some years ago. The writer was a seventy three year old man who still recalls the incident as if it happened yesterday. Being forced to parade around the orphanage in a dress was a totally humiliating experience and the victim asked Abby why the nuns would use such a "perverted form of punishment."

Abby responded with, "The ultimate humiliation for a boy is to be stripped of his masculinity and forced to appear girlish."

Now I know there are legions of you out there asking how Abby can be so insensitive to our crossdressing desires. Doesn't she know that some of us boys just love to be

girly? I think she does but she is right about how forced dressing can make a child feel. If it wasn't a humiliating experience in our culture then we wouldn't need support groups. No one would be in the closet and crossdressing would be just one more activity that people enjoyed right out in the open.

The writer did not say if he had the desire to crossdress as a result of his punishment. If he does I hope he has learned to be more comfortable with it.

ATTACK OF THE CRIMINAL CD

The next article in the Courier Post was a little news item about a crossdressed robber. It's a perfect example of the old adage about knowing who your friends really are. It seems that Frederick Ashworth, a twenty four year old

female impersonator was on his way to perform at a local bar in Brattleboro, Vermont when the older, (GG) woman he was riding with pulled a gun out of her bag and held up a restaurant. He wasn't too shocked to fill bags with money and help carry it away. Of course the woman claimed it was all the FI's idea. Police may have caught up with the pair after they followed a trail of sequins and boa feathers to their hideout.

Moral of the story: Be careful who you ride to the show with. Not all friendly and supportive GG's have your best interests at heart.

IS THE CALLER THERE?

Okay, it's Donahue's line and this is a bit about the Oprah impersonator who won the Ladies Home Journal Oprah look-alike contest but you get the idea.

Jecquin Stitt won the contest

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two years ago and appeared on Oprah Winfrey's show. Now she confesses that she "... felt kind of disrespected," since she only got to come out at the end of the program for about fifteen seconds.

Ms. Stitt, who has undergone sex reassignment surgery is not going to dwell on it though. She is hosting her own television talk show called "Straight Up With Quin" on public access television in Flint, Michigan.

Wonder if she'd care to do a show about transgender issues?

COURIER POST TELLS

THE SECRET

The secret of "The Crying Game" that is. In their People column on March thirteenth the Courier Post tells more about the Oscar nominated actor, Jaye Davidson. It seems that Jaye came to New York last December and gave two interviews about the film. One was done for the New York Times and Jaye held forth at that one in drag. It ran in the Times without gender references. The second interview was conducted with a writer for Rolling Stone and Jaye dressed more casually, as a man. The piece appears in the April issue of Rolling Stone and is currently available at your newsstand.

Information disclosed in the interview includes: born in California, raised in London. A white mother and a black father. He is mistaken for a woman at least once a month and when he met his last lover he had to ask, "You know I'm a man don't you?"

Siskel and Ebert picked Jaye as their winner for "Best Supporting Actor" in a special Oscar picks

program on March twenty first. Roger was peeved with Gene for outing the big secret on national television but they agreed that Jaye was the best actor who was faced with a difficult role.

Now the only secret is, (and it won't be by the time you are reading this) what will Jaye wear to the Oscars? I hope it's off the shoulder and slinky!

NEW BOOK PUTS THE

FOCUS ON GENDER

Keep a look out for the new book called *The Lenses of Gender*. The book is about how American culture has a need to separate every object and experience into masculine and feminine. This gender polarization causes most of our social ills. It perpetuates a society that is male dominated and imposes the view that the male form is standard and the female is other and inferior.

The author, Cornell University psychologist Sandra Bem, Ph. D., says that this distorting lens has been implanted in us all at a very early age and it is responsible for men who are macho caricatures, homophobic reactions and the devaluation of behaviors culturally defined as female. She contends that gender polarization has become the most important dimension around which personality and individual identity are organized and that this generates enormous insecurity in men who cling to this false model for their life. They are constantly in fear of experiencing feelings that they perceive as feminine. Could these be the men who get so upset when they encounter a crossdresser, a gay male or other "gender subversive?" As Ray

Charles would say, "Uh huh!"

The book is available from Yale University Press and if we can get our act together we'll have a copy in the Renaissance Library soon.

WHEN JOHNNY, AH

JENNY COMES

MARCHING HOME

It seems a young woman in North Carolina has won a federal case of sex discrimination against the National Park Service. Lauren Cook Burgess was all set to portray a young, male, Confederate fifer during a battle re-enactment back in 1989 when she was stopped by a park ranger. The ranger told Ms. Burgess that "We don't allow women in uniform here." Her options for the re-enactment were to portray one of the six female characters or leave the park. She decided to leave but she will be back in this year's re-enactment playing a male role thanks to a judge's ruling.

I wonder how many guys out there are thinking what I'm thinking? If she can't be discriminated against in portraying a male soldier then how do we sign up to portray one of those six female roles? Let us know if you get the part and we'll give a review of your performance.

POLITICALLY CORRECT

BED FELLOWS

Two transsexuals have made the news in politics recently. First in Arvada, Colorado, City Councilwoman Joanne Conte was about to be outed as a TS. She decided to fess up and go public about her sex reassignment Continued on page 90 While angry that she was forced to reveal what is really no one's business she admitted that there was a

Fan Mail From Some Flounder?

by Angela Gardner

Not quite. In the six years Renaissance has been around we haven't received one hate letter. Now how are we supposed to know that we're having an impact on society if we never hear from the great unwashed masses? I tell you, it's enough to get you really discouraged. But, at last, thanks to the publicity generated by the IFGE convention we have received our first hate letter. I would like to thank the anonymous writer for including a copy of the March 19th Daily News article about the convention. I saw the Philadelphia Inquirer article, the AuCourant write up and the one in PGN but I missed that piece in the Daily News. Let me just say, "thanks pal." The accompanying note was not as com-

plimentary as the article that inspired it. It had no greeting and (of course) no signature. It's text is as follows:

You people are plain sick. A man is supposed to love women and dress and look like a man. Plain and simple. You crossdressers and homosexuals are sick people who are trying to force your, "go with the times", 60s hippy attitude. Let's face it. Stand in front of a mirror and take a real good look and I hope you puke. It's just a matter of time before normal man gets fed up with you idiots and takes action to exterminate the cancer and I will be second ["first" had been crossed out here] in line behind God. AIDS forever to you piles of deranged garbage. A man goes out in public as a crossdresser-what's next! Believe it or not I am a very nice person but you have pushed me over the

edge!!!

And they call us confused. Threatened by a few men in dresses? Not too secure are we mister, "Nice Person?" I would say that what's pushed this guy over the edge is good old fear. Fear driven by the root of all fear, ignorance. This guy has been upset for years. Note the reference to hippies. How could we be "forcing" our "go with the times" attitude and still be sixties hippies? Why would we want to force our attitudes on this guy anyway? Don't worry bud. Your monster AIDS infected, homo crossdressers are all in your mind not lurking outside your door with a polyester house dress and a Tammy Faye Baker Maker Over Kit with your name on it. All week throughout the IFGE

(continued on page 15)

↑
↓ THE LETTER ↓

You people are plain Sick.
A man is supposed to
love women and dress and
look like a man. Plain
and simple. You cross dressers
and homosexuals are
sick people who are trying
to force your "Go with the
Times" 60's hippy attitude.
Let's face it. Stand in front
of a mirror and take a
real good look and I hope
you puke. It's just a
matter of time before the normal
man gets fed up with you
idiots and takes action to
exterminate the cancer →

AND I will Be ^{Second} ~~First~~
IN LINE Behind
God. A: Forever
to you Piles of
De Ranged Garbage
A man goes out in public
as a cross dresser - What's
NEXT! Believe it or not
I am a very nice person BUT you
have pushed me over the Edge!!!

Hot • BUZZ

JoAnn Roberts

"Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits."

• • • • •

Important Note for M.O.M: Thanks for the video tape. I needed a two hour tape to save the premiere episode of *Deep Space Nine*. Oh, about your allegations; I don't deal in gossip, especially from anonymous sources. Even the guilty have a right to know who accuses them. If you identify yourself, we'll talk. Call me.

• • • • •

Calvin Klein thinks he's onto a new trend, but we've already been there and done that. He's showing "his-n-hers" clothing. But, sweets, would you buy a CK gauze wrap skirt for \$400? Not this queen! Go sell it to the grunge poseurs.

• • • • •

Some transvestites could be in big trouble if research at the Monell Chemical Senses Center pans out. Researchers there are working on a human pheromone sex attractant. So, what happens when a M-t-F TV wears this stuff? Will he be so attracted to himself he'll never leave the house? We'll soon have a chance to test that theory when EroX, a newly created fragrance company, releases its first pheromone-based fragrance later this year.

• • • • •

So, ya wannabe a Beauty Queen? Then you jes gotta read *Tiara: An Insider's Guide to Choosing and Winning Pageants*. Written by pageant consultant, Barbara Howell, you'll find such tid-bits as how to choose a gown, how to master your smile, and preparing for the swimsuit competition. Budding BQs should write to Tiara Publications, PO Box 305, Whippany, NJ 07981. Send \$19.95 plus \$3 shipping & handling.

• • • • •

Is an image consultant for you? Well, maybe. Do you want to look your best always? Do you socialize a lot in public when crossdressed? Do you want to make an impression on people? If yes, then perhaps an image consultant is for you. Costs range fro \$50 to \$200 an hour and initial visits range from free to \$250.

Investigate carefully and ask for referrals before committing any money.

• • • • •

Being only slightly taller than the average genetic female, this Queen doesn't have problems finding pantyhose that fit, but some of my friends who push six-feet in height often find the crotch about three inches lower than where it belongs. If you have problems finding longer pantyhose, try Donna Karan or Hanes Ultra Sheer pantyhose. The latter comes in six rather than three sizes.

• • • • •

Every insomniac TV has watched the Victoria Jackson cosmetics "infomercial" by now, but are the products worth it? The introductory kit, with video, is over \$95. A lipstick replacement is catalogued as "\$14.95 retail," and "\$8.95 wholesale."

Yo! That's higher than fancy department store prices, especially when you compare dollars per unit weight. One product tester commented that the foundation provided was about one quarter the size of a comparable Clinique product, but the price was \$25, almost 7 times higher.

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If you spot an ad for the "Party Doll" bra, save your money, I checked it out for you. For about \$11, you get three sheets of silicone plastic backed with adhesive. The idea is to pull the breasts together to create cleavage and secure them in place with the tapes. Probably works fabulously if you have breasts to start with. For those of us who've avoided the Siren's call of Estrogen, the Party Doll bra is no bust, if you get my drift.

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Sunday, April 18, 10PM

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Hot • Buzz

Color is hot and your choices are greater than ever. Prescriptives has added 20 new eyeshadow shades to their current palette of 36, while Estee Lauder offers 80 individual eyeshadows. Lancome takes a split approach with Essentials, neutral basics for lips, eyes, and cheeks, and Accessories, bolder colors to be used as accents.

OH NO! Get the silver bullets and garlic. Blue eyeshadow is back. But the buzz is not about the solid blue of yore. Shades to play with are Prescriptives Blue Angel, YSL #119, Malice Blue, or deeper blues such as L'Oreal Teal and Givenchy Marine. To keep the blue from looking garish, coordinate it with browns and keep lips, cheeks neutral.

The other bright star in the color palette this Spring is one of my faves — yellow. Try Prescriptives Canary or Shiseido Tres Tres Peach. For evening, use yellow-gold shadow with shimmer like Guerlain Gold or Cover Girl Burnished Gold.

A tip of the wig goes to Eve Golden of Seacacus, New Jersey. Ms. Golden, a post-op transsexual, wrote a letter to the editors of *Allure* protesting a passage in a December 1992 article that referred to transsexuals as "sex changes." Says Golden, I do not define myself by a six hour surgical procedure. My transsexualism is a small part of a very full and happy life." We need more folks like Eve willing to stand up against ignorance.

A new technique for distributing disposable contact lenses could reduce costs to the point where lenses could be replaced daily rather than weekly.

Asshole of the Year goes to Karl Lagerfeld who, in response to all the transparent fashions in his collection, said, "Poosy [pussy] is in!" Well, Mr. L, Poosy may be "in" but your brain is definitely "out."

If the March issue of *Vogue* is any bell-

wether of style, the world has gone mad. I've never seen such a collection of ugly and expensive junk. At the other end of the spectrum, stroll through your local Sears and look at the clothing. You'll see why the once mighty have fallen. Sears makes K-Mart and Jaclyn Smith look like haute couture.

Well thanks to J. Edgar Hoover and *The Crying Game*, transgendered people are the hot buzz, both in print and on the tube. But we should not forget those who have gone before. For many years, a male played a female role on a prime-time network television show. Qwikie Qwiz this month is to name this eponymous TV-star of the 60's. The first correct answer received by mail will win a CDS video. Mail your answer to CDS-QQ, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406. Hint: a co-star of this show appeared years later in a television show produced by Irwin Allen, king of schlocksci-fi. (Due to a delay in the March issue, I'll hold off on answering the Feb. QQ).

Words worth repeating I: "Take three

Advil before you get your legs waxed and never do it before your period." Madonna.

Words worth repeating II: "My only regret in life is that I am not someone else." Woody Allen.

Commentary: I am hearing rumblings out of California and Texas that the Congress of Reps has been sold out to IFGE. Now that gets my pantyhose in a real twist. As I write this, the annual meeting of the congress hasn't taken place yet and already people are talking revolution. Listen up bone-heads! No one sold out anything. The congress is your organization. It is the **only** organization with the potential to represent *everyone*. Give it a chance, but more importantly, participate. It's easy to throw stones at other people's efforts when you have no personal investment in the outcome.

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South Jersey on the Move

Attendance at meetings of the South Jersey Chapter has been on the rise. Chapter Leader, Terri [REDACTED] reports that over the past two months more and more folks have been making their way to the group's meetings on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center on the Black Horse Pike in McKee, New Jersey.

South Jersey members have grown so avid about attending that in February when the weather was not quite a day at the beach people showed up on snowmobiles and skis. The weather was so bad that the scheduled speaker could not make it to the meeting. Despite all that a good time was had by all.

In March with better weather the turnout was much improved. Members voted to send a check to support the March On Washington and adopted a resolution to be a yearly contributor to the Make A Wish Foundation. Beth Marshall brought the Renaissance Bookstore to town and business was brisk. Other vendors were also on hand and money not spent on books and merchandise was used to purchase 50/50 tickets with the proceeds going to the Chapter. In addition to the regular garden variety 50/50 the chapter had been running, they have now started a Super 50/50 limited to forty tickets at five dollars each.

If you want to contact the South Jersey Chapter you'll need their new phone number. Call them at (609) 435-5401 and they'll be happy to give you any information you may require.

The old phone number, (609) 641-3782 will still connect you to Kelly Harris. Kelly will be operating it as a TS info line. If you have questions about transsexuality Kelly will be happy to help.

If you're in South Jersey and would like to visit a nice bunch of folks go ahead and stop on by.

Letter to the Editor

Renaissance Members & Friends,

I was indeed fortunate to be asked to speak on electrolysis at the IFGE convention. I cannot remember meeting a more warm, centered group of women. Thank you for allowing me to share in your experience. Thank you.

Jenell Ashlie.

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Casino Night A Good Bet

by Angela Gardner

What a night! Having the unerring ability to over task myself, I had been on the go since 6:00 AM on March 19th and at 8:00 PM my staff had begun to arrive in the ballroom of the Hilton Hotel. Already worn out from a college speaking engagement that morning in Newark, New Jersey, short on sleep since I stayed out too late the night before with the IFGE dining out night, I found myself faced with getting the casino together in an hour.

Thank goodness for a great bunch of people to work with. JoAnn Roberts had arranged for the casino equipment and made sure it was set up where we wanted it. The Hilton's Andy Ortiz gave us the utmost in cooperation, providing everything we needed from a piano to trays for the waitresses. And speaking of the waitresses, my friend Jayne [REDACTED] a veteran of the food service industry had volunteered to take charge of the troops and teach them how to hold a tray, do the bunny dip and move those drinks.

With all that covered, I only had to make sure my dealers were all set, the lights were dimmed to a proper romantic level and the cashiers had enough chips and change.

By nine everything was ready. I was attired in my long, elegant hostess gown, the wait staff was set and the dealers were all straight on the rules and regulations. If the casino control commission arrived for a last minute inspection we would pass with flying colors. The doors were opened and the show was on. In the whirl of Las Vegas and Atlantic City style action it's hard to remember everything that happened. Wendy [REDACTED], a convention attendee from California sat down at the piano and ripped into some rousing tunes. She was joined by singers at one point and then, she took a break and was replaced by the Greater Philadelphia Chapter's Barbara [REDACTED]. Barbara kept the singers around the piano for quite some time and then a banjo toting CD swept in from somewhere and kicked it into an even higher gear.

Meanwhile, the roulette table was the scene of some high rolling action as the two Joannes, JoAnn Roberts and Joanne [REDACTED] kept that little ball spinning. Over at the Big Wheel Brenda Davidson out Vannaed Vanna White and Terry [REDACTED] kept the over/under dice hopping.

(continued on page 16)

Family "Hate" Group Targets Ohio

The so-called "Christian" fundamentalist, fanatical right has targeted the state of Ohio as the next site for an assault on the rights of sexual/genderal minorities. According to a press release from the Stonewall Union in Columbus, Ohio, the "Ohio Pro-Family Forum" has confirmed that it will oppose gay rights laws in the state.

If you are a resident of Ohio (and even if you are not) and you don't want to see a replay of Colorado, contact the Stonewall Union at PO Box 10814, Columbus, OH 43201 and ask how you can help. Ohio is not a Hate State!

Classified Ads ...

are available in the *Renaissance News* for Services offered by members of the transgendered community to the transgendered community. \$3.00 for three lines for three months. Send to *Renaissance News*, P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020, Attn: Ads.

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Speak Out!

If you are interested in joining our Renaissance Speakers' Bureau be at the Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting site at 2:00 P.M., April 17th. Bring two dollars to help pay the rent and for light refreshments.

Bring a pen so you can fill out information forms that will help us place you on television and radio

programs and in talks to college classes. If you have members of your family who would be willing to appear on television with you please ask them before this meeting so you can note that on your registration forms.

In addition to registering people we will be talking about how to be

an effective public speaker for the transgendered community. Hand-outs on technique will be distributed. If you are planning to attend leave a message letting us know at (215) 630-1437.

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(RE-BEAT continued from page 8)

on the City Council of St. Paul, Minnesota, for four years in the seventies and was council president for a while.

Susan's recent political news was made when she pulled out of an effort to regain her council seat as a woman. She is keeping busy as head of the St. Paul Coalition for Community Development and says she may give politics another try at a later date.

LAST MINUTE NOTES

Don't forget about Elsa's TransParent effort. If you are transgendered and have children drop Elsa a line. She is trying to get a group of transparents organized to exchange information and advice. If you're interested write to: TransParent, c/o Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

This year watch out for a number of gender switchers on film in this year's coming releases. Entertainment Weekly tells us that Charles Busch, of *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* fame will appear as the Countess Aphasia du Barry in *Addams Family Values*. Lypsinka, mentioned in these pages before, has portrayed herself in Jonathan Demme's upcoming film *Philadelphia*, and Johnny Depp will play cult filmmaker and well known TV Ed Wood, Jr., (remember "Plan 9 From Outer Space," Glen or Glenda? I bet you do.) in Tim Burton's next film. Johnny will be much cuter than the real Ed but that's Hollywood for you. Always improving on reality.

Other upcoming gender switching includes John Hurt as the Countess in Gus Van Sant's adaption of *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* and

the appearance of Saturday Night Live androgenous character, Pat, in a feature film. Keep watching this column for the reviews!

Wine lovers alert! Coming in June to a winery near you, another heavy duty cultural elite event, a Renaissance wine tasting! The fine folks at the Chadds Ford Winery have reserved Friday, June 11th, at 8:00 PM for Renaissance members to sample their family of fine wines and tour the winery. On hand to conduct the tasting will be the wine maker himself, Eric Miller. If you attended our last wine tasting at Chadds Ford you know what a fun event it can be. Reservations must be made in advance and admission will be \$16 per person. We must receive your reservation and check payable to Renaissance by June 1st. Send it to the King of Prussia address. Don't worry, we'll mention it in the May issue, too.

Okay partners, that's all the gender news that gives me the fits. Happy trails to you!

(FANMAIL continued from page 9)

convention I saw crossdressers mingling at the Hilton with many so called "normal" people. I saw a few looks and some questioning glances but what I saw more often than not was mild curiosity or even indifference. We didn't threaten the people in that hotel. The writer of this letter is definitely a minority. Not even a dangerous minority. Since he got it of his chest with this little love note he'll do his best to forget all about us. There are with out a doubt more dangerous people out there. Some would victimize anybody, not just members of the transgendered community. We have to be who and what we are. We have no choice. Let's face each day with a lot of courage and a little caution. Together we'll work toward a day when everyone can feel free to be who they are with out being compared to "piles of deranged garbage." Till that day, thank you Mister "nice person" for letting us know we're doing our job.

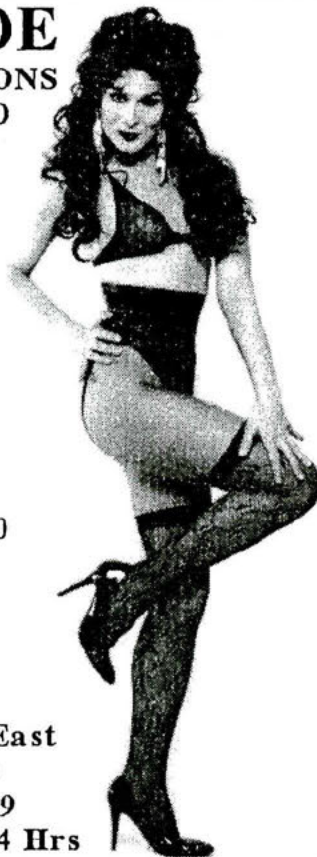
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(IFGE continued from page 1)

well as doing a great job with flowers for the various events. MaryAnn Kirkland led and participated in several seminars and acted as the Host Coordinator while Alison Laing moved on to Convention Director when the IFGE person was unable to attend.

Elsa [REDACTED], Beth Marshall, Nancy [REDACTED], Dottie Laing (Alison's SO) and Terry [REDACTED] were just some of the other Renaissance members who led or participated in the programs. Susan [REDACTED] organized what has set a new standard in staff volunteers. They included stalwarts Emily Sheldon, Bonnie [REDACTED], Jody [REDACTED], Michelle [REDACTED] and Joanne [REDACTED], as well as those mentioned above and many others.

The Saturday keynote speaker was friend-of-Renaissance Dr. William Stayton, whose "performance" was a smash hit. Dr. Stayton led the professional program later that afternoon. Carol Cobb-Nettleton led special sessions on Saturday, relating to the spouses and children of transgendered persons. Earlier in the week, Dr. Jeffrey Wolper, of the Wayne Counseling Center, helped out with one of the transsexual track programs.

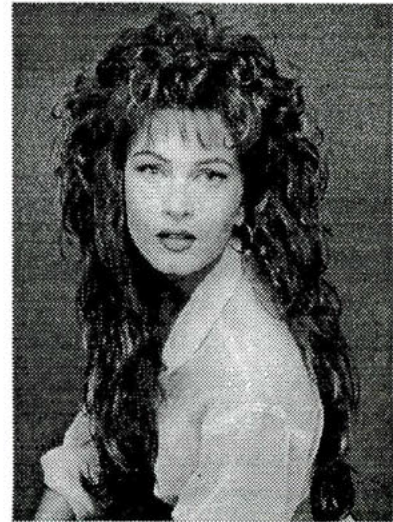
In the final issue of the convention newsletter, Renaissance was thanked, not only for the casino night, "but a well organized and productive convention." There is no question that the ladies of Renaissance did well. They all deserve special thanks for doing such a fine job serving the community and representing our organization in such a grand way. Merissa Sherrill Lynn, executive director of

IFGE, put it best, "this is the closest we've come to having a "community convention" as opposed to a personal growth experience."

(CASINO continued from page 13)

There were over thirty people on the Renaissance team that night and every one of them helped make Casino Night a smashing success. I did a little organizing and made a few phone calls but the staff carried it off. As they always say in articles like this, it's impossible to name them all. (Not actually impossible but we can't afford to add two more pages to the newsletter.) Thank you everyone. You were great!

As a result of everyone's efforts we were able to present the director of the Make A Wish Foundation, Debbie Galbraith, with a check for two thousand five hundred dollars. Thank you again everyone.



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