

# Renaissance News



Volume 2, No. 11

P.O. Box 1263, King of Prussia, PA, 19406

November, 1988

## It's Official!



"First, which of you is Mr. Marshbanks?"

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### An Historic Event in Boston

Four of this community's most outspoken leaders gathered together to discuss gender role issues in a public forum on Tuesday, October 4th at 12:30 PM in Boston.

Ari Kane, Executive Director of the Outreach Institute; Merrissa Sherrill Lynn, Executive Director of IFGE; Yvonne Cook, Executive Financial Manager of IFGE; and JoAnn Roberts, Managing Director of Renaissance, were the guests

of *People Are Talking* on WBZ-TV, Channel 4. The panel also included a F-to-M crossdresser, Dan, and Sterling, a gay crossdresser, to show the diversity of our community and the unity of its leadership.

JoAnn Roberts was asked to represent married, heterosexual crossdressers and Renaissance.

Of particular note, was the inclusion of Dan on the panel. This is

*continued on page 6*

### IRS Grants Tax Exemption

On September 29th Renaissance was notified by the IRS that, "...we have determined you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code." Which means the IRS is treating the group as a publicly supported organization.

It also means that persons or other organizations making grants or contributions to the group may rely on this ruling to declare a deductible contribution to the extent allowable by law.

The official recognition of the exemption makes Renaissance eligible for a number of special privileges. The first privilege that will be requested is the special bulk mail rate for non-profit organizations. This will reduce newsletter mailing costs by almost two-thirds. The exemption also allows the group to apply for grants from state and federal organizations in order to expand its public education and outreach activities.

In a related development, the general membership unanimously approved changes to the By Laws to permit the formation of chapters. The ruling is also good news for them. According to Melanie Bryan, Executive Secretary and an attorney, the IRS tax exemption should serve as an umbrella exemption for chapters. She says, however, "Chapters will

*continued on page 6*

## October Happenings

The AIDS Benefit on October 8th was **not** a resounding success. Poor attendance by Renaissance members and a lack of response from the local community in New Hope were contributing factors. When the tally is complete it will probably end up a break-even affair. Our thanks to all those who supported this event. It would be

appreciated if those who chose not to attend would tell the Board why they did not. We want the feedback for future planning activities.

The membership meeting, on the other hand, was very well attended. Monica Ray, a professional FI and friend of Renaissance, gave a good presentation on dramatic makeup for evening and stage.

## Christmas Party Plans Are Set

The 1988 Renaissance Christmas Party will be held at The Great Valley Inne, 16 Great Valley Parkway in Malvern, PA, only 5 minutes from our regular meeting location. The date is Sunday December 18th. This is a private party for Renaissance and its guests; the Inne will not be open to the public. The cost is \$25 per person for Full Members and \$30 per person for Associate Members and guests. The party will begin with

No-Host Cocktails and appetizers at 7:30 PM. Dinner will be served at 8:30. You have a choice of entrees; Prime Rib, Stuffed Chicken, or Crab Imperial. Soup, vegetable, coffee/tea and a dessert buffet is included in the meal price. Tax and gratuity is also included.

You **must** register and pay for the party by December 2nd so a count can be given to the Inne. A map and registration form is on page 7 of this issue.

## Member Commended by PCHA

Recently, some members of Renaissance decided to do a little outreach work of their own. Joanne [redacted] our rep to PCHA, found out that the Food Bank could not keep perishable food because they had no way to store it. Therése Aigner, on hearing this, decided she could do without the 8 cubic foot freezer she had in her cabin in the mountains. She promptly assembled 'F Troop', as they are affectionately called, and they delivered the freezer to PCHA. 'F Troop', by the way, consists of

Joanne [redacted] Therése and Joanie [redacted], with an occasional appearance by Jennifer [redacted]

In a letter from Jacqueline Easterlin, Director of Development for PCHA, she says, "The nutritional requirements of PWAs are even more varied and changeable than the general population, and it is our mission to meet those needs as fully, as promptly and as caringly as possible. Your thoughtful donation helps us immeasurably to reach this goal."

Our hat is off to Therése!

## And Don't Forget About...

- The PCHA Food Bank: Joanne [redacted] reminds us that the Food Bank would like food and basic toiletry items for PWAs. Please, no clothing, they have no space to store it.

- The Benjamin Book Project with the Outreach Institute. Special Renaissance member discounts, Regular Edition @

\$28.50, Deluxe Edition @ \$33.50.

- Christmas Party Committee needs volunteers. Contact Alison Laing. Please register early.

- Election of Corporate Officers at the November meeting. Mail your ballot or bring it to the meeting.

- Reprints of the Oct. Phila. Magazine are \$5.00 postpaid.

## Renaissance News

### Staff

Senior Editor: **JoAnn Roberts**  
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Copy & Layout: **Creative Design Services, King of Prussia, PA.**

For the latest information about events call: (215) 640-9449, 24 hrs. a day.

## Business Report Thru Oct. 15th

October Attendance: 75  
Paid Members: 215

Starting Balance: \$1837.10  
Income:

Dues & Donations	\$209.00
Benjamin Book	\$99.00
Publications	\$70.00
Advertising	\$120.00
Benefit Tix	\$475.00
Subtotal	\$973.00

### Expenses:

Meeting	\$215.26
Newsletter	\$87.00
Table for meeting	\$47.00
Printing	\$281.76
Outreach Institute	\$500.00
Office Supplies	\$89.82
Subtotal	\$1220.84

Ending Balance \$1589.26

### Coming Events:

#### November

19th Renaissance Meeting  
Feminine Department  
Shopping Smart

#### December

18th 2nd Annual Xmas Party  
Great Valley Inne  
7:30 PM Cocktails  
8:30 PM Dinner

#### January

21st Renaissance Meeting

## Opinion - The Forum - Information

### The President's Corner...Roni L. reprinted from NWGA Newsletter

Everyone has their own style in this world of crossdressing. Everyone has their own goals, their own fantasies, and their own dreams. I feel that men crossdressing in female clothing want to portray females as much as they can, or dare, in every aspect they are able. Going out into the public arena and "passing" as a female is certainly a goal that everyone of us want to achieve. And we all need as much help as we can get to be successful at that endeavor.

I feel that as club president one of my tasks is to help members achieve this goal by setting a good example, arranging for classes or instruction on being feminine, including feminine articles in the newsletter and by constructive

criticism. (Hopefully, no one takes offense to this criticism; it is only meant to help, not berate!)

But there are times that one is "read" as a male in female clothing. How one reacts to this "discovery" by others says a lot about the character of that person. Most ignore the discovery as one of the "prices" one has to pay for being a crossdresser. Some will not go out into public because they are afraid of being "read", and/or people might know who they really are. Some are confrontive (sic) to the people who "read" them, demanding that they have every right to be crossdressers. In fact, CD's do have a right to express themselves, but they also have an obligation to respect the rights of questioning

individuals. They have the right to not like what you, as a crossdresser, are doing, (and they might express their feeling to you!).

How one handles this type of situation reflects not only on them, but also on the club and it affects everyone in the club. Each member must realize that their actions reflect the image of crossdressing to the public as being an acceptable life style. If any of our actions have a negative or questionable impact on the public, then the club and all of its members suffer. Just be aware that how you are "dressed" and "behave" in any given situation has an impact on society as to whether they will accept us crossdressers or not!

### "HEROES"...commentary by JoAnn Roberts

On Thursday, September 29th, the Space Shuttle "Discovery" lifted from Pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center and with it went the prayers of the whole world. I sat spellbound and unable to utter a word lest my voice shatter the mood in the room. Some observers clapped as the Orbiter lifted from the pad, while others silently prayed "Oh God, please don't let IT happen again. Let them make it!"

"IT", of course, was the explosion that ripped apart the Orbiter "Challenger" and blew out the candle of life for seven fine men and women. For those of you who don't know me very well, I have been associated with this nation's space program for over fifteen years. I have met and spoken with many of our astronauts often.

I can't think about the Challenger without tears coming to my eyes. I remember openly crying at the news of the explosion and the deaths of the crew. Those people were special to me. They were my friends and personal Heroes. If you think the jet jocks in TOP GUN were cocky, you ain't met an astronaut! But, they have good reason to be that way. Every time they climb aboard a shuttle, they know that what happened to the Challenger crew could happen to them. They go anyway. It's their job.

Heroes aren't planned, they just happen. They have a job to do and they do it well; better than most, because they believe that what they are doing is worth doing correctly. We have heroes in our community, too. No, not the obvious names that probably just popped

into your head. These are people you've never heard about. I know of one here in the Philadelphia area who has gone way out of her way to educate and counsel new sisters. She most likely saved a life recently. And, I am sure that there are more like her all over the country, just doing their part, but doing it better than most because they believe in it.

I read a lot of sci-fi and my all time favorite book is a recent one titled "Armor" by John Steakley. In it, he has created a quote that I have taken to heart, thus; "You are what you do, when it counts." I am sorry, you will have to read the book to understand it better. When you do, you will also understand who our real Heroes are and you'll find them sitting right beside you at the next meeting.

### Significa

• Our sincerest condolences to Gloria Wright of the *Crossdresser's*

*Bureau* at the passing of her mother. Our prayers are with you.

• Copies of the Phila. Magazine article are available from the office.



## Paula • The NewsQueen • Sinclair

Many gay and lesbian newspapers carry a syndicated comic strip entitled "Dykes to Watch Out For." It chronicles those lesbians who wish their cats would become vegetarians and who agonize about *wanting* to shave their legs—a charming and innocent bunch. We're thinking about starting a version called "Drag Queens to Watch Out For," and giving it real punch by featuring actual felons.

Our first candidates (or should we say "suspects?") are the Indianapolis female impersonators who are believed to have started a fire that totally destroyed the warehouse building of The Works, a gay men's social club. According to a report in the newspaper published by the The Works, two (count 'em) "disgruntled female impersonators" are suspected of having started the fire because "they came unglued over comments made by Lucy the Lip in the *New Works News*."

Here is a sample of the type of comments that may spark more than a fire, taken from Lucy's latest column: "I understand that Blanche DuBois has finally learned to keep his drag performance (if you can call it that) at home instead of in a bar...Take some advice...join Weight Watchers and continue to live under that bridge at White River until you get it together. It may take years, but in the end we'll all be happier."

And what does Lucy have to say about the fire? She asks one local queen if it is true that her ex-boyfriend had recently served a jail sentence for arson, and asks another if she actually took credit for the blaze. Talk about flaming queens!



Our next Drag Queen to Watch Out For is also a police suspect in the Midwest—a crossdressing bank robber. According to authorities in Wauconda, Ill., a Chicago

suburb, the robber was wearing a woman's suit, frilly blouse, earrings, sunglasses, make up and a wig. He had stashed his Smith and Wesson revolver in his purse, and carried three super market shoppingbags with which he made off with between \$20,000 and \$30,000. A surveillance camera captured a clear photo of the robber.

Authorities were understandably upset that the bandit made a clean getaway, leaving them with few if any leads. So that may explain why they were so critical of the "Medusa Bandit's" drag. "Judging by the photographs," said one F.B.I. spokesman, "the thief is as ugly as Medusa and the wig he wore is askew, making it look like snakes above his head too."

It's one thing to be read, even when robbing a bank, but it is quite another to have the F.B.I. dish you in the newspaper! We wonder if the Medusa Bandit has friends in Indiana.



Our final candidate this month may not fit the criteria because she is just an *honorary* drag queen and only *may* be a suspect—Imelda Marcos, the former First Lady of the Philippines and the former first lady of shoes—2,400 pairs.

The shoes, along with other personal property seized when Imelda and Ferdinand fled the country, are on display in Manila's Malacanang Palace where they are carefully maintained by Bonifacio Santos until a court decides what should be done with them.

For the equivalent of \$115 a month, Santos dusts all the shoes each Friday. He spends the rest of the week polishing and buffing. By the time he finishes the last pair, it's time to start over again.

The collection includes both slippers, flats, and elegant high heels, many of them 5 inches tall.

One pair of shoes comes equipped with batteries so the high heels glow in the dark. And if that isn't enough to make Imelda an honorary drag queen, consider this: with a size 8 1/2 foot in a country where the average woman wears a size 6, she had trouble finding shoes in her size.



Real drag queens and Imelda Marcos aren't the only people who have trouble finding women's clothes that fit well and are priced right. More and more women are buying and wearing men's clothes. And men, who may not be transvestites, are buying items in women's departments to complete their masculine wardrobes.

Thanks to a *Wall Street Journal* clip sent to us by Etienne, we have learned that merchandisers even have a name for this practice; they call it "cross-shopping," and they hope to encourage it as a way to boost sales. In some cases, retailers take a selection of men's merchandise—primarily shirts and sweaters—and move the items into the women's department. Other stores keep all the men's items together, but order a larger number of some items in smaller sizes or in colors that appeal to women.

Is there a psychological issue here? Probably not. Industry experts say that the motivation for cross-shopping by women seems to be the pursuit of fashion and the saving of money. Many women, for example, picked up on the fad for men's boxer shorts after a pair was featured in a *Vogue* layout. There is also the perception that men's clothing is better made and less expensive than women's.

And what about cross-shopping in the other direction? Accessories like leather tote bags and scarves are the primary items men buy for themselves in women's depart-

*continued next page*



## The NewsQueen

ments. But The Limited has noticed that in the past few years more and more men who were shopping with their wives or girlfriends saw a shirt or sweater they wanted for themselves and began asking clerks if it was available in their size. Now at a few Limited stores, there are discrete signs near some items that state, "Available in men's sizes." That worked so well that men's departments have been opened in 16 Limited stores, with departments slated for the chain's remaining 64 stores later this year.



Women buying men's clothes; men buying women's. Where will it end? Perhaps we have the answer in a news item from Washington, D.C., the national headquarters for Renaissance Women. This is not an offshoot of our education association, but it could be.

"We are different from the feminists," says Nina O. May who founded the organization five years ago. "We believe being a woman is not a handicap. We can achieve anything." The 3,000 members across the country come from all professions (astronauts, Congresswomen, business owners, diplomats, etc.) and *both* genders (a third of the members are men). May described the organization as a "networking group" that is politically mainstream, but tends to shun domestic political issues.

Renaissance Women also know how to have a good time. They recently held a party in the nation's capital where members entertained. Donna Rice, whose rumored fling with Sen. Gary Hart doomed his presidential bid, won a prize for her hillbilly costume and clog dance.



As exciting as Donna's performance was, it couldn't have stood up to Kelly Lauren's medley from the

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## On The Town with Alison

### Head over Heels at the Cartwheel

If any place deserves the moniker of a "renaissance" establishment, *The Cartwheel* has earned that title. Some years ago, on the south side of Route 202, about 2 miles west of New Hope, there stood a restaurant-bar with the name of *The Cartwheel*. Later it was renamed *The Baron* and became a very popular entertainment place featuring shows and dancing. Last year, *The Baron* closed for remodeling and was "reborn" once again as *The Cartwheel*.

The rambling interior features several rooms. Up front, in the old original portion, is a cozy Piano Bar. The talented singer-pianists encourage the patrons to "sing along". On the same level, off to one side, are two spacious and attractive dining rooms, one of which has a balcony with a table for 6 to 8 people.

Winding down the spiral stairs from the Piano Bar, one arrives at the Dungeon Bar, furnished with a variety of electronic games and a continuously running video.

Behind all this, and accessible directly from the parking lot or the Dungeon, is the dance area. Here there are a couple of bars and a stage for shows. There's almost something every night. For instance, they hold Drag Wars '89 every Monday night; Tuesdays is FlashDance disco dancing; Wednesdays are varied - All Male Strip Revue or the Cartwheel Revue, starring Diane Jones, Tinsel Garland and Miss Cartwheel '88. There is usually a small cover charge (\$4) to get into this part of the complex.

But, back to the dining room! Believe it or not, *The Cartwheel* of-

fers a gourmet menu with many unique and exciting dishes created by chef **Terry Foote** and an obviously talented culinary staff. Appetizers vary from Rigatoni ala Vodka at \$4.75 to Buffalo Mozzarella at \$7.50. My favorites are Smoked Salmon with olive oil, capers, onions and lemon (\$6.95) and Escargot Teresa in red garlic herb butter (\$5.95). There are at least a half dozen more selections.

The main entrees (13 on the current menu) make it difficult to make a choice. Distinctly Continental, there is an emphasis on Italian specialties. Fettuccini & Saffron Butter is served with spinach and roasted peppers (\$11.50). Pasta Puttanesca is Italian sausage, shrimp, capers and black olives in tomato sauce over pasta (\$14.50). Then there's Roast Duck, Scallops Pagoda, Veal Isobel, Grilled Tuna and more! But, if you only want a snack, try one of the Pizza specialties, like Pizza Pesto (\$7.95). The wine list is reasonable, both in selection and price. This is all from the dinner menu - served nightly from 5:00 PM. Lunch is served daily from 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Sunday Brunch is served from 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

The service is especially nice at *The Cartwheel*, and hostess, **Danee Russo**, gives all of us an extra special welcome.

It's great to go out and be comfortably accepted in a public place of entertainment. But, it is a real treasure to find a place that also provides a variety of experiences in dining, dancing, entertainment or just relaxing. That's *The Cartwheel*, Route 202, just south of New Hope, PA, (215)-860-0880.

Go for it, girls!

**Correction: The winners of the FI contests in New Hope will assemble at Zadar's on TUESDAY evening, Nov. 1 st, not Oct 31st as reported last month. We regret the error.**

## Tax Exemption

have to keep scrupulously clean financial records. And, those records must be available for review at any time."

Chapters are forming in Burlington, VT, South Jersey, and King of Prussia, PA. Under consideration are chapters in Arlington, VA and Reading, PA. For more info write the Renaissance office.

## Networking Pays Off

When the call came to go to Boston, JoAnn Roberts immediately called the Boston area to find a room for Monday evening. It seemed as if everything was booked solid. Not knowing the Boston area at all, she turned to the JSS Gender Forum BBS for help. Could anyone recommend a place to stay close to the station?

In less than 24 hrs., someone had contacted some members of the Tiffany Club who were kind

## Historic Event

the first time that an acknowledged female crossdresser has presented himself on television. If for no other reason, that fact alone makes the show significant.

Sterling Stowell is one of two adult counselors for the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY) and also works closely with the Outreach Institute.

enough to offer to pick JoAnn up at the airport and give her a place to stay for the night. In the meantime, WBZ-TV had arranged a room for JoAnn, but she did accept the offer of the ride from the airport.

Renaissance sends its "Thanks" to the members of Tiffany Club for their help in getting a sister to an important appointment and to both the IFGE and the Outreach Institute for their hospitality.

## The NewsQueen

Broadway musical "The Phantom of the Opera"—complete with massive props and dazzling special effects—that helped the female impersonator win the Miss Gay Continental 1988 title in Chicago recently.

Kelly, who is from Chicago, wowed the hometown audience from the beginning. For the bathing suit competition, for example, Kelly entered the stage flanked by two muscular beach boys, and exited riding on a surfboard. When the statuesque blonde was crowned, Kelly's mother jumped up the audience and warmly hugged her son.

A total of 33 contestants made judging difficult, so difficult, in fact, that instead of narrowing the field to 10 semifinalists, the judges picked a dozen, not being able to eliminate more than 21 in the first cut. After the judging was com-

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