

Cross-Port InnerView

P.O. Box 12701, Cincinnati, OH 45212

The next meeting is April 16 at 8:00pm

A New View

By Elaine And Cathy

At the meeting in March we had 37 ladies. We also had four new ladies come to the meeting Melissa, Cheryl, Tommie (welcome back first time in quite a while) and Barbara. We welcome them to our group and we hope they feel welcome here. We also sent out four new introductory packs. This has been a very busy month for the phone.

♥ ♥ ♥

Belinda and Laurie teamed up on April 4th and participated in a three hour Workout for Hope, Aerobics Against AIDS fundraiser held here in Cincinnati. *Cross-Port* sponsored each gal for \$20 and between the two of them they raised over \$250. There were 247 participants in total, who raised over \$22,000 this year. All proceeds go to the City of Hope National Medical Center for their AIDS research. The fundraiser was held in 52 cities across the country.

♥ ♥ ♥

For those of you who have

wondered what ever happened to Candy Lee: If you remember, she moved to Washington state last year and no one has heard from her since. Well, Cathy got a phone call from her and she had a very good reason why. Seems that while driving home from work on a dark, wet night, her car was caught by a rock slide and pushed off the road. It then rolled several times and came to a rest down in a valley.

Candy Lee said that she spent nine months in the hospital and in physical therapy. At the time of the accident, she said that the doctors weren't sure if she'd be able to walk, but that now she is able to get around unassisted again. She said to say "hello" to her friends at *Cross-Port*, and that if anyone wants to write, to get her address from Cathy.

♥ ♥ ♥

We've always advocated *Cosmopolitan* magazine in the past as a good resource tool for learning all kinds of make-up and fashion hints. For the April, 1992 edition, *Cosmo* has published an article titled He's Strong, Straight, Handsome — So Why Does He

Want to Dress Like You? Written by Kathy Pavlovsky, the table of contents teaser for this one reads "A peek into the secret lives of some very macho men".

The article starts out by doing quick cameos of two transvestites — both successful, one a lawyer and the other a top-level manager at an electronics firm. It then goes on to state that they should not be mistaken for being gay, nor should they be confused with transsexuals, and it explained the difference.

The article goes into some of the "why's" men want to dress as women, and problems surrounding the accidental discovery by one's wife that one is a transvestite. It then gives an example of an accepting wife and then discusses how self-acceptance of being a cross-dresser is important. Several cross-dressers and one doctor are quoted throughout the article.

The article is pretty positive, accurate, and the author really seemed to understand her subjects (or at least their position in society). The only place where the things aren't consistent are in the photos which accompany the article. This, however, seems to be

the fault of the editorial staff rather than the author. All photos were pulled from films and the statement is made that Hollywood's take on transvestites has been mostly humorous. Right — like films about killer cross-dressers are hard to find. Inappropriate to this article are photos of John Candy wearing High Drag in Armed and Dangerous (though he is described as campy), and John Lithgow from The World According to Garp (whose character was a transsexual).

If you think that younger women that you meet seem to be more accepting of you as a cross-dresser, maybe part of the reason is articles like these which are appearing more frequently in the "ladies" magazines.

Our Newsletter

Ladies, may I make a few observations and comments on **OUR** newsletter. In the short time that I have been involved as a member of Cross-port, I have had the pleasure of reading many informative articles. Some were of a very serious nature, some were of current events and still others were little fun articles. What ever interest you, sooner or later appears in the **INNERVIEW**. I would suppose that you ladies as subscribers find it an interesting paper.

I have also observed that the majority of articles are generally written by just a select few people. There is nothing wrong with this. However, I feel that we could gain

much more insight to our community and one another, if we had more contributors. Each and everyone of you ladies, I am sure have had an event occur to you personally that would be worth sharing with your sisters. These do not have to be long articles written in the kings english. Of course these articles are also welcome. Just put down your thoughts and forward them to Cross-Port by the first of each month.

The more views that are expressed in **OUR** paper, the more interesting it will be for all. Notice, I said **OUR**, not mine or anyone else. This paper belongs to each and everyone of you. In closing may I ask each of you to do your part to keep **OUR** paper as interesting as possible. There is a certain amount of pleasure and pride to be gained by see one's own article in print. What do you say gals? **Give it a try!!!** You might be surprised to find that you have real hidden talents. Maybe even a whole new career!!

Love, Joyce

S.O. Corner

By Nora

Hello Friends

As an addition to our newsletter I thought we could include a section for us. The newsletter is for us as well as our partners. In my opinion, we have two choices in a situation where something as important as "dressing" is a part of our partners life. We can be excluded and feel like we are being pushed away by

something we don't understand or we can learn and share the fun of being included in the cross-dressing world.

I have decided to learn by asking questions, reading books and observing the transformation. The fun part has been easy. I accept the girls as who they are and enjoy. The Cross-Port meetings are a start. There are usually 2-4 S.O.'s each month attending.

Though the potential situations are fun are endless; Shopping trips, mini trips, luncheons & parties. Make up some of your own and enjoy!

This section is for us. You may send in funny stories to share or if there is a need for sharing concerns or issue we will try to guide you to the sources for answers. Please send in your articles by the first sunday each month. Address it to :

Cross-Port
P.O. Box 12701
Cincinnati, Ohio 45212

TV News Item

A couple weeks ago, I was contacted by people from the Jerry Springer talk show. The lady was very pleasant and asked if we had any people who would be interested in appearing on his show. I told her I did not know any such person, but that I could get in contact with someone who might. She explained to me that the topic would be transsexualism and that they were a pre-op as well as a post-op TS.

Not being able to handle this myself, I phoned Linda and she took up the ball from there. Through her many connection she was able to engage Merissa Sherill Lynn and Jon Davis to appear. This is all still tenable as all the details have not yet been worked out with the producers. But as things stand at this time the show is to be taped on the 17th of April at the channel Five studio. Tickets to attend this taping of the show are available. Anyone interested in going my contact Joyce at Cross-Port [REDACTED]

depending on when these people arrive in town, Merissa and Jon have been invited by Linda to attend our Cross-Port Meeting on the 16th of April. She also invited Joyce of the Jerry Springer show to attend the meeting. I personally met Merissa and she is a very interesting person and one of the CD community leaders. While I have not met Jon, Linda tells me he does make overs and would be glad to answer questions and give tips. Hope to see all you girls as this could prove to be most interesting.

Love, Joyce

Linda's Corner

DID YOU KNOW?.....A 200 lb. man wearing men's dress shoes with a regular heel will exert less than 30 lbs. pressure per square inch. Now take that same individual, and dress him up like some young hot babe with 5" stiletto heels, and guess what? The heel of this frolicking transvestite will now exert in excess of 2,000

lbs. per square inch. With no problem, these shoes will dent hardwood floors, puncture carpet & pad, chip ceramic tile, and dent or rip vinyl flooring. So.... if you are the kind of girl that only appears when no one is around, be careful, you might be leaving behind your mark. A mark that may not be noticed until someone cleans the floor.

♥ ♥ ♥

And now, a personal message from O.W.W.S.M.M. Do you enjoy playing the roll of girl, woman, lady, or even Bimbo? Do you want to mingle in the crowd without anyone suspecting your true sex? Would you enjoy trips to the ladies restroom, or better yet the locker room?

These and many other questions can be answered yes. And you too can become an elite member of the O.W.W.S.M.M., if you act now. You ask, just what do these letters stand for? Why the ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN WHO ARE SOMETIMES MISTAKEN FOR MEN, of course.

Let us examine some of the advantages of belonging to this prestigious group over existing choices.

So you want to go shopping while at the "T" party. Until now, your choices were to brave it alone, or go with Cynthia. Just because she's the real thing, doesn't mean this will be a pleasant adventure. I bet she doesn't even take you to one shoe store that sells pumps in a size 13 with a 6" heel. I can see it now, she'll try to talk you out of that short mini skirt you want so

bad, or that low cut top to show off you tits you've worked so hard to create.

It would be nice to hope that people would look at the group of you, and seeing Cynthia first, say "The girl in front is cute, but her friends are sure big and ugly." At least you'd pass. But that's not the case. Instead, they say, "I wonder if that girl knows there is a large pack of Transvestites following her." Yes folks, you're gonna stand out like a sore thumb. People will giggle and laugh, names will be called, and you may even be denied use of the women's bathroom and changing rooms. Are you going out to shop, or to entertain strangers?

Well, now thanks to Linda, the group known as the ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN WHO ARE SOMETIMES MISTAKEN AS MEN, has been founded. The idea is so simple, it's amazing no one has come up with it till now. Instead of trying to get all the crossdressers to look and pass as everyday women, you reverse the logic, and try to get the group to stand out in the crowd. There's no better way than to have everyone wear a large badge with O.W.W.S.M.M across it. Everyone gets a name tag and puts OWWSMM at the top. In smaller print, one can spell out the meaning of the letters and your name. Anyone who spots you, will read the badge and say "If I looked like that, I'd probably join too."

Now some examples of what may happen to a member of O.W.W.S.M.M. who plans a full day of shopping:

You are in need of a make over, so you approach the cosmetic counter. The saleslady sees your 5 o'clock shadow. But she also sees the name of the group you belong to. Her fears become tamed as she realizes that you are not some perverted old man, but a real woman just like her, who has had to put up with some problem facial hair. You are treated with dignity and respect, and you walk away feeling great with your new face.

You stop in the wig department. You want to try on the platinum blonde showgirl you saw in the window. As you expose your bald head, a shriek is heard from across the room. "Eeek, a man!" But your saleslady knows the other patron has made a terrible mistake because she saw your badge as you entered. The other person has been asked to leave, and you are given an extra 50% discount on your purchase.

You want to be fitted with a new bra. In the lingerie department, a cute blonde takes you in back for a private fitting. She has seen your badge, and she subconsciously assumes you have some abnormal hormone imbalance. Now when she sees you with your top off, she won't be asking embarrassing questions like, "I see you have no boobs", or "Gee you have quite a few hairs on your chest." You are given consideration and courtesy as you make your selections.

You choose a mini dress of your liking, and you approach the petite saleslady as to where the dressing rooms are. Even though you are almost 7 foot tall, 325 lbs., and have a voice like a bassoon,

the helpful clerk sees your badge and directs you accordingly. In case you still see some doubt in her eye, you may want to throw in something like, "Could you also tell me what department would carry Stayfree Maxi pads." This should ease her mind.

Yes folks, if you come shopping with us, you can look or dress anyway you wish, and no one will suspect a thing. Sure there may still be some whispers, but they'll be saying things like, "If I hadn't seen the badge myself, I too probably would have mistaken those ladies for men."

In fact, the badge works so well that if you buy something for your wife, you'll have a hard time convincing the sales person you are not a lesbian.

♥ ♥ ♥

There's no report on the IFGE convention since this will go to press before I return.

♥ ♥ ♥

I got home very late after the last meeting, so I ran upstairs, quickly washed my face and jumped into bed.

I woke up a couple hours later, half dead and met my men that work for me. As I gave each directions as to their jobs for the day, they had these puzzled looks on their face. No one said anything, they just left to start work.

I then stopped at a supply house for some materials. The counterman who I have known for

about 10 years, came over to assist me. He takes one look at me and says, "Did you get your truck fixed?" "Woooo," I thought, "Why would he say that to me. I never said my truck was broke."

Not knowing why he said that, I said, "Yea, it's all fixed." "And I see your allergies are bothering you again," he said. "But how did you know I was working on my truck?", I quizzed. "HA! HA! HA!," he chuckled, "While you were working on your truck, you must have been rubbing your eyes, they're all black." "Sh_t", I thought, "I must have mascara smeared around my eyes."

I darted into the john to wash my face, and there in the mirror was Uncle Fester from the Addam's Family. My eyes really look awful. "How can I be so stupid", I thought. (Of course on the good side, here I am, caught red handed, and no one really knows the truth.)

I tried my best, but waterproof mascara just doesn't wash very well with cold water and a paper towel. My eyes were getting sore from rubbing them so hard, so I just slipped out the back and went home.

Three Essays on Fear

by Terri [REDACTED]

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Editors note: Due to space considerations, we are only printing the first two essays this month. The third essay should

appear in next month's newsletter.

On Vulnerability

I wrote an essay on vulnerability a few days ago. Unfortunately, the disk with that piece was stolen — from my car — along with the word processor. After that experience, I think I needed to revise the article anyway.

I had to take care of police reports and insurance claims after work in my male persona. This meant it was nearly eight o'clock before I could put on my makeup — however, I didn't. Instead, I went out to dinner in suit and tie, even though I especially enjoy dining out as a woman.

I have to ask myself "Why?" What was it that made me feel more comfortable as him than as her. The Answer: Vulnerability. I've experienced it even since my first excursion as a female. Sure, part of it is fear of discovery, but much of it is related to the feminine experience. Talking to other women, I find this sense of vulnerability to be almost universal. Even the most liberated of us carry about an awareness that we are potential victims physically, legally and psychologically.

As men, we grow up feeling nearly invulnerable. it's part of the Supermale myth of manhood. Logically, we knew we weren't, but emotionally, we felt that compared to women (the "weaker sex") we had little to fear. We were inculcated with a John Wayne image of manliness. The lone guardian of hearth and home, standing guard to protect the

women and children. Even though movies have changed, and the externals of culture have changed, internally, much of this attitude prevails.

Likewise, the comparative vulnerability of women continues to be a prevalent mindset for the gender. I went to a supermarket to pick up some groceries about 11:00 one night. The clerk and I chatted a few minutes, then she said, "I hope you parked close to the door. We have to be careful in the parking lot. Would you like a box boy to escort you to your car?" The discussion wouldn't have even come up if I had been dressed as a man, even though, I could still have been mugged or robbed at gunpoint. All of this goes to reinforce your own feeling of vulnerability as a woman.

Even those clothes we love to wear contribute to this feeling. Everyday male clothing almost totally encases the body in heavyweight clothing. Hands and face are the only parts of the body exposed. Occasionally, short-sleeve shirts expose the forearm. Heavy shoes, opaque socks, cotton underwear, durable shirts and slacks, a heavy jacket all contribute to completing the male suit of armor contributing to that feeling of security. Women's clothing on the other hand is less substantial. Skirts swing of their own free will in the wind, brushing our knees, leaving our legs exposed to the elements with nothing but a thin, transparent veil of nylon covering them. Even in slacks, the pants are of less substantial material and the underwear is of thin nylon. Our feminine clothes leave us metaphorically

unprotected.

This is not to say that this vulnerability is without it's advantages. It was comforting to have this young man escort me to the car. He even carried the groceries for me. At a deeper level, this vulnerability leads to a greater interdependence between women. No machoistic bravado here. Women watch out for each other. They band together for mutual protection. This leads to a much deeper relationship among women than among men who are too busy being "macho" to admit their need for help.

However, overall, this sense of vulnerability is one of the prices we must be ready to pay for joining the female sex. It's a trade off masculine bravado and relative immunity from sexual assault and domestic violence traded in for deeper friendships and a greater honesty about our own fears. For those of us who feel misplaced in the wrong type of body for our soul, it's a small price to pay.

On Paranoia

Related to the natural, and sometimes justified, sense of vulnerability that accompanies the feminine experience, is a uniquely transgenderal experience of paranoia. Paranoia may be defined as a pervasive and unreasoning fear of personal danger. Such paranoia is almost certain to attack you at some time in your life if you choose to leave your home in the persona of the opposite sex. The first several times I went out in a dress, I just knew everybody on the street, in the stores, driving down the roads, or looking out windows

six blocks away were saying to themselves, "There goes (Name withheld) dressed up like a girl. What a nut!" (This version has been cleared up. I'm too much of a lady to use the words I was sure they were using.) As more and more people obviously accepted me as a woman, I became more confident and the paranoia went into remission only to reappear when I hear a high pitched laugh as I walk into a restaurant or I notice a man looking at me with a puzzled look or two men at the next table turn in unison to look at me then make an unheard comment.

There are several dangers connected with giving in to paranoia. Obviously, one's mental well-being is hampered by an all pervasive fear. Your enjoyment of life as a woman becomes dulled by fears you are not passing. You separate yourself from the companionship of others. You can even become a prisoner of your fears living your female life entirely behind closed doors.

For those of us who plan to become a woman physically as well as mentally, we need to overcome this paranoia. After all, we will have no choice but leave our homes in feminine attire when we begin the real life test. So, overcoming this fear of discovery is an important step in the transition process.

First, we look for alternative explanations for other people's behaviors. People may be laughing because someone told a joke. If they are not looking at you or pointing in your direction, this is probably the case. The behavior

may actually be a typical reaction toward a member of your adopted sex. I remember several years ago becoming paranoid because every time I was standing waiting for a traffic light to change or trying to cross a street on foot, men in the cars would look intently at me. I just knew they saw my beard through the makeup or something. Then one time, in masculine attire, I was waiting at a stop light with a woman and a man in a car looked at her the same way men looked at me. A little more observation confirmed my suspicions: Men look at women who are near their age or younger when stopped at traffic lights. It's almost a natural law.

What I had perceived as being evidence of my ineptitude in passing as a woman was actually a symbol of my success. From then on I could enjoy the looks. Observe typical reactions in public to people when you are dressed in your male attire. You may find that what your apprehension told you was unique to you was simply part of the way people react to other people regardless of gender identity.

Learn to recognize the probable signs of discovery and of acceptance. Usually, if you are read, the person will take a long, sustained look, possibly several. His or her countenance will register either puzzlement, amusement or, sadly, disgust. If with friends, he or she will confidentially share the discovery with the friends and they will all glance surreptitious back. If you watch carefully, you'll notice the looks and laughter is different from that of friendly joke telling. There is usually a

nervousness connected with it. Clerks, waiters, waitresses and other business people will usually register moderate surprise then become overly businesslike in serving you. They usually won't say "Come again." They may be nervous or confused in waiting on you unsure of how to handle the situation. However, this may not be an accurate test. Many people simply act that way on the job.

Of more importance to the development of your self confidence is to recognize the signs of acceptance. The most obvious is when a clerk, waiter, waitress, etc. calls you Miss or Ma'am. If a man acts in deference to you: holds open a door; allows you to go first; smiles flirtatiously or patronizingly; then you probably have passed. I remember the first time a waiter held my chair for me, it was very reassuring. Blank looks on people's faces or polite smiles and nods tells that the person hasn't seen anything other than a woman passing by. If someone starts us a casual conversation about the weather or fashion or a popular topic, then you can assume you've passed. People aren't casual when they are confused. If a clerk in a dress shop is anxious to show you the new styles and shows you to the dressing room, you're in good shape. In other words, if people react to you like they would another woman then you have nothing to worry about.

Incidentally, paranoia will actually hurt your ability to pass in public. If you are nervous, you probably won't act naturally and thus will draw attention to yourself. This will make it more likely

someone will notice something different. In turn this will make you more nervous which will deteriorate your ability to pass. It becomes a cycle which feeds off itself. If you display confidence in yourself, that confidence will transfer itself to other people.

In her book Canary, Canary Conn, a transsexual who went full-time before counseling, remembers seeing people looking at her then realizing the reason they were looking at her was because she was looking at them. When she stopped acting paranoid, people stopped looking at her which made her stop feeling paranoid.

There is an important truth to be learned here: You have to act first and feel later. The more confident you act, the more effective you will become. The more effective you become, the more confident you will feel.

Finally, be realistic. You are not the center of everybody's universe. How many people do you watch intently enough to determine if they are a GG or a TS/TV? If you don't, being an involved person, how likely is it that noninvolved people will? Unless you're doing a really bad job, nobody will notice from across the street that you aren't a woman. What's more, once accepted the odds are the person will not question his or her first impression. In fact, people tend to accept what they expect to see. A person comes in with long hair, wearing a dress, some eye shadow and lipstick they will probably assume you are a woman unless something is very much out of place. This is even more true when you are in a

place where a woman should be found or is expected to be found such as a dress shop.

True, we must be careful, especially those of us who do not yet have the benefit of hormones or completed electrolysis. However, we must not be unrealistically fearful. Yes, we take risks when we leave the house dressed as a woman, but we also take a risk when we turn the ignition on in our cars or cross a street no matter what our attire. If you allowed the fear of what MIGHT happen stop you from driving or crossing a street, you would be hopelessly housebound. The true art of prudent living is not to be found in living a risk-free life, but, rather, in balancing the risks against the benefits. Paranoia simply leads to the consistent failure of this balancing act.

Sex Changes Offered at Akron City Hospital

By Deborah A. Winston

*Reprinted from the Akron Plain
Dealer Reporter*

A team of doctors performed Akron City Hospital's first man to woman sex-change operation in December and believe they could be doing their first woman to man surgery within a year.

The surgeries are being performed by Dr. Donald Fuerst, a Urologist, and Dr. Michael G. Parker, a plastic surgeon who performed sex-change operations during his residency at Cleveland Clinic in the 1980's.

Cleveland Clinic no longer performs the surgeries, a spokeswoman said. The surgery is also not available at Metro Health Medical Center.

Fuerst said he and Parker teamed up because the surgeries are in great demand and are not very difficult to perform. He said once word got out that Akron City Was scheduling the operations, patients "literally started coming out of the woodwork."

The first patient to undergo surgery at Akron City was Kisha Nunley, a twenty six year old Akron hair stylist. Fuerst said Nunley has been a patient of his for several years. He castrated Nunley about five years ago.

Fuerst there is a network of transexuals who wish to have surgery done, but either cannot afford it or cannot find a hospital allowing the surgery. In Cleveland, a support group of transexuals has nearly 170 members, he said.

Fuerst said he and Parker charge a flat rate of 4,000 dollars, which must be paid in cash up front. The three hour surgery is not covered by insurance, although most insurance carriers will cover the hospitalization for the week to ten days stay after the operation.

Fuerst said the fee for surgery is one third to one forth of that charged by other hospitals.

"It really isn't all that much work. In good conscience, I cannot look in the mirror and charge more," Fuerst said.

Fuerst also has privileges at Akron General Medical Center and Saint Thomas Medical Center, but doesn't perform the surgery at either hospital.

"I think Saint Thomas would roll over in the grave," he said.

Fuerst attributes the surge in interest in gender reassignment surgery to news stories about other transexuals, like the English model Tula, who was featured in a nude pictorial in the September 1991 issue of Playboy.

Tula appeared as on of the Bond Girls with Roger Moore in the 1981 James Bond movie "For Yoyr Eyes Only." Fuerst said another prominent transexual is former tennis pro Renee Richards.

Fuerst said most of his patients are already undergoing hormone therapy and have completed other stages of thier sexual transformation, like having breast augmentation and castration. For a patient to be considered for the final surgery stage, she must have lived as the opposite sex at least two years and had a psycholological profile completed, as well as extensive counseling.

The majority of transexuals wishing to have surgery are men who identify with the female sex.

Dr. Howard Gottesman, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Case Western Reserve University, said the act of dressing like a woman is not done for sexual arousal, as with a transvestite, but rather because there is an identity problem.

"They suffer terribly by being

in this situation and not having the right kind of body," Gottesman said.

"Reassignment surgery," Gottesman said, allows the person to fully assume the life of the oppisite sex, including sexual functions.

Furest said many of his patients would not be considered attactive as women.

"Unfortunately, most of them don't look like the model in the Playboy spread. Kisha is probably one of the more attactive ones," he said. "There are some that aren't good looking as a male or a female.

From Our Readers

Ladies —

This first year of Cross-Port has flown! Cathy, Elaine and Joyce — thanks to you and the many unnamed folk who keep the organization intact.

I'm still "in the closet" when the kids are about. I have to take days off from work when I know they'll be at school to "be myself" around the house. I don't think the kids would handle my cross-dressing. Perhaps when they are adults... One of these years I'll venture to the Oregon District doings. In the meantime, I'll keep reading.

Love to all — Bonnie

The Oregon District is fun, but you should try to get to a meeting

too. Conspire with your spouse to tell the kids you are going "out of town" to visit a friend or on business. In actuality, get a room at one of the hotels near Christopher's where you can change and spend the night. If a weeknight won't work, maybe a trip one Saturday to Columbus to a Crystal Club meeting can be accomplished in the same fashion. Take care.

— Eds.

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