

# CrossPort InnerView

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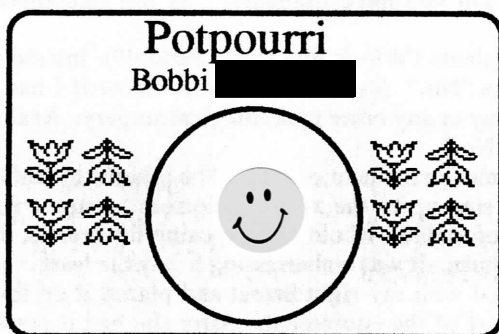
P.O. Box 1692, Cincinnati, OH 45201

Vol. 12. No. 3

MARCH, 1996

The next meeting is March 21, 7:30 PM at Holiday Inn, I-275 & U.S. 42

## CrossPort: Homeless Again ?



### Fecal Matter Occurs

That's right, Girls...*CrossPort* is about to lose its "home" once more! See Jennifer Marquette's column later in this issue for the details and explanation.

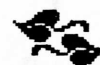


### The Voice is familiar, but...

On an upbeat note, the *CrossPort* couples', non-dressing, get together was a blast! On Saturday evening, March 2, Jackie and Nina opened their beautiful Blanchester home to *CrossPort* couples for a "pot-luck" feast. Jennifer and Suzy, Bobbi and Beverly, Paula H. and Jan traveled to meet with Jennifer C. and Marie, Kristine, Holly, and Abigail, JoAnn and Carol, Melony and Terry, and Gina and Dawn. Making the long trek from Lexington, KY were Julie and Nancy and from *Crystal Club*, Adrienne and Karen rounded out the gathering. Of course, as promised, everyone was dressed in gender appropriate attire (making initial identifications somewhat of a game).

After way too much sampling of the tasty treats, we concluded the evening by challenging one another with a variety of trivia. This was a splendid evening...the first of what I hope is a tradition of enjoying the company of, not just those

who share a common lifestyle, but of nice folks who are interesting in their own right and in any form. Thank you, Nina and Jackie for your warmth and hospitality!




### In the Media...

I received a note from Joyce this past week with a clipping from the Wednesday, February 28 edition of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. The article related the sentencing of the 18 year old who was convicted of murdering Arthur Baker at the *El Rancho Rankin*. Mr. Baker, a crossdresser, was murdered October 26, 1995. His murderer pled to a reduced charge of involuntary manslaughter and was sentenced to a term of eight to 25 years in prison.

Joyce revealed that Arthur Baker (femme name, Ruth) had contacted *CrossPort* in early summer of 1994. Then, in September of that year Ruth Baker moved to Cincinnati asking Joyce to meet her at the bus depot and drive her to *El Rancho Rankin* where an apartment was secured. Ruth did attend the September '94 *CrossPort* meeting at Golden Lions but never came to another. Joyce expressed regret at playing even such a small part in the eventual tragedy befalling Ms. Baker.

Joyce, to you I say, that what you did was an act of selflessness and generosity, just like so many others you performed in your role as spokesperson for *CrossPort* in recent years. You are a treasure.

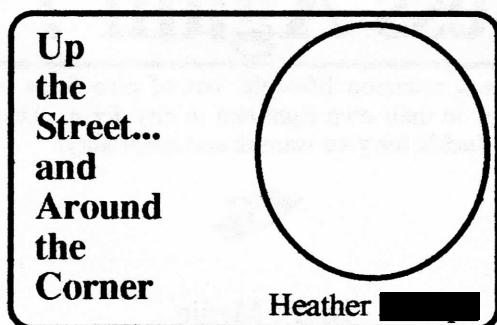
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The February issue of *Glamour* "road tested" the new all-day makeups and reported that they are wondrous. Following their suggestion concerning concealer "(You may find you don't need one.)", I purchased Revlon's *Colorstay* and, sure enough, was able to eschew the waxy coverall on four separate outings (one of which was a daylight shopping trip). Shave close...very close, moisturize as usual, and apply as with any liquid foundation. Let set (very quickly done), and, if necessary, apply over shadow with a patting approach. It may not work for those with Barney Rubble Stubble, but for most, I think it will prove just the ticket.

So sue me if I'm wrong!

Stay Healthy. Stay Beautiful. Avoid Runners.



Everyday life offers us a new experience. Each day is new and needs to be enjoyed. This past month I experienced something that only a woman can experience. No, get your minds out of the gutter and let me explain. During my normal bi-monthly checkup, my doctor and I discussed the prudence of getting a mammogram.

According to Dr. Kirk's tape, a TS on estrogen is at a lower risk to develop breast cancer than a genetic woman. However, being cautious and having a friend die from cancer that started as breast cancer, I felt that I would prefer to be checked and know that everything was okay.

February 19th I made my way to Good Samaritan Hospital radiology department. I had pre-registered by phone, so I didn't expect a lot of questions. Wrong! First, I had to verify all the information I had given over the phone, then, a complete new form. It started with the usual questions like name, social security number and date of birth. Then the personal questions appear.

They began with "When did you have your last period." It occurs to me that we get asked that question in number of various situations. I remember when I took the physical for Fairfield Center, that question was on the form. There seems to be a preoccupation with women's reproductive functions. I mean, they don't ask men questions like "When did you last

have a wet dream?", or "Ever had a problem getting it up?" Men are spared these indignities. Yet, it seems perfectly normal to ask us when did you have your last period.

Next they asked about number of pregnancies, and were any of them difficult. I thought about that one and not knowing what it is like I can only assume that, of course, giving birth is difficult! I answered the questions and turned the form in to the receptionist. I took a seat in the waiting area awaiting my turn.

Looking around the room I noticed the ratio of about 8 women to every 1 man. I expected to find numerous magazines appealing to women. Wrong again! Various sporting magazines and one lone *Time* magazine were all that were there. Luckily, the wait was short. I was soon called for my turn. I followed the technician her to the area where the mammogram are performed. I was directed to a booth and told to remove my clothes from the waist up. There was a gown for me to put on. I did as I was told and went into the x-ray room.

I had thought that the questions were finished earlier. Guess what? Wrong again. She flipped over the form, that I had completed earlier, and proceeded to ask more questions. The first was "Do you have implants?" (I felt like answering, "Hon", if I had implants I'd look like Dolly Parton!") Instead I gave her a feeble "No." She then wanted to know if I had had a hysterectomy or any other gynecological surgery. Again I just mumbled "No."

At last came the moment of truth. She told me to remove my gown and step up to the x-ray equipment. I never realized how uncomfortable I would feel exposing my breasts, even to another woman. It was embarrassing to say the least.

She started with my right breast and placed it on this shelf that was part of the equipment. After she had it positioned exactly where she wanted it, she proceeded to lower another shelf on top of it compressing my breast. It was so tight that I thought that the entire interior of my breast was going to be pushed out through the nipple. She repeated the procedure with my left breast. Then she turned the camera to a different angle and repeated the process for a total of four pictures.

At last it was over and I was told that my doctor would be in touch with me and I could get dressed. It was over and I was free to go. I walked back to the cubicle and dressed. I was glad I had gone through the procedure preferring to know everything is okay. At the same time I was glad it was over.

The personnel at Good Sam's were professionals. If they read me, they never let on. If you ever find yourself in my position I recommend them highly.

Until next time, this is Heather, up the street and around the corner of Greater Cincinnati, may God bless and keep you in His love.

## Jill's Ambrosia

by:  
Jill Ambrose

In the last "InnerView", I mentioned that I was planning on attending the Texas "T" Party in Dallas. This is being written well before the affair, although you will be reading it after the fact.

Since making my decision several months ago to attend the "T" Party, much has gone into the advance planning for the trip. My reasons for picking this get-together are numerous.

It is located in Texas, which has a special significance as you will see shortly. It gives me the opportunity to attend a convention out of town where I can live full time as a woman from start to finish ( including the plane trip down and back).

And lastly, the program looked interesting and the price seemed right.

For the past several months, I have been corresponding with my niece, Laura, a M2F pre-op transsexual, who lives in Ft. Worth. Included in my mailings to Laura were copies of the "InnerView", and a teaser that I would be visiting Texas the end of February and would like to get together with her.

I'm sure that when she received the first note from me she had no idea who Jill Ambrose was. It probably did not take long though, to deduce who the notes came from, since they were postmarked in Cincinnati, and included my phone number. (Sometime later, my brother, who also happens to live in Texas mentioned that Laura had received a note from a Jill Ambrose. My younger brother indicated that he was looking forward to meeting Jill, and indeed he shall.)

Laura has been 'dressing' for as long as I can remember and grew up with several sisters and a brother. She was always borrowing clothes from her sisters and was accepted as a crossdresser by her family long before her teenage years ended. For years she has been talked about in family circles, though everyone accepts her as she is. Everyone (except my mother) addresses her as Laura. Laura is petite and beautiful and has worked as a model and was featured in a photo spread in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Perhaps next month we can run a picture of Laura. Her three sisters are also very pretty and have lightly tanned skin reflecting their Hawaiian heritage. Laura has been living and working full time as a woman for many years now.

Many times over the years, I longed to share my secret with Laura and to assure her that she had an ally and was not alone. BUT, I was not ready to step out of the closet.

In preparation for the trip, I secured a good price on a round-trip flight on US Air. Since this is to be my first time flying enfemme, I am trying to eliminate any possibility of being turned away at the ticket counter. A person who flies enfemme regularly stated that it should present no problem, but that's easy to say if you are a seasoned veteran. My main

concern is the ID check now required as part of the tightened security. The last several times that I've flown, I have been asked to provide a photo ID.

When I checked with the ticket counter at the Greater Cincinnati Airport, the young lady stated that if I could prove who I was and the name on the ticket matched my ID, I would be allowed to fly. She then had second thoughts, and transferred me to her supervisor. He stated that I needed a photo ID that matched the way I would be dressed, and suggested that perhaps it could be accomplished at the Hamilton County Court House.

I came up with a plan to have "before and after" pictures made and then notarized with the information that all the pictures, one of which matches my drivers license, are indeed of me.

The supervisor confirmed that he thought that this would be acceptable.

**"I'm extremely excited at the prospect of traveling with almost nothing but female garments and accessories in my suitcase..."**

Apparently everything has been cleared with US Air at CVG but who knows what may happen at the car rental or the airport in Dallas on the return trip home. But the lyrics from an old Doris Day song keep echoing in my mind, "Que Sera, Sera".

I'm extremely excited at the prospect of traveling with almost nothing but female garments and accessories in my suitcases. My girlfriend, Janet, with whom I have had lunch several times recently, is driving me to the airport. My plan is to arrive in Dallas, get my rental car, and drive to Corpus Christi to visit with my brother and his family. As of this writing, Laura was planning to be there when I arrive. After a three day visit, I'll return to Dallas for the "T" Party.

Next month, I will report on what I hope will have been a fascinating and rewarding adventure.

One quick note before I go. At the last *CrossPort* meeting, my fellow columnist, Paula Ison, commented on my mention of buying some casual clothes. I realize that in the real world, I can not always 'dress to the nines', and I appreciate her friendly advice to "dress for the occasion."

Via con Dios!



### Accessories:

"Nobody outside a baby carriage or a judge's chambers believes in an unprejudiced point of view."

♥XOX

Lillian Hellman



## The Perils of Paula: a continuing saga:

"Go Figure"

by: Paula Ison

For the past several months I've dance en femme at a local country western night club. Usually I only go there on Fridays so, on a lark, I went there on a Saturday night as my male self. After a while, a girl came up and said "It took me a few minutes but I've figured out who you are". I didn't want to offend her so I replied "When I figure out who I am then we'll have a story!" We both laughed and she trotted off.

My response was probably the right approach but I badly wanted to say:

"A few minutes? I've spent a whole life time and still haven't figured it out."

or

"You'd make better use of your time if you tried figuring out who you are."

or

"Mind your own business."

It annoyed me that she only spent a few minutes when I've literally spent hundreds of hours taking academic courses and reading as much literature as I can about transgenderism. For the past year I've attended Northern Kentucky University and have taken Basic Psychology, Abnormal Psychology and Human Sexuality. Plus, I've read everything from Kate Bornstein's Gender Outlaw to Men are from Mars by John Gray.

All of this has given me some of the answers and I've learned (despite what my ex-wife says) that I'm pretty well adjusted. When we realize that we are well adjusted, then our self-esteem and self-worth go up markedly; which are things we can all use.

A disappointment to me was learning that some gender community members have no interest in knowing the origins of their genderism. One *CrossPort* member said to me "I'm not interested, I just want to have fun". I want to have fun, too, but if I know "why" I'm having fun, then I can replicate it in greater quantity and quality.

The past few issues of this fine newsletter carried stories about *Stonewall*, the gay political group. As a Republican with "family values" I've found the *Stonewall* leaders to be very fine people who fully support *CrossPort*. In October I attended en femme the *Stonewall* sponsored "Meet the Candidates Night" and shook hands with Mayor Qualls and met various Judges and School Board members. It was a

blast! Then last month I attended *Stonewall*'s "Casino Night" and had another good time.

On March 26th *Stonewall* has its annual membership meeting and I'll be there. Recently I did something that a few years was unthinkable: I joined *Stonewall*! It was \$25.00 well spent. I encourage all of you to do the same and help vote for the bylaw change that will make transgenderism inclusive in the *Stonewall* mission statement.



Gina and I recently attended the monthly *Louisville Gender Society* meeting. We arrived early and ate at a near by restaurant. When I commented during the meeting that the restaurant treated us very well, the local girls responded with "Over on the east side of town things can get testy." Guess where we are eating next time?



The *CrossPort* Thrift Store will be open during our next meeting, March 21st, from 9:30pm to 10:30pm. Please donate clothing that you no longer like or just can't wear anymore. Shoes, jewelry and other accessories are welcomed.

Everything will be priced at \$10 or less, so bring lots of money and your checkbooks. The money goes to our general treasury.

Please give me the donated items when you first arrive at the meeting room.

The sale will not begin until the business portion of the meeting is done. Please do not start shopping until the meeting is done, this is not a *McAlpin's Moonlight Madness Sale*.



**Recently I did something that  
a few years ago would have  
been unthinkable:  
I joined Stonewall!**

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## Almost Time to Flyfish in Patent Leather Pumps

Jennifer Marquette

Here's a cheery thought: Our next meeting will be on the first full day of Spring. It feels good just to think about it. Ah, Spring, it makes a young crossdresser's thoughts turn to... well, you know.

For those of you not at the last meeting, I want to acknowledge and thank once again those who helped move the set last month as a fundraiser for CrossPort. A very significant contribution was made to our general fund due to the generosity of Rob, Kristine, Melony, Joanna and Paula. A special thank you goes to Jackie who helped on both Saturday and Sunday. I guess she liked it so much she just had to come back for more. Anyway, it's not so much like work as it is a two-day-diet-workshop.

I also want to thank both Jackie and Nina for hosting the couples get-together on Saturday night. Their home provided a very comfortable setting for dining and mingling. Thanks to the eleven couples who attended and their wonderful array of prepared dishes and desserts I didn't have to eat on Sunday.

Don't forget about the clothing swap fundraiser next meeting. Please bring items that you know others would like. I believe Paula will go into more detail on what is appropriate to donate. If you're not sure about something, don't hesitate to bring it or give a call and ask.

I am requesting some books from Sandy Thomas Publications (TG fiction) that can be sold at a discount and I am also trying to get some back issue samples of CrossTalk Magazine to sell. CrossTalk is a monthly publication that I look forward to reading every month. It is very "user friendly" with the scope of its articles, cartoons and insights. CrossTalk has recently made arrangements to sell their subscriptions through support groups as a fundraising tool. For every new or renewed subscription, our group will get a commission. Please see the ad elsewhere.

Speaking of ads, we also are reprinting the *Arcanian Nights* ad from CrossTalk. Some of you will remember Belinda Twomey from our group and notice her name. We kind of lost track of her so I wrote and she sent me a nice long letter updating her situation in Florida. She is doing well and proceeding with her transition. She's still trying to land that Snow White gig at D-Land.

There is an imprisoned TS I have received some correspondence from who is receiving her first issue of the *InnerView* this month. Welcome, Tasha. She is looking for others to write to, compare notes with, etc. so I will reprint her address here for those of you who might spare a few moments to drop her a line. Address mail to: Robert "Tasha" Dines # 943702, B5-205 East, Wabash Valley Correctional Inst., PO Box 1111, Carlisle, IN 47838. I know she will be happy to hear from you, so send her a note.

**It is very likely that our April meeting  
will be our very last at the Holiday Inn.**

It is very likely that our April meeting will be our last at the Holiday Inn. I had a meeting with Cathy Smith from the hotel the other week. Their upper management is refocusing its scope of what type of functions they will handle at the hotel. They have been redecorating and rearranging their facility to directly market only corporate and family functions. They have hired a new sales manager and have brought on an outside sales person who will solicit corporate business. The

only non-corporate events they will host will be wedding receptions, reunions and the like.

Groups such as the card and sport shows that have been there for twenty years, the singles dances that have been there for years, are being asked to move on also.

Please do not take this as a personal slight; Cathy was very apologetic for the decision and expressed to me how much the hotel staff enjoys us as a group. She also told me she would prefer working with our group over the more "difficult" and less fun corporate groups.

I have several letters of referral and thank you from the hotel beginning with the Be All from last June. I'm sure I can get us into another hotel without much effort. But I'm not so sure that is the best venue. One problem is with the dinner reservations. It has been continually difficult to provide the hotel with a reliable head count. Last month, we had to pay \$36 out of the contribution to meet the guaranty. That money isn't a great amount, but I can think of a multitude of things we need or desire that I would be pleased to spend the money on instead.

So, we're kind of at square one. If you have input on the type of facility that you would like to meet, now is the time to voice your opinion. If you would like to help search out a new location, please contact me. I want our new spot to meet as many of our needs as possible and for as long as possible. I'm looking for a long term home.

Finally, there are two quotes of k.d. lang's that I read in the *USA Weekend Magazine* that I enjoyed and would like to share:

cont'd

"Spirituality comes from questioning everything but at the same time accepting everything."

"You should wear a wedding dress whenever you want. Both men and women, go for it! Wear it bowling."

Take care and I'll see you at the ball return.



**Note:**

**Deadline for April articles  
is Wednesday March 27.**

**e-mail: [crossport@aol.com](mailto:crossport@aol.com)**

**The View Inside**

**Bobbi [REDACTED]**

It seems like forever since I've showcased one of CrossPort's ladies in this column. Well, it's not for the lack of trying. Imagine how frustrating it is to have a seemingly desirable object: featuring one of us in her own, up-close-and-personal interview and to hand out questionnaire after questionnaire to those who haven't yet been showcased, only to receive zip-nada-nichts-nuttin' in my box (if you pardon the colloquialism). Finally, not only do I get one of them back, not only is it on a disk ready for publication, but, now get this, it's someone whose interview positively reeks with the promise of sordid tales and scandalous intrigues. Who else, but the unsinkable Linda Buten!

**How long have you been associated with organized crossdressing groups, and when did you first come to CrossPort?**

In the fall of 1980 I helped form a group called Lambda Delta, a Tri-Ess chapter, that was based in Louisville. A few years later I then got involved with a group that was trying to form up near Dayton. I think we may have met only once or twice.

In June of 1985 Heather Pearson had wrote to several girls, and organized a small get together of about six people at her house. One of those girls, Sharon, had met me previously up at the Dayton group and still had my name. She called me, and I've been coming ever since.

In the spring of 1986 in Chicago, I became involved with IFGE. I continually became more and more involved, and soon became a member of the IFGE board. That was six years ago. I am currently running for another three year term.

**What is your earliest recollection of crossdressing?**

My story is very typical. Around five or six, I remember being fascinated by the way the girls dressed. Soon I was trying stuff on to see what it felt like. Just a little here and there. I was about eight before I totally dressed as a girl. I was in high school before I started dressing like a woman. (you know, makeup, stockings, heels, and wig)

**What is your favorite crossdressing memories?**

I have been so many places, and done so many things as a girl, it really hard to say what my favorite is. I loved it all.

As far as happiest moments, they are probably at a special occasion like Christmas, when I open up my presents. This is when my wife, who only tolerates my dressing, shows me she loves me by showering me gifts for Linda.

**What about your family and friends. Do they all know?**

Actually only my wife and three children know. There are a few other outsiders, but I don't make it a point to let it out. I believe in the "need to know" logic. I don't want to embarrass my family so I am some what discrete. (Believe it or Not) Beside, I enjoy being a father and a husband when I'm with them.

I told my wife before we married, and my children have grown up seeing Linda about every other day. They are all pretty understanding. My wife knows everything about Linda's activities, including the trouble she gets into on occasion. We have now been married for 22 years, and our marriage is stronger then ever.

**What is the most satisfying aspect of crossdressing?**

While I have always enjoyed expressing my feminine side, my real satisfaction comes from helping others and doing outreach. This is the driving force that keeps me involved with groups like IFGE. Whenever CrossPort meets we always attract a few new faces, and I always go out of my way to speak to everyone.

**What is the most disturbing aspect?**

I really shouldn't let this bother me, but I see so many individual who always take from the community, and never give anything back. On the other hand, I also have seen so many well intended individuals, who just come from the closet, promise so much. Unfortunately many never follow though after the initial excitement wears off.

There also seems to be a never ending supply of rabble rousers out there who enjoy fighting with each other. Too many people think they are an authority when it comes to being transgendered. Everyone needs to really work together, and stop being so critical of everything and everybody.

**Can you give any "tips" on creating the illusion?**

You can wear the best clothes, have the greatest hair, and exhibit the perfect makeup and still not pass. The most important thing is attitude. It can be slowly acquired, or it can be rubbed off from a more experienced person. When you venture out in public, don't try so hard to be a female, just be you. Don't worry so much about being seen as a guy in a dress. I'm not saying don't work on the other part, it's just that one's self esteem is the icing on the cake.

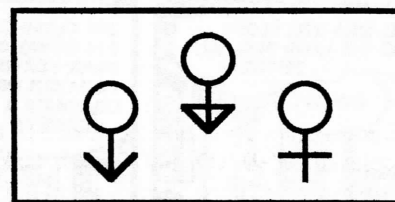
The public in general feels uncomfortable with those who look like they have something to hide. Try to get away from hiding your face with piles of hair and speaking so no one can hear you. I always find it amazing how I can talk with someone with my regular voice for quite sometime, and then later realize, they have no idea. I usually just assume they know.

**What do you imagine the future holds for Linda?**

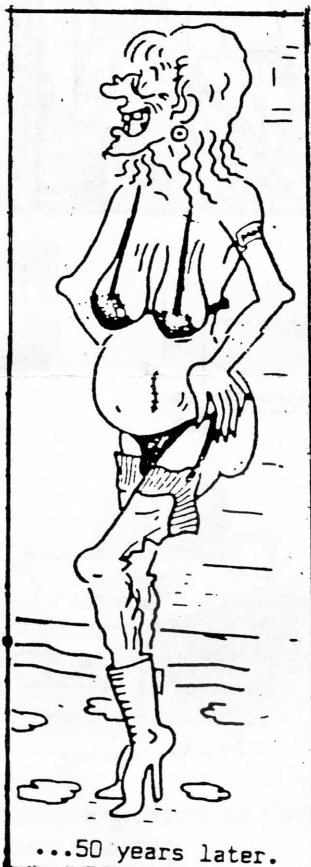
There's really nothing I would like to do, that I haven't already done. But looking at some of the older crossdressers who have been around forever, I assume I'll just turn into a grandma who wears short skirts and 5" pumps.

Linda, thanks for your candor and your time. You are truly one of those *CrossPort* members who guarantees a wonderful view inside.

**Stay Healthy. Stay Beautiful. Avoid Runners.**



What Younger Sisters Have  
To Look Forward To.



#### Publication Notice

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*InnerView* is a monthly publication of *CrossPort* for its members and friends. Subscription dues are \$24.00 per year, payable in January of each year. It is our goal to support the TV, TS, and Gay communities and in return we need your support.

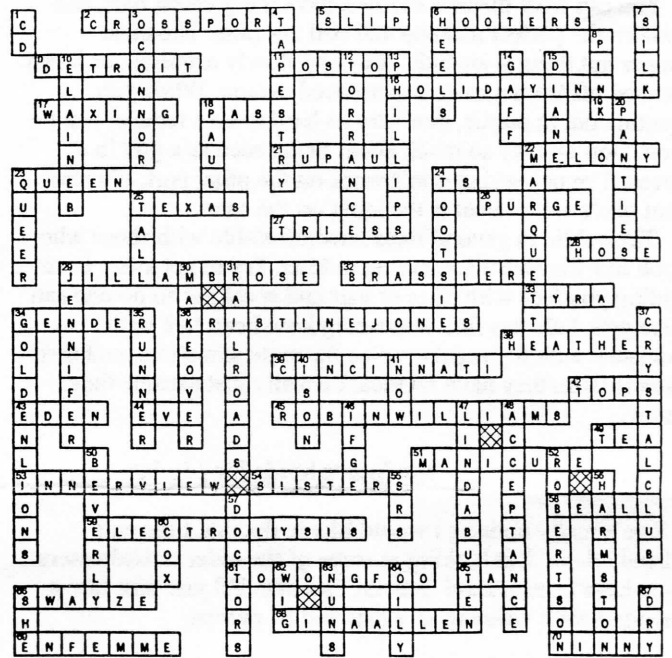
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*InnerView* is produced on a Macintosh IIfx using *Microsoft Word 5.1*. Articles submitted for publication should be on 3.5 disk or typed, double-spaced. Contributions of articles are welcomed but may be altered, with the author's intent retained, or may be rejected, whether solicited or not. Absolutely no sexually explicit material will be accepted or printed.

*CrossPort* is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, transsexuals, and their families and friends.





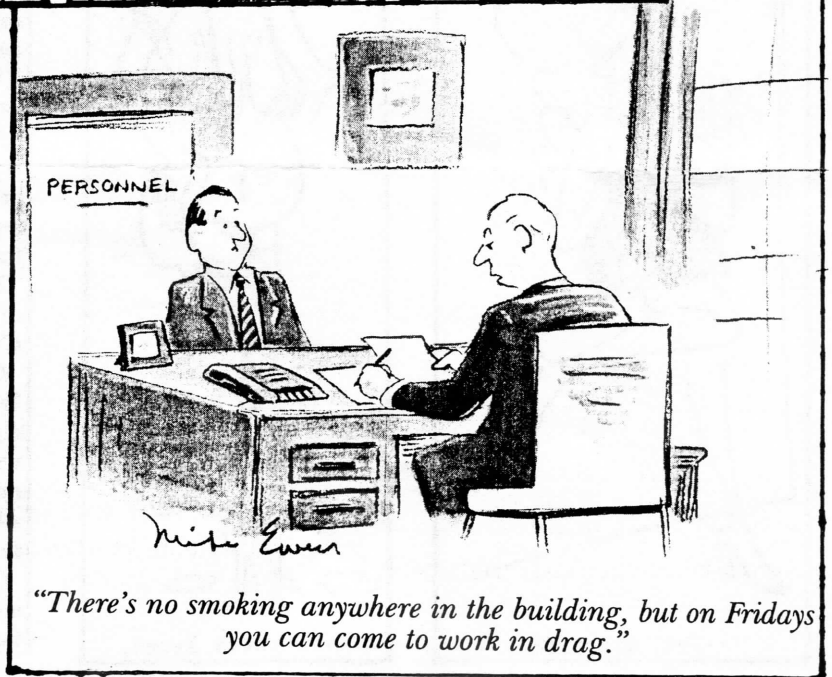
### CURTIS



### I Need Help



Victor's secret.



## Future Fun

- March 18 -** Deadline for dinner/meeting reservations.  
Call *CrossPort* @ (606) 581-3711 or E-Mail
- March 21 -** *CrossPort* dinner/meeting, 7:30 pm
- March 24 - 31 -** Minnesota Pride '96 *IFGE* Convention  
Minneapolis/St. Paul. c/o *IFGE*, PO Box  
229, Waltham, MA 01754-0229
- May 18 -** *Stonewall's* Annual Dinner
- May 31 -** *Pride* Rally on Fountain Square at noon  
"Happy Hour" events (TBA)  
"Cruising on the Ohio" Boat Ride
- June 1 -** *Pride* Parade and Festival Special  
Events (TBA)



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*Music for the  
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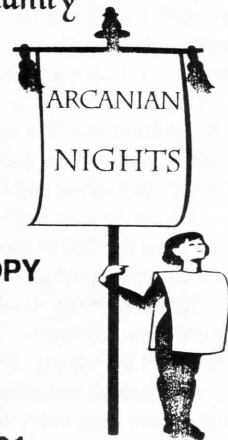
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## You can make a difference!

### Help us fight for your right to be transgendered.

In June of 1995, several of the national transgender organizations created the community's first political action committee — GenderPAC. It's purpose is to fund the increasing number of political activities of the transgender community such as the Transgender Lobby Days last October. In just a few short months, GenderPAC, through the evangelism of a few dedicated people, managed to raise and disburse over \$10,000. It is not enough.

It's time for the entire community to pitch in. GenderPAC wants to ensure that your right to work, your right to fair housing, and your right to reasonable public accommodations will not be denied. GenderPAC will continue to lobby Congress in 1996 for transgender inclusion in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). But, we can't do it alone and we can't do it for free. Your tax-deductible contribution will make the crucial difference. Give and give generously. You'll feel really good about it. Send your contributions to:

**GenderPAC, c/o IFGE, PO Box 229, Waltham, MA 02154**

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*"Are You Ready For Your Mystery Date?" (Part Two)*  
an X Dressing Phile by Isabella Anya

Matt was reveling in the reflection of "Marissa" in the floor length mirror. His friend, Sharon had done an amazing job of transforming him into a beautiful woman. He was startled back to reality when she told him they better practice his walk before the "Boys arrive to pick them up for their date."

"What are you talking about, Sharon?" asked Matt. "Transforming me into Marissa is my mystery date, isn't it? That's what you and Rob were referring to, right?"

"Of course we were. But then we got the idea that maybe we all should go out. You don't want to get all dressed up then sit around the house and drink beer, do you?" Returned Sharon. "We thought it would be fun to fix you up with someone."

"Fun? Fixing me up on a blind date with another guy? I don't believe this!" Protested Matt. "I'm not going out on a date with a man. You two are out of your mind."

"Look," said Sharon, "Ted's a really nice guy that works with Rob. He's cool. It's his birthday and we're treating him to a nice dinner at Chez Merde's. And if Marissa plays her cards right, her dinner's on us, too. Come on, we'll have a great time. You look fantastic!"

Chez Merde was a perfect place for the way Marissa was dressed. In addition to a five star restaurant they had a spacious art deco lounge with a jazz combo and plenty of dance floor. It was a favorite "special event" spot of his and Cindy's while they were dating.

"I have to say that's a great choice, Sharon. But I'd be too nervous to leave the house much less go there. And there's no way I'm going on a date with some guy. People will be staring." Matt stood fast.

"Matt, *Marissa*. Look in the mirror." Sharon turned him once again towards his reflection. "Do you realize how gorgeous you look? Yes, people will be staring. But not at some guy in a dress; they'll be staring at a drop-dead beautiful woman. The reason we invited Ted was just to protect you from every other man in the place from hitting on you. Besides, if you don't go I will be so incredibly pissed at you for wasting my time and money this afternoon that I will literally toss you out of your own house and lock the doors. You can fend off the neighborhood guys."

Matt stood silent for a moment gazing at the mirror. He thought that if he saw someone like this he would be entranced. Hell! He *was* entranced. "Sharon. I really do appreciate all you've done for me. This is a dream come true. I have fantasized about doing this for so very long. I just want to say how grateful I am for your help and most of all your understanding. But can't it just be the three of us? I'd feel so much more comfortable. Can't we lose Ted? Please?"

"Marissa, it's his birthday. It's not like we're asking you to go home with him and show him a good time. Besides, Ted's cool."

"You mean he knows about what's going on?" asked Matt.

"Uh,...yeah. He knows about the blind date." said Sharon.

Just then the front doorbell rang and Matt nearly jumped out of his heels. He turned and ran into the bathroom. Sharon shook her head and opened the door. Rob entered alone.

"Ted's sitter fell through, he wants to take a rain check." Rob said as he entered. "So? Where's the new girl in town?"

"Marissa?" Sharon said to the bathroom door, "You lucked out. Ted can't make it, it's just Rob. Come on out of there."

Marissa opened the door and turned the corner into the living room where Rob was standing.

"Holy cow!" Rob's eyes opened wide. "You look incredible! I never would have thought... God, you look good enough to bend over the fender of a Buick. Unbelievable. I'm glad Ted canceled. This will be some major ego pumping for me to walk into Merde's with two ultra fine women on my arms. I hope there are people there I know!"

Marissa gave a big smile and blushed. "So, let's go."

When they pulled up to valet parking, Marissa's door was flung open for her. As she stepped out she could sense the valet's eyes checking out her legs. "Evening, Ma'am." He said with a sly grin.

"Was he grinning because he knows or was he grinning because he's a lech?" Marissa asked Sharon.

"Lech." Replied Sharon, "You passed with flying colors. Stop being so nervous, you're making me nervous. Take a deep breath."

After they checked their coats Rob suggested they go to the lounge for a drink since they were early. He told them to get a table while he checked in with the Maitre'd. Sharon and Marissa entered the lounge and spotted a table pass the bar. There were a few couples and groups but the bar was mostly comprised of businessmen trying to impress their clients while chasing a deal.

"Just remember," said Sharon, "one heel in front of the other with toes slightly pointed out. Your butt will take care of itself. Ready?"

All eyes focused on Marissa and Sharon as they parted the Red Sea. Marissa just looked straight ahead with an easy smile frozen on her mouth. After what seemed an eternity, they finally arrived at the table.

One woman elbowed her date. But the rest of the crowd, especially the businessmen, just stared.

"Sharon, what's going on? They know, don't they?"

Just as Sharon was about to respond the waiter came over and said, "Good evening, ladies. You look wonderful. The two gentlemen at the corner of the bar there were the fastest ones out of the blocks, your first drink is on them. What'll it be?"

"Yeah, they know, Marissa." said Sharon with a smile, "They know what they want. I'll have a gin and tonic. Marissa?"

"Um, a Budweiser. Ouch!" Sharon had kicked Marissa's ankle. "I mean, uh, I'll have a gin and tonic also."

"And my husband will have a martini, you can add that to their tab also - for jumping the gun. Now smile at the nice men, Marissa."

The two women smiled and the men toasted them.

"I told you that you would do just fine. Every guy in the place is salivating over you. I like this treatment; we need to do this more often."

"Thanks again, Sharon." said Marissa. "It feels great!"

Almost at once, Marissa's nervousness disappeared. She breathed easier and felt a warm and powerful confidence flow through her body. She raised her head a little higher and smiled at the men at the bar - all of them. Then just for fun, she batted her lashes a little.

The two men looked at one another then back at the girls.

"Now look what you've done, Marissa." Sharon shook her head.

"What? You told me to smile at them."

"Right, but not the 'come on' you just sent them. Now they'll be over here and pawing all over us. Hope you're happy."

Sure enough, the two men slid off their stools, straightened their suits and started towards Marissa's lips.

"What are we going to do?" Marissa asked frantically.

"I think I'll let you fend for yourself." Sharon said coolly. "You'll figure it out. Oh, watch out for that hand slipping up your leg."

As the two men approached, the nervousness came back to Marissa with a vengeance. She thought about jumping up and hurrying off to the ladies room but then she became more nervous at the thought of that. Just as the men were about to introduce themselves a hand on Marissa's shoulder made her jump.

"I can't leave you two alone for five minutes without you getting into trouble." It was Rob. He stood between Marissa and Sharon with a hand on each of them. He bent over and kissed Sharon on the cheek and startled Marissa by turning to her and giving her a peck also.

"Sorry, guys," Rob said to the two men, "my wife and sister already have dinner plans." Then Rob's eyes caught something past Marissa's shoulder. "Ted! You made it! Good to see you, buddy!"

(Continued next month)