

Renaissance News



Volume 4, No. 10

Vision - Integrity - Quality

October 1990

Chapters will host elections & 2 parties are in the works

It's that time of year again. Members of Renaissance chapters will be considering candidates for the various chapter leadership positions for the 1991 calendar year.

The Lower Susquehanna Chapter already held its officer elections in July. Elsa [REDACTED], the original chapter organizer, stepped down and Brenda [REDACTED] has taken her place as chapter leader. Congratulations, Brenda.

The South Jersey chapter will be holding open elections in Nov./Dec. Anyone interested in participating in chapter management should contact the current chapter leader: Kelly [REDACTED]. She will be very appreciative of your support.

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter will hold its election in November, since their December function

is traditionally the Holiday Party. Nominations for chapter officers should be sent to Angela Gardner, chapter leader, or Gloria [REDACTED], chapter secretary.

The annual Renaissance Philadelphia Chapter Holiday Party will be held on Sunday evening, Dec. 9 at The Inne in the Great Valley Industrial Park. This is the same location as the past two years, only the name has changed. The party will start at 9:00 PM. Tickets are \$30 per person. Reservations and tickets must be purchased by Nov. 9, from the Philadelphia chapter. Tickets will **not** be sold at the door, so register early. Ticket sales are limited.

The Philly chapter has also planned a Hallowe'en party at the Prelude in New Hope for Sat., Oct. 27, from 6 to 10 PM.. The fee is \$5.

Henri David bash moves to Bellevue

Get ready for the biggest annual drag and glitter party in Philadelphia. On Wednesday night, Oct. 31, Henri David will host his perennial Hallowe'en Ball downtown at the Bellevue Stratford Hotel.

David, one of the city's best known jewellers and creative artists, has been producing the Hallowe'en spectacular since 1968, making this the twenty-second year for the event. He says he never expected it to last this long and, in fact, "I never expected to last this long." He can be counted upon to astound and amaze the revelers with a variety of completely outrageous costumes.

The party starts at 9:00 PM with costume judging at midnight. There are two categories for drag: Most Beautiful and Most Believeable. The Ball will also feature prizes for eight additional categories, including the Grand Prize for Best Costume. The entrance fee is \$10 if you are in costume (drag counts as costume) and \$20 if you just want to gawk.

The Bellevue is located at Broad and Walnut streets in the heart of Center City Philadelphia.

David requests that all partygoers enter by the Broad street entrance, proceed through the Grand Lobby, up the Grand Escalator (or alternately the Grand Staircase) to the Grand Ballroom, where the party will be held. This gives the voyeurs in the lobby a chance to see you at your finest.

Feel free to call (215)-732-7711 for additional details.

Search for editor is successful

Pamela Ashley Westin, a new member of the Greater Philadelphia chapter, has volunteered to assume the editorship of the Renaissance News. In January, Westin succeeds JoAnn Roberts, the newsletter's founding editor.

"I am delighted that Pamela has volunteered for this challenging job," Roberts said. "It's time the newsletter gained a new perspective after four years. Pamela's newness to the organization will certainly provide this fresh outlook."

"JoAnn is a tough act to follow," Westin said. "Before I moved to Philadelphia, I was aware of her

publishing talents. I had hoped to meet her and others associated with Renaissance, but I didn't expect to become so deeply involved so soon. However, the opportunity presented itself, and I jumped at it."

Westin moved to Philadelphia from San Diego six months ago and began her coming out process with the support of Renaissance. Like many members, one of her first public appearances while cross-dressed was at a meeting.

"Renaissance has become very important to me," she said. "I hope that I can repay part of the debt through editing the newsletter."

CHAPTER INFORMATION

New Jersey

South Jersey: Kelly [REDACTED], chapter leader. Write Renaissance SJ, c/o P. O. Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. 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) 641-3782.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia area: Angela Gardner, chapter leader. Write Renaissance PHL, Box AD, Bensalem, PA 19020. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, Pa. Winter hours: starts at 8:00 p.m. Call (215) 946-8887.

Pennsylvania

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Elsa [REDACTED], chapter leader. Write Renaissance LSV, Box 7412, York, PA 17404. Meets the first Saturday of the month in Camp Hill, Pa. Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. Call (717) 767-4095.

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 Please Note:
 Until Further Notice
 The Reading Chapter
 Has Suspended Operations

NATIONAL INFORMATION

✓ Renaissance has a new mailing address, please correct your records: P. O. Box 552, King of Prussia, Pa., 19406.

✓ Renaissance has a new phone number as well. Call (215) 630-1437 24 hours a day for current information about events and activities.

✓ The board of directors has approved a new policy for the development of chapters and affiliates.

— Any group that wishes to become a Renaissance chapter must be incorporated as a non-profit in-

stitution in their home state (except Pa.) before asking for chapter status.

— Any group that wishes to become a Renaissance affiliate will pay a small annual fee for services normally afforded to chapters for free. Affiliates have no legal connection to Renaissance and remain autonomous. Services include unlimited access to reference publications and newsletter copy.

Write for details to Alison Laing, Co-director of Outreach, P. O. Box 552, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406.

AND, DON'T FORGET ABOUT...

• 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, 7-What Is Renaissance?, and 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics.

• 3R addiction recovery support group meets at King of Prussia on third Sat. of the month.

• The Pen Pal Project. If you are willing to write letters to pen pals, please inform Mary Ann Kirkland or write to the office, c/o Dept. PP.

• A few copies of the Deluxe Edition of Dr. Benjamin's *The Transsexual Phenomenon* are still available at \$39.95 postpaid. Make checks payable to Renaissance.

Renaissance News

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 \$2/copy, \$12 per year, 12 issues.

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JoAnn Roberts
 Paula Jordan Sinclair

Contributing Editors:

JoAnn Altman Stringer
 Alison Laing

Administrative Assistants:

Beth & Rachel M.

Design & Layout:

Creative Design Services

For current information call (215) 630-1437 24 hrs. a day.

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

Events Calendar

October

6th Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
 6th Ren. LSV Chapter
 13th Ren. Reading Chapter
 14th Sunday Social @ Woods
 20th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter
 12-21 Fantasia Fair
 Provincetown, Mass.
 19-21 Dressing for Pleasure
 New York City
 31st Henri David's Hallowe'en
 Ball at the Bellevue

November

3rd Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
 3rd Ren. LSV Chapter
 10th Ren. Reading Chapter
 11th Sunday Social @ Woods
 17th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter

December

1st Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
 1st Ren. LSV Chapter
 8th Ren. Reading Chapter
 9th Holiday Party @ The Inne
 15th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter

JoAnn Altman Stringer
SURVIVAL™

Appropriate social behavior is difficult to express with an exact definition. Oh, I suppose we could write Miss Manners but I doubt her response would be applicable. There are many etiquette books that tell you what utensil to eat with or what dish to put where, but few tell you how to act in public. Specifically, and more to the point, how is a transsexual supposed to act in public? Well, if it waddles and quacks it must be a duck, right? Not exactly.

Ideally we all want to blend in to the point that we become mirror images of the ideal genetic woman or man (M-F, F-M). You should be able to "pass" so well that anyone simply sees you as another genetic female or male.

Passing, to me, suggests a mask in a Shakespearean drama—a play on the reality of life. It's a game you play with everyone else in the restaurant—I wonder who spotted me? Oops, they spotted me. Guess I didn't pass as well as I thought. Must be my makeup or did I give myself away in another fashion?

Transsexualism is not a game. It's as real as Russian roulette and it's played for keeps. The realities of not 'passing' in this game are: you become a social outcast; you can't support yourself economically because no one will hire you; and your life becomes a living hell.

In psychology we learn that behavior modification is a long, difficult process of altering one's habits and behaviors to fit a certain standard. Doing away with old 'bad' habits like smoking or overeating is easy compared to changing some facet of personality and sociological makeup. To change a person's personality, and the behavior that stems from that personality, is almost impossible. This is partly why the Standards of Care are so concerned with the transsexual getting good psychological counseling

to determine if this personality is really you or is it a fake.

After 30 or more years of socialization, it is understandable there might be a few sex-related behaviors that might need changing. They will not change overnight. They won't change at all without a lot of work, determination and courage on your part.

In my job at K-Mart, I have many friends who are of the just-barely-out-of-high-school age. One night, Christine and I were talking about 'hanging out.' A high school friend of hers came in and wanted Chris to go out, cruise the town and 'hang out.' Well, Chris had been out of school all of two months and she felt somehow above all that. "It felt really weird," she said, "I never did that when I was in school. Why should I do it now?"

Her comment made my mind wander back to the days when I left the Army headed toward an uncertain new life. Too, a divorce occurred within that time period and I felt free as a bird to do whatever I wanted. At the time, I was 32 but felt like a one year-old. I started hanging out in a multitude of night-spots, discos and bars. This was something I had never done when I was younger but I somehow felt I needed to do it now. I can't explain why I felt this way. I simply did.

For about six months I really kicked up my heels and generally made a fool of myself. At the time, I was too eager to get on with my life to think any other way or be ashamed of my actions. I did some good things too, like volunteer work at the Denver Art Museum. But generally, I enjoyed myself to the fullest. Yet, this type of behavior was not normal for me. My impression was (wrongly) that all transsexuals should act this way. Society expects it of me so why not do my part, right?

I found out as I progressed

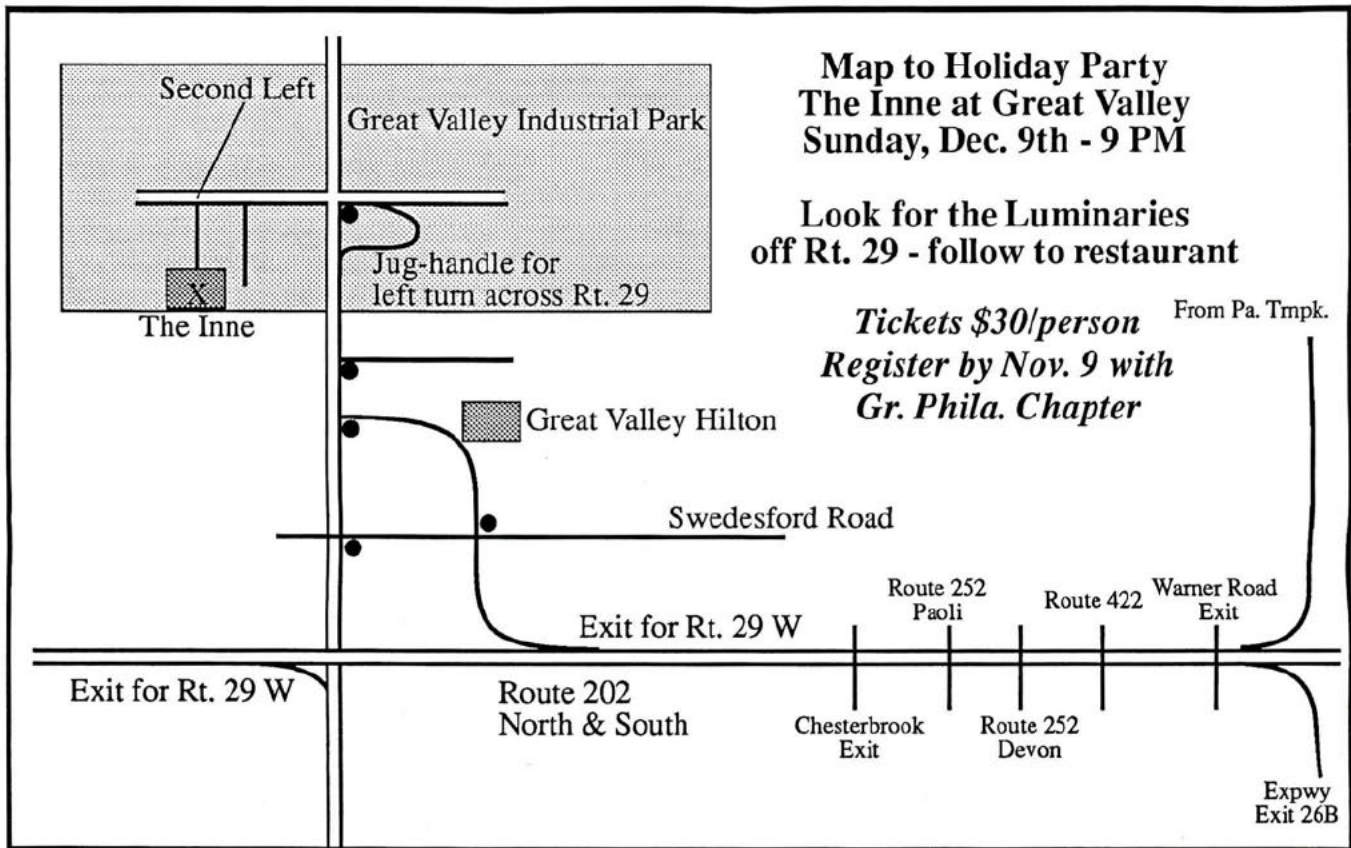
through my transition that society did not perceive me as a transsexual, but as just another woman. Not that women don't go out and party, but few do it with as much enthusiasm as I did. As the newness of my freedom wore off, going out and doing the town seemed less and less important. My behavior settled down to a steady pattern that told society I was just as normal as anyone.

So, at 3 years post SRS, my life seems completely normal now. No one thinks I am anything but a genetic woman—not even my step children (but that's another story). I am accepted and respected as a well-known college professor and photographer, not to mention my part-time job at K-Mart to get my husband through police academy. (The "respected" and "well-known" come from my boss at K-Mart, so I'm not blowing my own horn).

Is this what I was striving for nearly four years ago? Emphatically, yes! Have I grown and matured in my behavior and manner in that time period? It would seem so, judging from the interpersonal feedback I get from people.

Four years ago this was what I wanted and this was the person I wanted to be. There were no roadmaps for me to follow. I just let my heart lead me where it had to go. Through this metamorphosis my behavior changed and evolved to the person I was inside. It was a painful process to be sure, but a necessary one.

For transsexuals going through transition reading this, undoubtedly, you, too, have had the misconception that you're supposed to act a certain way. That notion will go by the wayside as the new person emerges allowing your real personality to blossom. Just don't try to do too many dumb things during this period. Try to act your age. You will evolve into the person you are supposed to be; just let it happen.



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THE *Paula Jordan Sinclair* NEWSQUEEN™

With the large number of killings on the streets of Philadelphia, a cynic would say that it was only a matter of time before a transgendered person became a victim. That sad occurrence happened in August when a sailor assigned to the USS Kitty Hawk shot and killed a man wearing women's clothes.

Vernon Bryan, 19, of Oklahoma City, Okla., told authorities that as he was entering a Center City store Eduardo Lora Vasallio, 37, "brushed into me and was giving me a gay look and winking at me." At the time Vasallio was wearing a wig, a blue tank top and a skirt. Bryan said that when he came out of the store Vasallio tried to come onto him again. "I'm not a homosexual," Bryan said, so when Vasallio grabbed him, Bryan hit the crossdressed man. "He tried to run down the street," Bryan said, "and I pulled out the gun and started shooting at him. It was me telling him to get away from me."

Bryan was ordered to stand trial on murder and weapons charges.

♣ ♣ ♣

A Maryland transvestite got herself into serious trouble this summer when walking along a highway in Gaithersburg, a suburb of Washington, D.C. Identified by police as Tracey, the 24-year-old was seen earlier in the evening on the highway. Later, she was found unconscious in an apartment complex parking lot, beaten about the head and face and cut with a knife.

Police said that Tracey was known to walk along the highway looking to be picked up. Sgt. Robert Stelling said that she was hospitalized two years earlier after being beaten up by someone who believed her to be a woman. However, Stelling added, "We cannot afford to just assume that someone just picked her up and did this to her."

One interesting note is that while newspaper reports referred to

Tracey as "he," Sgt. Stelling consistently used female pronouns when talking about the victim.

♣ ♣ ♣

Another crossdressed man fooled a lot of people, but so far none have resorted to violence.

In February, the publication *Women's Wear Daily* announced that the cover photo accompanying its lead story a few days earlier, featuring a photo of a woman in a fringed dress, long earrings, high heels and a blonde hairdo, unintentionally was a photo of a man.

♣ ♣ ♣

Several months ago (when we should have been reading *Women's Wear Daily*) we reported on an anti-transvestite tirade from the lunatic right wing. Here is another: this time concerning the debate now raging over the National Endowment for the Arts and making federal money available to artists who produce what some call indecent art. The controversy began over an exhibition of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe. Some of the photographs are homoerotic and one is a self-portrait of the artist made up like a woman.

When the touring show opened in Boston a few months ago, the streets outside the Institute for Contemporary Art were filled with protesters in favor of and opposed to the show. One of those supporting the show was a man wearing a dress and zebra-print tights. His presence prompted Jim Edgerly of the American Freedom Coalition, a right-wing group opposed to the exhibition, to say, "this is a perfect example of the kind of behavior this kind of art manifests."

♣ ♣ ♣

Thanks to Mr. Edgerly, we now know why a Ken doll was found in drag in a Tampa, Fla., Toys R Us.

Ron Zero, a former stock clerk at the Florida toy store, said that to pass the time during their over-

night shifts, they would sometimes do strange things to dolls. "We'd hang them in the aisle or have Barbie spanking Ken in Barbie's house," he said. The crossdressed Ken was just one of those pranks. But instead of striping Barbie's companion of his purple tank top and lace-trimmed skirt before the store opened, Zero used clear glue to re-seal the package and put the doll on the shelf, making it look like Ken had come from the factory in drag.

The "Transvestite Ken" was an overnight sensation, spoofed by Arsinio Hall and featured on *The Joan Rivers Show* and in *Newsweek* and *Fortune* magazines. But Mattel was not pleased by the incident that implied their strict quality control measures had failed. A Mattel spokeswoman said that the company was "vindicated" by Zero's confession.

The only unresolved question is: did Zero visit the Mapplethorpe exhibition?

♣ ♣ ♣

Another possible motive for Ken was that Barbie was on his case to be more sensitive.

According to research reported in *The Boston Globe*, depression, suicide and violence toward others could be reduced if men became more like women, at least in terms of being sensitive to other people's feelings. The study says that women are more prone to depression because they carry the emotion burden for insensitive men, while men who cannot connect emotionally as well as women are more likely to kill themselves or others.

♣ ♣ ♣

If acting more like the other gender doesn't solve all of your problems, have you considered acting like another species? Thanks to the California Milk Advisory Board, it is now possible to dress like Holstein cows. Soon, cow crossdressers

continued on page 6

NewsQueen...

can pick up leotards, T-shirts, weightlifter's pants, tights, bike shorts, and beachwear bearing the distinctive black-and-white Holstein pattern. The clothing is a marketing ploy to remind people that "milk does a body good."



Also in a bovine vein, 30 "big and beautiful" female impersonators competed for the crown of Miss Gay U.S.A. At-Large in Louisville in July. Denise Russell, 30-year-old redhead who was Miss Midwest U.S.A. At-Large, won the title, thanks in part to a series of live musical impressions that included Mae West, Carol Channing, Bette Midler, Katherine Hepburn, Ethel Merman, Judy Garland and Tammy Faye Bakker.



Ethyl Eichelberger, a self-professed "storyteller" and the creator of numerous female characters which he portrayed himself on the New York stage, is dead. A friend

said that Eichelberger had been ill with AIDS and took his own life by slitting his wrists.

Eichelberger performed both male and female roles with excitement. In more than 30 plays of his own creation, he gave new life to such traditional characters as Casanova, Medusa, and Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln. His plays include *Leer*, a send up of *King Lear*, *Hamlette* and *Media*.

Eichelberger, who was 45 when he died, began his New York theater career by working with Charles Ludlam and the Ridiculous Theatrical Company. Originally named James Roy Eichelberger, he legally changed his first name in 1975 as his off-beat, theatrical comedy career took off. Last year he appeared with Sting on Broadway in the revival of *The Threepenny Opera* and sang that show's famous song "Mack the Knife." He had become such a well-known avant-garde character that movie director Oliver Stone

had him play himself in Stone's next movie, *The Doors*, about rock musician Jim Morrison.



Yet another new motion picture will feature a drag bit. Peter Falk, perhaps best known as a television's bumbling detective Columbo, will portray a variety of characters in *Tune in Tomorrow*. They include a Roman Catholic bishop, a rabbi and a (allegedly) sexy French maid! The film is due out this month.



And finally, here is a bit of news for those who are looking for an excuse to justify crossdressing: it takes 65 percent more energy to walk in high heels than in flat shoes.

After making that remark about the Miss Gay U.S.A. At-Large contestants, Miss Sinclair will be burning off a ton of calories in her high heels by keeping out of those girls' way. Being on the lam, she may miss some news items relating to crossdressing. If you see any, kindly send them to her at the Renaissance office as Susan [redacted] of Washington did. Be sure to note the name and date of publication. Tell her also if you see any At-Large contestants at large.



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Pa. considers licensing Electrologists

A State Senate committee is considering a bill that would require a state license for permanently removing hair with electrical or heated instruments. Electrologists in the state say the bill would reduce injuries to clients and protect the reputation of their profession.

The bill, approved by the House last year, would direct the state Board of Cosmetology to license qualified electrologists and regulate the field. Presently, members of the profession attempt to regulate themselves through voluntary membership in professional organizations such as the Pennsylvania Society of Electrologists (PSE) or the American Electrology Association.

"At the present time, any person in Pennsylvania may go into the business of removing hair on unsuspecting consumers, even though the person has no training," said Rep. William R. Lloyd Jr. (D-Somerset County) the bill's sponsor. "Unfortunately, the result can be permanent disfigurement or scarring."

In August, the Senate Consumer Protection Committee, chaired by Sen. Clarence Bell (R-Delaware County), held hearings on the bill. Prior to the hearings many Senators believed that electrolysis posed little risk to consumers and did not warrant regulation. But as Joel Strum, PSE president, testified, inexperienced or poorly educated electrologists may accidentally draw blood, creating the risk that unsterilized needles may transmit diseases like hepatitis and AIDS.

Lloyd told *The Renaissance News* the Senate committee would likely not vote on the bill until late September. The entire Senate must pass the bill before the end of the legislative session in November, he said. He added that regulation of the profession would be supported by licensing fees, not tax dollars.

Lloyd urged persons supporting the bill to write Sen. Bell and their local state senators in Harrisburg.

What's in it for me?... JoAnn Roberts

Next month three of the four Renaissance chapters will hold elections for officers. The big question is whether there will be anyone who wants to hold the responsibility of an officer.

Don't mistake what was said. There may be some who want the title of an officer and the presumed "glory" that goes with it, but few, if any, understand the responsibility of office until they actually hold it. Then they wonder how or why they let themselves get "roped" into the job. It is likely that those people who've held an office in another group or organization understand the responsibilities and that's why they're not applying for the job.

In a way, you can't blame people for not wanting to take an active role in the group. It is a lot of work. There are board meetings to attend. Budgets to balance. Arrangements for food and beverage at meetings have to be made. Planning for speakers. Devise activities to get people out of their cocoons. Spend two hours getting dressed for a meeting and then not have time to sit down or eat while you're there. Something always needs to be done.

Officers aren't appreciated either. They take the heat for everything that goes wrong, but don't let them crow about the things that go right. Things are supposed to go right so why praise anyone for doing what they're supposed to do?

An officer becomes an instant target. When you stand in front of the group as one of its leaders, you immediately become suspect. You're on a "power trip." You've set yourself "above" the great unwashed masses. Who the Hell is she to tell us what to do?

Officers are incompetent. Ask anyone and they'll tell you they can do that job better than *she* can. Isn't it obvious she's not the best qualified for the position? Anyone could do it better, can't they?

So why bother?

Because...

It matters to some people, particularly the newcomers who are scared and still afraid of their own shadows. Your critics have forgotten what it was like to be all alone in the closet and there you were holding open the door saying, "Come out. It's okay!"

Because...

There are some people who can never get to a meeting and the newsletter is their link to a world they can only dream about. Your critics never see the letters of thanks and gratitude you get for just being there, or the letters from sisters who say you've changed their lives because of something you wrote.

Because...

You answer the phone at midnight and it's a 15-year-old boy who's scared. He doesn't know if he's gay or straight. All he knows is that he likes to sneak into his mother's room, grab a pair of pantyhose, put them on and masturbate. It feels so good, but it makes him feel so bad. You try to console him but he hangs up on you. Your critics don't remember being a teenager and the only person in the world who does this "unnatural" thing.

Because...

You remember how "liberating" it was when you decided not to apologize for your transvestism anymore. You remember what it was like meeting a sister for the first time and finally knowing for sure you weren't crazy.

Because...

You remember how difficult it was to find a support group and you want to make it easier on the next person who is looking for help.

Because...

Now you know what it's like to have close friends that you don't have to lie to about your long nails or shaven legs.

Because...

If you don't do it, no one else will and all this was a waste of time.

Burn Your Bra!

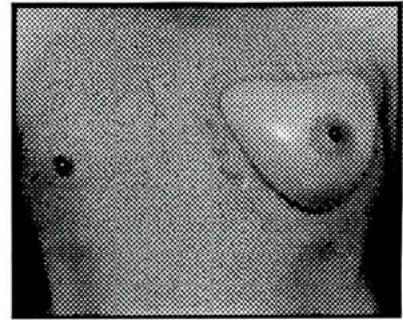
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An appeal for practical research help... Phaedra Kelly

Early in 1990, I began a long-planned project of travel to countries where the TV/TS population are little known. They are often under great pressure from the law, established religion and government, and truly understand the nature of need and the need to be active in self-help.

In Gambia N.W. Africa, I discovered a place where transgender in all its forms save one is repressed. Just as in Communist countries, in Islamic lands it's seen as a dissident force. It's permitted solely in cabaret performance, sometimes in Carnival and infrequently shows through in pre-Islamic tribal ritual, only providing it can be exploited for tourism. But there, I traced something of the origin of the earliest transgender and discovered two important things; a reason why many Afro-Caribbean trans in the West suffer extra pressures from within their own coloured community, and a thin, but telling, advantage to Islamic women's feminism. I left Africa having risked being in an Islamic land in mid-Ramadan with sunstroke, bronchial flu and non-recurring malaria. Having written down my report and research as a small book manuscript with photos, I cannot now find a publisher within the community able or willing to see to it that it gets seen.(sic)

Last week hubby and I returned from a similar fact finding mission in France: Le Harve to Paris and back. There I gathered new information on the European scene and did video and soundtape interviews with TSs at Pasteur Douce's mission to minorities. We also got video, sound and stills in the Bois de

Boulogne of 1990's crop of young Brazilian, Colombian and Spanish TSs, the Ultimate Angels of the book of that name. We established contacts and updated info. (The book was [written] in 1984). That, too, is looking for a publisher. It also links anthropologically to the information gathered in Africa as I have revealed a hitherto unknown/unrecorded African dual deity, which may be related to the Brazilian Yansan, a man/woman (TS) deity in Candombles, the local voodoo.

The connection continues, as hubby and I shall be in Istanbul, Turkey, in January on the trail of the Djinn. While it's vital to trace these religious and occult origins of Islamic attitude to transgender, I shall also be working on contemporary issues. My intent is to help and encourage the formation of new transgender self-help groups in these countries and to establish communications with those of the rest of the world. I take with me to all places photocopies of the Tapestry listings which I provide to contacts. As well as coming back with sound, video tape and stills of the transgender people I meet, I also exchange addresses and continue communications after the trip which ought to help make future visits by the GTA or by your groups easier and cheaper. But I am in great need of your group's assistance, with pre-journey practical research on contacts. You may recall that in Renaissance News, Vol. 3 No. 7, News Queen column the Turkish situation for Trans was published. It was not stated from where or who that news came, but a new Turkish gay movement was mentioned.

Rather than depending upon the gays, our sisters there need their own groups and the support of their own kind in other countries. If anybody can trace the name and address of the original complainant in Istanbul, it would therefore help me greatly to establish a link and someone to meet when I arrive. I do already have some glimmer of where to find the trans from a UK journalist contact who has been there and knew them. Wandering a red-light district in Paris was risky enough, doing so in an Islamic land here the customs people and police are wary of video and soundtapes, let alone trans, is worse. We have until January. Any positive help you or any group can provide would be most welcomed.

Contact: Phaedra Kelly, The Gender Transient Affinity, 1 Bank Buildings, School Green Road, Freshwater IofW, P0409AJ, UK of GB

PS: A secondary job which groups in free'r countries can do is to build up a list of members able to translate, French, German, Spanish. Portuguese can be understood in Africa and Turkey, but English in some places is rare. I, of course, am working to make links with English speakers, and have had some success. But considering the danger and pressure these people live under, any one single contact can (and sometimes does) disappear at any time. You might also consider discussing what plan(s) of support you can/would/will take for these people, i.e. what are you able to offer them?

PPS: If there's any volunteers of funding to keep this job going, that too is needed.

from around the TV/TS community
NATIONAL GENDER NEWS™

PHILADELPHIA, PA. — One of our friends recently commented that our style of writing was a trifle "high-falootin'" for our average reader. She cited as an example the comments in the July NGN about **Tri-Ess** becoming a more virile (sic) organization and asking if the word "oxymoron" came to mind. Our sister felt the average reader would miss the irony of the "virile" remark and, in any case, would not know what an oxymoron was. We poo-poo'd her implication that our audience would be too lazy to pick up a dictionary. We give you more credit than that.

We will continue writing in this style, thank you. It is one of the distinguishing trademarks that separates us from the other hacks.

NGN

CONCORD, N.H. — The editorial and publishing offices for *Gender Expressions* has migrated once again. A recent press release announced that the bi-monthly magazine has divorced itself from **Siobhan Donovan** and **Bisley Enterprises**. Citing irreconcilable differences, Donovan was removed from the magazine by a vote of the magazine's board of directors. Dono-

van was both publisher and printer of the magazine.

GenX will continue under the capable hands of **Janet Christon** (current editor) and **Diana Obidowski**. The publisher will be **Electronic Media Arts**, P. O. Box 150, Concord, NH 03302-0150

NGN

INDIANAPOLIS, IN. — One problem area that many transvestites and transsexuals share is hips, or rather the lack of them. Help is at hand, dear sisters.

Elaine Edwards of **Geiger-CMC** sent us a press release for a new product: the **HIPSLIP**.

This garment, says the release, will provide the wearer with a soft, smooth and natural appearance, adding from two to four inches through the hip area.

The **HIPSLIP** is priced at \$20 (including postage) for waist sizes to 36 inches and \$24 for larger.

Write to **Geiger-CMC**, 8105 VF Trail, Indianapolis, IN 46214.

NGN

PHOENIX, AZ. — It looks like we're problem solving this month.

We received a notice from a vendor here for large sized, fashionable

shoes. **The Unbound Sole** bills itself as a shoe boutique for the unique foot, specializing in sizes 10 through 14, exclusively. The widths range from super slim to double wide (although not for all selections).

Three styles of pumps are shown in their flyer with heel heights going from a mild 2½ inches to a towering 4 inches. Prices vary from \$46 to \$62 depending on the material of the vamp. Credit cards are accepted.

Thanks to **Julia Patrick**, president of the company for letting us know about her shoe source.

Contact Patrick at **The Unbound Sole**, 1515 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004, or call (602) 271-0350

NGN

TORONTO, ONT. — We were privy to a screening of a new makeup video from the folks at **Take a Walk on the Wildside**.

The 90 minute tape follows the transformation of one **Jackie Loren**, a local female impersonator, from male persona to female. Loren does an excellent job of explaining what he is doing and why. The transformation is stunning.

Our only critique is the makeup

continued next page



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from around the TV/TS community

NATIONAL GENDER NEWS™

techniques are most suitable for stage or clubbing, not daytime.

The tape is \$59.95 (U.S.) and can be ordered from Wildside at 2312-620 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont. M4Y-2R8, or call (416) 864-0420

NGN

WILKES BARRE, PA. — We're constantly surprised at where we sometimes find resources, like here in coal country.

We're sure that transvestites live everywhere, but we were surprised to hear that they appear in public in this town. Specifically, they go shopping at **Mr. Fashion/Exotic Lingerie**. At least that's what owner **Judy Petiak**, tells us.

Petiak says that many of her customers are men who come in looking for help with clothing and lingerie. Several of her customers arrive "en femme."

Petiak called Renaissance for more information about transvestites so that she would better understand their motivation and know better how to help them. We provided her with several Background Papers on the subject.

If you're upstate Pennsylvania, stop in and say Hi to Judy at 1255 San Souci Highway Wilkes Barre, Pa., 18702 or call (717) 829-2224.

NGN

ANAHEIM, CA. — The headline reads "PPOC Is Not Becoming A Tri-Ess Chapter" on the front page of the Aug. *Girl Talk* (Powder Puffs of Orange County).

What follows is president **Joan's** explanation that she received so many negative reactions from members that she didn't even bring her motion before the board of directors. We reported in the July NGN that Prez Joan had suggested PPOC become a chapter of **Tri-Ess**.

Joan says the problem seemed not to lie in Tri-Ess itself but the association of Tri-Ess with **Virginia Prince**, one of our favorite people.

Says Joan, "...conjured up fright-

ful apparitions in their minds about how the whole emphasis of PPOC will change and that we will all become minions of the evil and wicked queen..."

She continues, "If any of you really thought that I would allow her to get a foothold here, then...you don't know me very well." But we see that some "puffers" know Prince.

Perhaps Virginia did herself in last year when she visited PPOC and proceeded to lambast a well-known figure in this community. What goes around comes around.

Prez Joan is right, though, an entire organization should not be judged on the basis of one person alone. Why, some people even do that with Renaissance.

NGN

LAGUNA NIGUEL CA. — Several of this country's best know professional makeup artists have their own salons and even a few offer makeovers by mail, Rex for one.

Now our transgendered sisters have their own makeover-by-mail service, **Fe-mail Fantasies**.

We spoke with owner **Jerri Feola** recently and we've seen her work on her partner **Frankie**. Both are committed to high quality, total makeovers with personal care.

Using several photos (which you supply) and a questionnaire Jerri and Frankie will return to you a personalized makeup approach with suggestions on corrections, hair color and style, a color palette, and a fashion profile of clothing and accessories. The cost is \$59.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

They also have a video "How to Apply Your Makeup" for \$19.95 if you order the makeover service or \$29.95 ordered separately.

Try Fe-Mail Fantasies at P. O. Box 7701, Laguna Niguel, CA 92607

Look for Fe-mail Fantasies makeovers to be featured in a nationally distributed TV magazine.

NGN

ISLE OF WIGHT, U.K. — Miss **Phaedra Kelly** was on a walkabout in Paris, France in late July/early August. One of her stops was to talk with **Pasteur Joseph Douce** of **Trans-CCL** a non-profit organization for sexual minorities. Trans-CCL has a hotline and provides contacts for transvestites and transsexuals.

Miss Kelly did not get to see Pasteur Douce. She was informed that he'd been called away on an emergency.

It has now been revealed that Paris police believe Douce has been kidnapped. Reports say he went away with two men who showed ID and claimed to be police. The real police know nothing about the two other than they were not policemen. A real police investigation has begun into the incident.

Kelly believes the publicity will help the search for Douce and hopes he will be found alive and well. Perhaps there is no sinister motive behind Douce's disappearance.

NGN

PHILADELPHIA — We mentioned here earlier about *People Exchanging Power* (PEP), a support group for those into the B&D/S&M scene. Well, we've heard from PEP **Dominia Maxima**, **Nancy Ava Miller**, that PEP-PA is now in operation in the Philadelphia area. They have at least two activities scheduled every week. (Must be a lot of people into this scene to support this level of activity.) And, Miller says, transvestites and transsexuals are encouraged to attend. There is a door charge at all parties and seminars for males and, like it or not, both M-t-F transvestites and M-t-F transsexuals are considered males. (Nancy, we think that's a tactical error.)

For more details about PEP-PA write Nancy Ava Miller, [redacted] Phila., PA 19114, or call (215) [redacted].

NGN

The BACKPAGE

To the Editor:

I would like to reply to the "Soapbox" column in the July issue, (Vol. 4, No. 7).

During the early seventies it was to obtain SRS (sex reassignment surgery) "on demand." All you had to do was be certified as sane by a psychologist, then go to a lawyer, get the papers and off to the surgeon.

Most of the "regret-tees" we see on *Geraldo*, et al., are from this period. The fact of the matter is, all transsexuals self-diagnose themselves as surgical candidates, whereas 99 per-cent are not [candidates].

While the RLT (real life test) may be an unnecessary burden to many transsexuals, and some unstable persons may have committed suicide out of sheer frustration, there are good reasons for the test. The main

reason is to be damn sure about surgery which is irreversible. Some of my transsexual friends don't agree with that view. They believe the RLT is to protect the doctor's ass; in some cases that may be a valid point.

It also bothers me greatly every time I hear the term "secondary transsexual." One does not "develop" into a transsexual, nor can one intellectualise oneself into the distaff gender identity. There is no choice in being a transsexual. Trying to convince oneself of such courts emotional disaster. I have personally met such people and they are invariably confused and unhappy. Your "gender sense" must be that of the opposite sex for a successful outcome. I suspect that successful persons of this genre are really "hidden" transsexuals.

Sincerely, Jackie K.

To Jackie K.:

I always appreciate your comments to editorials. Thanks.

I'd like to address your concern about "secondary transsexuals."

It appears that we both agree there are people in this community who label themselves as "transsexual" when they are not. Secondary transsexualism appears only to occur in males. Is it late onset of true Gender Dysphoria or an inability to cope with the demands and responsibilities of masculinity? A male can grow up believing he should really be female or a man can decide he no longer wants to be a man. These are two entirely different things. If one no longer wants to be a man what is left but to be a woman? Thus, we see "secondary" transsexualism.

JoAnn Roberts

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