

IFGE NEWSLETTER

International Foundation for Gender Education

Spring 1996, Volume 2, Number 1

IFGE Announces Exciting Membership Benefits

22 TG-Oriented Businesses Offer 10% Discount For IFGE Members!

The long-awaited vendor discount program for you, the members of The International Foundation for Gender Education, has become a reality. As of today, 22 vendors and suppliers of TG community products and services have agreed to participate in the program and offer discounts to all paid-up IFGE members. Additional vendors will be joining the program over the coming year, and their names will be announced in forthcoming newsletters.

Each vendor provides a 10 percent discount on most of their products and services to IFGE members. Simply provide your IFGE membership number at the time of purchase or have it handy when ordering by phone.

In a few special cases the membership discount may not apply, such as on already discounted specials or closeouts, or for special items such as events and special presentations.

If you encounter any problems using this procedure, please let us know immediately so we can rectify it.

If you know of a vendor not listed that you believe we ought to include, please drop us a line with their name, address, phone number, and the product or service offered. We will get in touch with them and see whether we can enroll them in our program. As an IFGE member, you will be doing us a favor if you also than the vendor for participating in the program.

Here is a list of the participating vendors who have joined this discount program so far:

A New You Electrolysis

61 Spring Brook Rd.
Old Saybrook CT 06475
Electrolysis, skin care
(860) 395-0730

A&A Electrolysis

815 Washington St.
Newtonville MA 02160
Electrolysis, skin care
(617) 964-1000

Adams Electrology

380 Lowell St. #202B
Wakefield MA 01880
Electrolysis, skin care
(617) 245-0005

Allana of New York

160 E. 56th St. 9th Fl.
New York NY 10022
(212) 980-0216

Amelia James

1312 Shady Oak Place
Santa Rosa CA 95404-2741
(707) 526-4826

Carox Co.

POB 14025
E. Providence RI 02914
TG clothing and prostheses
(401) 438-8507
c/o Carol Sunderland

Ed's Forms

POB 501
Williamstown MA 01267
Breast forms by mail
(413) 686-7409

Eileen Davidson RE

120 W Harwich Professional Center
Rt. 28, POB 533
W. Harwich MA 02671
Electrolysis, skin care
(508) 432-6330

Electrolysis Unlimited

6780 Rochester Rd. #C
Troy MI 48098
Electrolysis, skin care
(810) 879-2232

Electrology 2000

2765 Trinity Mills #405
Carrollton TX 75006
Electrolysis, skin care
(214) 416-3390. Ruthann Piranio

Especially for Me

113 N. First Ave.
Upland CA 91786
Clothing, publications, etc. by mail
(909) 946-6251
(909) 946-5500 (fax)

The Greater Woman

10360 Ellison Cr.
Omaha NE 68134
Women's clothing, large sizes by mail
(402) 493-4667

Fantasyland

POB 682
Owen Sound Ontario
Canada N4K 5R4
Clothing, publications by mail

Johanna A. Bartkiewicz, R.E.

93 Union St., Suite 321
Newton Centre, MA 02159
(617) 964-9536

Lee's Mardi Gras

400 W. 14th St.
New York NY 10014
Clothing, publications by mail
(212) 645-1888

Lydia's TV Fashions

13837 Ventura Blvd. #2
Sherman Oaks CA 91423
Clothing, prostesis
(818) 995-7195

Newton Studio of Electrolysis

93 Union St. #321
Newton Ctr. MA 02159
(617) 964-9536
Electrolysis, skin care

Pat Butterworth RE

281 Nimble Hill Rd.
Newington NH 03801
Electrolysis, skin care
(603) 433-6566

Sexy Shoes

POB 48
480 N. Second St.
Rogers City MI 49779
Women's shoes by mail
(517) 734-4030 ATTN: Sandy Ruttan

Shoe Express

POB 31537 Dept. T.
Lafayette LA 70593
Women's shoes by mail
(318) 235-5191
(318) 235-5359 (fax) ATTN: Ann West

Suzanne Anderer & Co.

26 E. Lincoln Hwy.
Frankfort IL 60423
Electrolysis, permanent hair removal
(815) 469-0050

TGIF

POB 272819
Tampa FL 33688
Electrolysis, permanent hair removal
(813) 884-7835 ATTN: Kim

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IFGE Newsletter

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IFGE Membership

Basic Membership:

\$25.00 per year.

Membership newsletter, IFGE ID, voting privileges, and 10% discount on IFGE products.

Supporting Membership:

\$100.00 per year.

Basic membership, 15% discount on IFGE products, and 10% discount on IFGE sponsored events.

Benefactor Membership

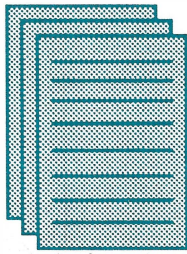
\$500.00 per year.

Supporting membership, 15% discount on IFGE sponsored events. **\$400.00** will be treated as a contribution, and will be applied towards a life membership.

Life Membership:

\$2,500.00.

A supporting membership for life, and is based on accumulated contributions.



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR The Past Year

by Linda Buten

Chair, IFGE Board of Directors

IFGE's business year runs from one Coming Together convention to the next. Like in past conventions, we start off by installing the new elected directors and appointing new committees. We continue by reviewing the past year, and setting our goals for the coming one.

Some major changes, and I do emphasize major, took place in 1995. The first prize has to go to the appointment of Alison Lang to the position of Executive Director.

Alison has been a transfusion of fresh blood to a tired body. She has bounced around the country, diligently creating excitement about what it means to work together. She has fused numerous links within the gender community, and outside, with our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters.

Strong evidence of success is apparent to those of us fortunate enough to attend the IFGE Convention this year. The key here is inclusion, and another step forward into the mainstream of society. Many of the programs include entities that in the past have been overlooked. Future coalitions with groups outside the gender spectrum are vital steps to political awareness and future legislation. I am pleased to say that this momentum is now in progress.

Another metamorphosis is apparent in our publication, *Transgender Tapestry*. You have had an opportunity to see a complete revamping of *Tapestry* into *Transgender*. The responses have ranged from "About time, I LOVE IT", to "You have destroyed everything IFGE stands for, cancel my subscription". Thank goodness, however, the vast majority of the responses are overwhelming positive. We feel that the magazine's new approach is much more in line with our ever-changing community.

With the new magazine came a new editor, Jean Marie Stine. She brings years of professional magazine publishing experience from the west coast, and we have only begun to touch on her talents. Her

third issue (#76) will contain a reader response questionnaire that will ask for your input on the magazine. I certainly hope you take the time to answer the questions. In order for IFGE to remain an effective entity, feedback from the grassroots is imperative.

Thank goodness for membership. The added boost of income, along with Laura Caldwell and the Finance Committee, has kept the doors open for business. Many of the changes I speak about come directly back to membership. For example, nearly every change in the new Transgender Magazine is directly linked back to member involvement.

As you can see, we take membership seriously. You are not just a donor number with us, you are part of the decision-making process. I know some individuals dislike change, but IFGE is being run democratically, and that means pleasing everyone is sometimes impossible.

Two months ago, we saw the opening of the first ever gender Bookstore, on the main floor of the IFGE office. Sales have increased, and we have cleaned out a backlog of open orders.

You must agree, we have had a very busy year, and I have only touched on some of the major items. (I could ask Alison to fill in between the lines, but believe me, you do not have time to read it all.) The point is, IFGE saw many improvements and changes, and this following year there will be even more.

For many of you, this is the end of your first year as a member of IFGE. I hope the board has lived up to your expectations, and I certainly hope you will renew your membership. For many of you, the only contribution you can make to the community is through membership or a donation. To those of us who give so much of our time, we really see that as a pat on the back, and an inspiration to continue. Thank you so much, and I look forward to speaking with you for least another year.



Bridges and Freeways; Planks and Pilings

or

Reaching out to make a better community.

By Alison Laing
IFGE Executive Director



That “politics makes strange bed-fellows” is really not so strange when the underlying reasons for the alliances are considered. This is especially true for the Transgender community and the minority groups to which we find ourselves building bridges. As the news of the court decisions and legislation relating to same sex marriages for gay and lesbian couples makes headlines, it is easy to see how this issue applies to the transgender population as well.

The most obvious piling supports the bridge to the Gay-Lesbian-Bi community. It came about as a result of the public’s tendency to group transgenders in with GLBs. Accordingly, those of us in the TG community see the necessity of allying in with the GLB community in support of getting national legislation passed to protect employment rights. (i.e. ENDA - Employment Non Discrimination Act.)

The list goes on and on. The toilet issue (which to use in public facilities) brings back memories to those of us who were freedom fighters in the 60’s when blacks were segregated into separate and definitely not equal toilets. There is even a bridge waiting to be built with our Native American friends, who at one time were, and to a large degree still are, considered second-class citizens. For the old-timers, remember when to hold down a job you had to have “neatly” trimmed hair? An earring would have cost you your job, no matter how excellent your performance. These same issues still apply today to TG persons.

But there is one major plank that reaches between the TG community and all the minorities. We all share the common bond of being victims of prejudice. Simply because we are “not like every one else,” we all suffer the indignity of being “excluded”; of being held in contempt by those who believe that they know what is right. Yet, if you take the sum total of all these minorities, it is

we, not the religious right; not the white supremacist; not the conservative politicians; not the bigoted red necks, that represent the majority in this nation. Together, all the minorities must represent the true majority. How is it, then, that the conservative right seems to have a hold on our destiny? Perhaps it is because so many of us are often busy dealing with the day-to-day struggles of trying to make a good life for ourselves that we have little time for politics. Or, perhaps it is because some of us feel secure enough in our own circumstances that we let national economical issues or international policy determine our votes and not the social issues that, either directly or indirectly, ultimately determine our freedom to express our gender diversity.

It is not my intention, or the purpose of IFGE, to even suggest how you should vote. It is, however, important to have your support and participation in building the bridges to the other minority groups. Perhaps I need to add that it is also extremely important to have the bridges, or better yet, a network of freeways among our own organizations and clubs.

This brings me to the question of “exclusivity.” IFGE has made major inroads in working with the GLB community. For example, we have supported and will, once again, support the National Gay-Lesbian-Bi Task Force by participating in their “Creating Change Conference.” We have also been vocal and visible in the Boston area on the issue of gay minority transgender youth.

Yet we have been criticized for our support of “exclusive” organizations such as Tri-Ess and for selling books that have negative connotations regarding gays. At least a part of this is a result of our respect of the right of individuals to make their own choice regarding these matters. Another way to put it is that we want to be inclusive to the

extent that we even welcome the “exclusive.”

Just as applicable are the issues surrounding the rights of a woman in making a choice regarding abortion. While the question of SRS on demand is a debatable issue, almost every one in the transgender community accepts the right of a person to choose surgery as a viable option.

One of the best ways to help educate others that it is OK to be different is to allow them to join with you and to deal with each other on a face to face basis. Then you will see we really are not that different. If you believe your values are better for you and strongly identify with these values, then exposure to a different set of values should not be a threat. True diversity can and must welcome those who espouse some degree of exclusion so long as they do not feel that they must force their values on others. How else can we claim to be a true community? If we practice exclusivity, then we are no different than those who we believe are denying us our rightful place in the scheme of things. Since bridges generally go both ways, we as bridge builders need not only to reach out to others but to be receptive to those who reach out to us.

To put these principles into practice, IFGE will be undertaking more joint projects throughout the coming year. We will welcome the challenge of finding ways in which we can support other organizations. We will aggressively seek opportunities to help other minority groups and participate in the interchange of ideas and the understanding of their needs. We will encourage other TG groups and organizations to do likewise in hopes that the TG community will become known for its openness, understanding and caring support to all who are struggling to have control of their lives and their right to freedom of gender expression.

