

# The Monmouth & Ocean News

**Monmouth Ocean Transgender/An Affiliate of Renaissance Education Association**

**November/December, 1997**

**PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701, Tel: 732-219-9094; [REDACTED]@aol.com**

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**The opinions expressed in the newsletter represent the viewpoints of the writers, and not necessarily of MOTG.**

## **Upcoming General Meetings**

**Doors open at 8:00 p.m.; program starts at 9:00 p.m.**

**November 22, 1997 - Elections**

**December 20, 1997 - Holiday Celebration**

**January 17, 1998**

## **Newsletter Meeting**

**7:30 p.m.**

**1998 - to be announced**

**We hope to see you at our special Holiday celebration on Saturday evening, December 20, 1997! We will be having a "pot luck" which Stephanie will be organizing at our November meeting. In addition, there will be a "gift exchange." Come to our November 22 meeting for all the details!**

## **A FINAL NOTE FROM MARYBETH**

As you know, this is my final issue of the MO News, and I know that my successor is eagerly waiting in the wings, ready to take over in January. I have appreciated the opportunity to get to know your community a whole lot better through your stories, and it is with mixed feelings that I move on to leave the newsletter in capable hands.

Please let Elaine, Terry, Vikki or Stephanie know if you are interested in editing the newsletter. All you'll need from me are copies of the current ads; how you format the rest of the newsletter is entirely up to you. Don't forget the job comes with a small honorarium.

A special thank you to Stephanie for leading our discussion in October. As you will be reading in her article, we have a new location, the Unitarian Church in Lincroft. A special thank you also to Diane and Carol and Babs for your contributions to the MO News this month.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I bid you a fond farewell. See you at the Unitarian Church. And don't forget to vote for our new officers at our November meeting!!

## **CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS**

**Stephanie [REDACTED], President:** I believe that I can resurrect a now stagnant and floundering support group. If elected, I intend to breathe new life into our group, and transform us from a dull and boring team to a spunky and outgoing group of people.

**Diane [REDACTED], Vice President:** I have served as the MOTG Treasurer for the last year. I wish to continue my commitment to make MOTG an enjoyable and useful group for all of us in the transgendered community.

**Porschea A. [REDACTED], Membership Director:** I believe that my ability for this position is in my heart. I have a good communication ability and have experience in dealing with all types of personas or personalities.

My job experience with the Department of Corrections, as well as running my own business, has helped me grow. I'm able to be friendly as well as a leader in enforcing rules.

All this, plus further experience for future positions on the MOTG board.

**Kay M., Treasurer:** My husband Vikki and I have been involved with MOTG since September of 1991, and have attended almost every meeting. Since the beginning I have helped with the logistics of the meetings, such as collection of the door fees, food, the set-up, the clean up and various other areas, including the mailing of the newsletter. I am very supportive of Vikki and her commitment to the transgendered community. I myself have my own commitment to assist the members of MOTG to have a place where they can have the freedom to express themselves.

In my job I have taken care of the budget for my division for over 24 years. I enjoy this type of work and know how to set up and keep an accounting of the funds. I also work with many people in my job, including vendors.

In conclusion, I would be happy to serve as Treasurer this year for a group of people I have grown to care about.

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM STEPHANIE

Dear girls,

Have you missed my wit and sarcasm in writing or what? I know I have! Hey, on a more serious note, I hope that those of you who took part in October's meeting were not disappointed in the evening's events. I thought "moi" and Miss Terry M. were resplendent in our roles as soothsayers in this world of turmoil. Imagine that, some people still get upset at the sight of a grown man in a dress! Geez, we hardly ever get upset at a grown adult with a trap door for a brain.

What I really mean to say is: So what if we are all just a little different from one another? Imagine how dull and boring our world would be if nobody ever decided to look at or think about life in a different light. See my point? I know how this can be sometimes. We all get into the same old routing, everybody following directly behind the other person, and we all march blindly.

Well, this is what has happened to our once vision-filled organization. No one seems to be moved or compelled to make things happen any more. That being said: I must at this time enter my plea: "Not guilty"! You see, I have been hearing from some of you for quite some time, about the lack of a place to "go" after the meetings are over.

Well, I took it upon myself to do just that. I called a local pub the night of our October meeting, and asked permission to frequent the establishment. Well, after a few absurd questions from the owner, "moi" and some other TS/TV friends went on ahead. We were met with the usual stares, and why not? We all were gorgeous. We ordered a round of refreshments, and sat at a table. We were graced with the presence of a very curious female guest, whom I must say was quite the talker, and relaxed in our new spot. "WRONG"! After only 30 minutes or so, the very spirited, [read that as loaded] owner approached our table and quietly asked us to leave, since we had apparently chased the 4 or 5 patrons in the bar out into the cold dark night.

I and my girls shall not be deterred. Onward I shall fight. We have a right to be seen and heard wherever we shall be!

### Location Change

"Location, location, location!" How many time have heard this?

Well, we are proud to announce a new, extremely private, and very secure and, might I add, a very welcome environment. That's right, MOTG has moved its meetings from the Jersey Shore Medical Center in Neptune to the Unitarian Church on West Front Street in Lincroft, NJ. Please follow the directions enclosed, and upon arrival, proceed behind the church to the house in the rear left hand corner of the parking lot. The door is on the lower right hand side of the house. Plan to arrive at 7:30. Please bring goodies; we'll supply the coffee and tea.

I hope to see all of you return to us.

*[Editor's note: You can also get directions to the Unitarian Church on West Front Street in Lincroft by calling 732-219-9094.]*

### Newsflash

MOTG holds nominations for elected positions. Dateline: MOTG, October Twenty... The year doesn't matter.

Flash: The following people filed for the positions of elected office 1997-98: a) President: Stephanie [REDACTED]; b) Vice President: Diane; c) Membership Director: Porschea; d) Secretary: Vikki M.; e) Treasurer: Kay M.

In case you didn't notice a pattern, I'll state the obvious: There are no challengers for any positions. What happened the rest of you? You know, the ones who want to do something different. I hope that all of you who care about our support group will show up this month to vote.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 22, 1997

**Second Annual World AIDS Day Event.** The Asbury Fastlane, 207 4th Ave, Asbury Park, NJ. 732-775-5540. 8:00 pm. Admission \$25.00

January 16 - 19, 1998

**Dignity Cruise IX Special. On Royal Caribbean's "Sovereign of the Seas.** \$329. With Peggy Rudd and the Gender Gifted. Call Brenda at 1-800-247-7021.

January 23, 1998

**The Gender Identity Project presents "They lived it OUT!"** (See page 5.)

July 15 - 19, 1998

**6th Annual SPICE Convention (for spouses and partners).** Atlanta Airport Sheraton Inn. Contact Dr. Peggy Rudd, PO Box 5304, Katy, TX 77491 (fax 281-347-8747).

October 30 - Nov. 3, 1998

**Halloween Weekend Cruise to Fantasy Fest.** (See page 6.)

### OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS OF INTEREST

**Transit (TS-oriented support group)**

**2nd Wednesday of every month. 908-722-9884**

**Renaissance Greater Philadelphia**

**3rd Saturday of every month. 610-975-9119**

**New Jersey Support (Titusville)**

**1st Saturday of every month. 609-933-2233**

**Imperial Queens and Kings of NY and NJ**

**1st Friday of every month. 212-229-1968**

**Delaware Renaissance**

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# *“They lived it OUT!”*

*A night to remember & honor all people of transgender experience who have died from AIDS, illness, suicide, violence, addictions, and old age.*

**Friday evening, January 23, 1998**

*Come join us for a night of entertainment and camaraderie celebrating the lives of these remarkable and courageous people.*

*If you have pictures, names, or articles of people you know on the transgender spectrum who have died & you would like them to be honored in our collage, please forward materials to:*

The Gender Identity Project  
The Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center  
208 West 13th Street  
New York, NY 10011

*(The Transgender Spectrum includes but is not limited to:  
Drag Queens, Femme Queens, Cross-Dressers, Drag Kings, Transsexuals,  
Intersex, MTF's, FTM's, Pre-Op's, Non-Op's, Post-Op's, Phallic Women)*

**PLEASE NOTE:** Photos and articles will not be returned, so please send a photo copy.

If you would like to **VOLUNTEER** for this event, please call G.I.P. at 212-620-7310.

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A few weeks ago Mary and I were looking around once again for someplace new to go to with me dressed as Diane. Having done New York quite a few times in recent months I was hoping to find somewhere a bit closer to home and something other then just another bar. I had heard that there were several gender friendly restaurants in Philadelphia so some investigation was in order. In cases like these I find that logging onto AOL and checking out the web is often helpful. Before long I had located several possibilities the most promising of which was a restaurant that caters to a mostly lesbian crowd called Sisters (<http://www.webbysetgo.com/Sisters.html>). From reviewing Sister's WEB page it looked pretty good to me. Mary said it looked ok to her, but she was wondering if anyone there might have a problem with Diane. I didn't think so, but better safe then sorry. Since I was still on AOL I just did a member search on the keywords of Philadelphia and lesbian. Two people came up as being online at the time so I sent them each an instant message asking if they had ever been to Sisters and if I would have any trouble there. Both said yes they had been there and no I would not have any problem at all. (As it turned out they were right too. Thanks K1Kit and ScoutFem!). Since we had decided to go for an early dinner, Mary suggested a movie afterwards. Mary picked My Best Friends Wedding as the movie. I remember the last time she mentioned seeing it I had said that it looked like a "girls" movie and I had no interest in it. "Well is Diane a girl or not?" I guess she had me there..... Best Friends Wedding it was.

I had a few hours before we would be leaving so I decided to pick out what I was going to wear. Sisters I was told is pretty casual and with the movie afterwards I knew I had to dress down to blend. Scanning my wardrobe I decided on women's jeans, a blue button-down blouse and black sandals. I did my makeup very light and toned down too. Mary worn light colored jeans, a white top that tied in the front and these way cool white clog shoes she had just got. Of course she was ready an hour before me and looked way better, but I once I was finished I looked pretty good and passable. We left my apartment at around 7:00pm and hit very little traffic on our way there. Once in the downtown Philly area it was a bit harder because of all of the one-way streets. Still we found it pretty quickly and there was a parking garage right at the end of the block. We ended up on the second floor of the garage and opted to take the stairs down (I still get a bit nervous in elevators since the Anaheim trip). From street level all we had to do was cross the street and we were there.

As we went into the entrance way of Sisters we found that since we were early there was no cover charge. The cover charge is normally only \$7.00 and I believe they don't start collecting it until 9:00pm anyway. We proceeded through the main door which leads into a restaurant/bar area. Looking around I noticed that the walls were decorated with these really neat looking large prints of various lesbian icons like K.D. Lang and Melissa Etheridge. The bar, which was right in front of us, was large and sort of rectangle shaped. To the left of where we were standing were the tables and a few patrons were already busy having dinner. We picked a table towards the side of the area near the bar and had a seat. We were quickly joined by our waitress who provided us with our menus and took our drink orders. Mary had her usual Coors Light while I selected a white zinfandel (when out as Diane I try to avoid beer for two reasons. 1) It bloats me and 2) It makes for more trips to the bathroom which can be problematic). Checking out the menu I was glad to see a nice selection of moderately priced items ranging from sandwiches to some nice sounding entrees. I was also amused to find that several of the dishes had been named in the spirit of the restaurant. Mary ordered The Best of the Breast for her dinner while I simply had a veggie burger (no, no cute name for mine, but I bet you can all come up with some).

While we waited for our orders we enjoyed each others company and the atmosphere of the club. Glancing around I noticed that no one paid me any special mind at all. Another thing I noted was that not only was I the sole crossdresser at the time, I was also the only male in the place! Our dinners arrived and the waitress asked Mary if we needed anything else. I started to say something, but caught myself almost in time as Mary answered. That was one thing that took me a while to get the hang of, not speaking for us. When out as a male the servers always address me first and direct their questions my way. Here though the waitress always addressed Mary first (guess she looked like she was in charge, she is of course so it was a good call on the waitress's part). Chalk this up as a another lesson for Diane to learn about being a woman. At least I did have it down before the end of the dinner. I still had to bite my

tongue though. In any event, both of our meals looked and tasted great. Mary had a hard time even finishing hers. We both pasted on dessert, but I had a coffee which was also good. Our meal was very enjoyable.

Once we were done our dinner we headed over to the bar for another drink. Sisters has a dance club area upstairs, but it had yet to open. At the bar we played a few games of video trivia which I lost at very badly even though Mary had chosen Sports as her category. No, I didn't chose Sports as my category (then I wouldn't have a chance!). Instead I tried everything from Movies to General to Sex. Still I couldn't beat her. Guess it wasn't my night for trivia..... While at the bar we conversed with a few of the other patrons all of which were very friendly and nice. It was really pleasant to just be able to be accepted without question. Don't get me wrong many of the people figured me out after we were there for a bit, but no one was anything but nice to us.

Before we knew it the time had flown and it was after 10:00pm meaning that the upstairs area had opened. Mary and I grabbed our drinks and headed up one of the two sets of stairs that lead to the club area. The club area is a large room which has a fairly big dance floor and two bars. The smaller of the two bars is on the wall near the stairs while the larger one was along one of the side walls. At the time we went up there were already a good number of people though not many were dancing. In the club the crowd seemed a bit more diverse. I saw few straight couples and singles as well as several gay males mixed in the crowd. At one point during the evening I did spot another crossdresser, but she disappeared before I was able to catch up with her and introduce myself. Mary and I were enjoying ourselves though I was not in a dancing mood (no this is not always the case, but sometimes I can be a stick in the mud when it comes to dancing. Mary just usually grabs one of our friends to cut a rug with and they are always happy to oblige). The atmosphere in the club, just as it was in the restaurant, was very accepting and both Mary and I felt totally comfortable. We mingled and chatted the night away so late that we missed the movie (shuckie darn!....lol). It was about 12:30am when we left and by then the places was pretty packed and hopping.

Our experience at Sisters was an totally enjoyable one. We have since went back several times and never been disappointed with the food, service, atmosphere or have ever had anything but a good time there. One tip to remember is if you park in the garage across the street to be sure to bring your ticket into the restaurant to have it validated for a cheaper rate. Mary and I would both recommend Sisters as a safe, fun and reasonably priced place to eat and hang out.

By the way, I did make good on my promise to see My Best Friends Wedding the next weekend. Was it just me or was Julia Roberts character so mean that a better ending might have been for her to have gotten hit by a bus? Maybe it is just that unique transgendered perspective of mine coming through again. Maybe not....

You can view this story and others at my WEB site:

[HTTP://MEMBERS.AOL.COM/DIANE1962/DIANE.HTML](http://members.aol.com/diane1962/diane.html)

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## ECCO L'ITALIA

by Carol and Babs

We were first attracted to this restaurant several years ago, during one of our first "dressed" weekends in NYC, by a smiling doorman who entreated us to come in as we passed by one Saturday night. "Are crossdressers welcome?", Carol asked on behalf of her equally semi-secure mate. "Everyone is welcome!", he replied with a big smile. We took him at his word a couple of weeks later and were not disappointed. A very friendly staff from the manager, to the hostess that took our coats, greeted us warmly. By reserving a table for 6, we were given comfortable seating in the rear, conducive for conversation and far away from the live piano music that enhanced the overall ambiance. Our original round table has given way to the more efficient square ones. Over the years we've come with parties as large as 14 that were well accommodated. On one occasion a dinner party of 23 was just too much for them to handle, however!

We normally start with complimentary "bruschetta" appetizers that are so well received our request for seconds are courteously fulfilled. Appetizers such as shrimp cocktail, mozzarella in carozza and stuffed mushrooms are favorites, as well as the Caesar and tricolor salads. The best values are the well prepared entrees, almost all the veal dishes are 11.95, our favorites being veal alla parmigiana, Valdostana(proscuitto and mozzarella), Scallopini alla Sorrentino(eggplant, proscuitto and mozzarella, and of course Saltimbocca alla Romana with proscuitto and sage).

Most chicken dishes are 10.95 with the house dish, Pollo alla Ecco(with artichoke hearts, peas, mushrooms and of course proscuitto) being our favorite. Others range to 12.50. Most seafood dishes are similarly priced, ranging from 10.95 to 15.00. Even those "steak eaters" among us were pleasantly surprised at the quality and cut of the filet mignon in an Italian restaurant. In addition there are daily specials, generally at the higher range. Desserts that we've particularly enjoyed( but payed for afterwards) are tiramisu, italian cheesecake, and zabaglione!

What sets Ecco apart from most restaurants is the fact that on weekends, during dinner, it's a jazz club! Expect to find an accomplished jazz trio, usually with a singer. Expect also at any time to find a talented musician to just pop in and "jam" at least a few numbers. Unlike other places in the area, there is no music charge! One night, one of the soloists came by our table and dedicated a "number" to Babs... was she in "heaven"! There were a few extra dollars in the musicians tip glass that night! Normally, as long as you are not directly next to the musicians, conversation is possible. Sitting three or four tables away makes for an incredible ambience!

"Ecco" one of those places where we feel welcome and special when we arrive dressed! It's really nice when the owner and manager greets both of us with a warm, "Good Evening, Mrs ....!" and a kiss on the cheek! Even Albert, the new bartender who, unlike his predecessor, knows how to make an Absolut Gimlet, is better known as the opera singing Countess Diva of the Imperial Court of New York... and a friendly face!

One note of caution for the frugal diner, since most of the entrees are quite reasonable for the City, plus that fact that there is no music charge, plus the fact they are included in the Entertainment book and other discount plans, means that they make up for it with the beverages, that includes milk and tea! Reservations are suggested on weekends. Its a place for a good time!

ECCO L'ITALIA

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