

Renaissance News



Volume 4, No. 8

Vision - Integrity - Quality

August 1990

Mayor's commission seats member

The Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Sexual Minorities announced the appointment of nine new members from the sexual minority community. The new commissioners were appointed by Mayor W. Wilson Goode on June 5, 1990.

Among the new commissioners seated was Paula Sinclair, a founding member of Renaissance and Director of Outreach for the national board of directors.

Sinclair had been a member of the Transgender Issues Workgroup sponsored by the commission.

"The commission strives to be representative of the diversity in the sexual minority community at large," stated Peg Conway, Executive Director of the commission. She went on, "With the appointment of these community members, the commission is becoming even more diverse and inclusive."

Couples click in social setting

The office area was relatively quiet; the radio could be heard above the buzz of conversation. Quite a contrast to the regular Renaissance meetings held at The Woods, this was the first Sunday Social.

Six couples met on June 24 at 3:00 pm to share snacks, beverages and conversation in a social setting. All the males in attendance were transvestites, but not crossdressed.

Conversations ranged from opera, to wine selections, to sports cars.

The group adjourned to *Binni & Flynn's* restaurant for dinner and more chit chat. The group broke up around 9:00 pm.

There will not be a social in August. They will resume in September on the ninth, and continue on the second Sunday of each month.

See you at the next one?

Senior editor to retire from newsletter

JoAnn Roberts, one of the senior editors of the *Renaissance News* announced at the last board meeting that she intends to retire from that position in December this year.

Roberts, who has been editor since the newsletter started four years ago this month, cited an increasing work load in other areas of her life as reason for the move.

"The editor's role is an important one," says Roberts, "the newsletter is the 'public' face of the group. An editor can be a major influence in this community simply by the words

she chooses to print."

Roberts has been ably assisted in the newsletter production each month by co-editor Paula Sinclair. Sinclair declined the top position but will continue as assistant.

The board reluctantly accepted Roberts decision and has begun a search for a replacement editor.

Anyone with desktop publishing experience and equipment who may be interested in the position should send a few examples of their work to Roberts at the main office. The new editor will take over in January '91.

Convention logo unveiled

The Renaissance national board of directors has selected a logo to publicize the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) 1993 *Coming Together* Convention (see logo below).

The design has been sent to IFGE headquarters for approval by the convention chairman, Merissa S. Lynn. IFGE approved Renaissance as the host and Philadelphia as the site of the 1993 convention in early May of this year.

The board appointed Alison Laing as IFGE liason for host activities. The host organization, has a number of responsibilities:

- Coordinating outside activities — Dinner parties, receptions, shopping trips, tours, river cruise, etc.
- Logistics — Maps, transportation information, where to go and how to get there.
- Local Publicity — Press releases, media contacts.
- Local Services — Florists, beauticians, DJ, Caterer, etc.
- Go-fers — workers for registration, workshops, etc.



Proposed Convention Logo

Chapter information

New Jersey

South Jersey: Kelly Harris, chapter leader. Write Renaissance SJ, c/o P. O. Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc. 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 641-3782.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia area: Angela Gardner, chapter leader. Write Renaissance PHL, Box AD, Bensalem, PA 19020. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, Pa. Summer hours: starts at 9:00 p.m. Call (215) 946-8887.

Pennsylvania

Reading: Susan Marshall, chapter leader Write Renaissance RDG, Box 14421, Reading, PA 19607. Meets twice a month. There is a dinner-social held at THIS IS IT, 801 Walnut St., Reading, second Wednesday of the month and a membership meeting on the second Saturday. Call (215) 376-8886.

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

National information

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And, don't forget about...

• Background Papers are available for \$1 each plus \$.25 postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing, 2-Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing, 3-PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others, 4-The Matter of Children, 5-An Annotated Bibliography, 6-Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View, 7-What Is Renaissance?, and 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics. A

paper on transsexualism is in work.

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

• The Pen Pal Project. If you are willing to write letters to pen pals, please let Alison know. Write to the office, c/o Dept. PP.

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

Renaissance News

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

Senior Editors:

JoAnn Roberts

Paula Jordan Sinclair

Contributing Editors:

JoAnn Altman Stringer

Alison Laing

Administrative Assistants:

Beth & Rachel M.

Design & Layout:

Creative Design Services

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

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

Events Calendar

August

4th Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
4th Ren LSV Chapter
11th Ren. Reading Chapter
18th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter

September

1st Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
1st Ren LSV Chapter
8th Ren. Reading Chapter
9th Sunday Social @ Woods
15th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter
20-23 CDS Pocono Weekend

October

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

S JoAnn Altman Stringer **SURVIVAL**™

DEALING WITH CHILDREN

For many transsexuals family the problems become a major issue in their daily lives, more specifically the issue of children. There are no textbooks and no guidelines to tell us how to handle children. What do you say and when do you tell them?

This assumes, of course, that a M-t-F transsexual is married. Certainly, there are many who aren't, but, from my experience, a large majority going into transition are either married or have been previously married and most have children. Many times a transsexual will start transition after only a few years of marriage while the children are still young - 10 years old or less. This is where how to tell the children become of primary importance.

These early years are, if we are to believe the milk association commercials, the formative years where kids learn most of their values and basic information about life. It is during these years they learn, or start to learn, who and what they are. Much of their direction comes from the role models of mother and father. As adults, we look back and see that we got this trait or that trait from mom or dad. Little boys, naturally, look to their fathers for self-identity direction and little girls look to their mothers. The question arises of how does a transsexual father affect the identity of a young child? As the child looks to the parent for direction and guidance the feedback from a transsexual parent may be very confusing.

To a child, life is black or white, right or wrong, boy or girl. Their first impression of you is as their "Father" and they apply all the trappings that go with that label. They instinctively measure you against other kid's fathers.

How does this perception change if they see their father image adorned as a female? Can it affect them permanently?

Some answers can be found in the cues taken from a partner as they assimilate the changes going on in their transsexual spouse. The TS best be ready for the firestorm with good answers for the hard questions. What they are doing with their life affects the lives of those closest to them and that is a responsibility that must be shouldered.

Much of the concern with children, I believe, is a false perception. There really isn't a lot of data to draw upon from the professional's viewpoint. Much of their fears are perceived, some rightfully, some wrongfully.

So, how will a child react? Even the best child psychologists have no pat answer. Some would say that exposure to a transsexual parent does not provide the proper role-model foundation for preadolescent children. Other professionals would say that kids adapt to almost any situation and seeing their father transformed into "Aunt Jane" over a period of years would not put them into needless emotional strain.

One thing probably all would agree upon is it really depends on the personality of the child(ren) involved. If a 7 year old child is not set into who they are, and has a meek personality, indeed the shock of seeing a parent transformed into the opposite sex may be too much for the child to handle. But if the same child is very outgoing, aggressive, with a very strong personality, then s/he most likely could accept the inevitable change.

How does a parent come out and tell a young child what is about to happen? Part of the answer lies in what will be happening with the parental structure. Are the parents separating or divorcing due to the gender issue or other non-gender related matters? If separating, will the "father" have visitation rights?

Here's my story. You judge if it was appropriate.

From the time my twins were born, I was not a good "father" image. Most of my actions were guided by what I call the "frustrated mother" syndrome — I would rather have been their mother than father. Too, my children grew up seeing me in various forms of female/androgynous dress. When the Army requested I resign my commission, it was time to make the final transition and I informed my spouse of my plans for a divorce. I felt it was necessary to spare the children inordinate role variances. I moved out of the house when the kids were away with relatives and they were told of my departure when they returned. I assured them I would still be a parent even though I wasn't in the house, what I was doing was not their fault, and I still loved them.

During the ensuing months I went through transition, saw the kids sporadically, and they realized I would never be their father again. They had some problems for a couple of years due to the emotional upheaval of the divorce — but not from the gender issues. I counseled a family with three teenage daughters awhile back in which the post operative TS parent (father) was still present. All the children seemed well adjusted, as far as the transsexual parent was concerned.

The important thing to remember is that each situation is as individual as snowflakes on the mountain top. The transsexual parent, male or female, must be cognizant of the feelings and emotional stability of the family concerned. All too often the TS sees the world through a tubular looking glass thinking their problem is all that is important. The lives of those kids, and likely the spouse, will be changed forever, better or worse depending on how you handle the situation.

Go slowly, be considerate, and think about how others are being affected by your gender confusion.

Tran Music...from backpage

for her and the last I heard she was getting support from a TS self-help group. But, she did cut some records in the U.K. before the callous ignorance of the West destroyed her.

You all know (don't you?) that lovely Amanda Lear, formerly Peki de Oslo, formerly Alain Tapp, is a TS. Her records are still available on order in the U.K. Her husky European voice is sexy and soothing.

A more raunchy TS (US) is Jayne (Wayne) County, who made her name in the cult movie *Jubilee*, co-starring Toyah and Adam Ant. Jayne is a cross between Punk and Rock with a large following in London. Her most specific "gender" tracks are *Man Enough to be a Woman* and a cover of *Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl?* Her post-op, live concert album includes such "goodies" as *Creamed in My Jeans* and *Fucked by the Devil*. The album is on the Safari label and is available

off the rack or by order here.

Synthesizer music brings to mind any album by Wendy (Walter) Carlos, *Switched On Bach* being her most well known. Walter became Wendy just before cutting (no pun intended) the score for Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*.

Many bands have cut at least one Tran track: The Who's *I'm a Boy*, The Kinks *Lola* and Aerosmith's *Dude Looks Like a Lady*.

There is one song of late that I feel is significant, *Secret Garden* from the album *Rage* by T'Pau. *Rage* was T'Pau's second album and it took a dive. Carol Dekker of T'Pau discussed her early life as a barmaid, a cross between a tomboy and nympho, over compensating, she admits, for a difficult identity crisis. She told the press that she often feels she wants to be a man and that her gender identity is most vulnerable when she is singing on stage.

Dekker told the press that *Secret Garden* was inspired by a "radio talk show with a transvestite" that she'd heard. It's possible that the press used TV instead of TS since the lyrics suggest a surgical change, although they could suggest a spiritual/mental change just as easily.

In the video for *Secret Garden*, Dekker is dancing and striding with defiance through a landscaped maze, overturning wheelbarrows, pulling people's hats over their eyes, making a statement of personal freedom, regardless of others bigotry.

She sings, "You'll never know how it feels not to be one thing or the other. If there was a world without hypocrisy, you never know, I might just be something you need."

So, *Secret Garden* has been adopted (by me) as the official, international anthem of the Gender Transient movement. And... It's easy to dance to. I give it a 99.



Therése Aigner
32 A South Main St.
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Therése Aigner
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THE **NEWSQUEEN**™ *Paula Jordan Sinclair*

At the risk of causing a schism within the ranks of this publication, the truth must be told. The author of this column did not exactly decline the honor of succeeding JoAnn Roberts as the *senior* senior editor; she accepted but with small conditions that others found unacceptable. Those conditions? Expanding this column to at least six pages and adding a full-page photo of the writer. After all, we don't get paid.



And speaking of ego, here is the case of Mona Dez of Dayton, a hopeful during the Miss Ohio U.S.A. At-Large pageant held recently in Kettering, Ohio. Mona was named the mere second runner-up, and reacted by throwing glasses, pitching a hissy fit, and questioning the abilities of the judges, who included Carmella Marcella Garcia, Miss Gay U.S.A. At-Large 1989. Behavior like that can be a particular problem on the At-Large pageant circuit because contestants must weigh at least 200 pounds.

Dez was also named Miss Congeniality. Go figure.

The title was won by Jena Jones of Indianapolis, a well-known entertainer in the Hoosier state.



The At-Large pageants are a relatively new but not unwelcome feature in the female impersonator beauty queen game. As pageant impresaria Kitti Daniels explains, "Just as you see speciality shops for big and tall girls, the at-large pageant was designed with the larger queen in mind. If you stood 5'5", 125-pound Cezanne (Miss Gay U.S.A. 1990) next to an At-Large hopeful, you will see a difference. While both may be beautiful and talented, there is really no comparison or competition."

The girls who compete are quite properly not ashamed of their stature. Witness some of the names they compete under: Eartha Quake,

third runner-up for Miss Ohio U.S.A. At-Large, and Dieta Pepsi, Miss Illinois At-Large.



Alas, despite their involvement in beauty pageants, there is still one area where large queens have yet to make their mark, so-called she-male videos. But there may be hope.

John Summers, producer of adult movies for two decades, was recently in Chicago where he met some of the most beautiful women he ever saw. They turned out to be she-males. Summers was so smitten by them that he is planning on making his first she-male film, called *Ladies First*. Now he needs starlets who have breasts plus their original male equipment.

Audition photos — both clothed and unclothed — can be sent to Associated Video Groups, Suite 202, Los Angeles, CA 90069. (To you hopeful queens who have your photos returned by the Postal Service because of an insufficient address, we apologize, but this is the only address we have.)



Were it not for one small detail, Steve McMahan, 24, could be John Summers next she-male star. He has breasts (that even give milk!) and his original equipment works well enough to impregnate his wife Sheila. The only problem is that Steve, a factory worker from Coalville, England, displays all of the signs of being pregnant — swollen belly, backaches, food cravings and morning sickness.

According to Dr. James Drife, Steve's symptoms are all psychologically rooted, possibly prompted by Sheila's miscarriage only a few months before becoming pregnant again. Dr. Drife said that Steve's sympathetic pregnancy may have been caused by excitement or worry.

"It was a bit of a shock at first," Steve said. "I was worried, but now I can see the funny side. Sometimes

I notice that my breasts have leaked and there are wet spots on my T-shirts. But I'm not ashamed of it."



For a second transgender mystery, remember the story a couple of months ago about Elizabeth Taylor's supposedly 23-year-old boyfriend named Julian Lee Hobbs who stayed by her bedside during part of her recent hospitalization in Los Angeles? The story turned out to be a hoax, and Hobbs denied having any part in it.

But *The Los Angeles Times* said it had received many calls from Hobbs in recent years in an attempt to get his name in the paper. A policeman, who arrested Hobbs for calling in a fake bomb scare, said Hobbs often used female aliases. The story of the reported Taylor-Hobbs romance was called into the media by someone who was — or who pretended to be — female.



Here is a third transgender mystery, this time in West Hollywood, Calif. Is Elizabeth Michael, a candidate for the Republican nomination for the 45th State Assembly District, a woman, a transsexual or a transvestite? Bob Davis, her GOP opponent, and Tom Larkin, co-chair of the Lesbian and Gay Republican Task Force, both claim that Michael is, or at least was, a man. Larkin charges that Michael "was born Alan Michael, later becoming Allania Elizabeth Michael and finally Elizabeth Michael." He also said that in the mid-1980's, Michael attended a local synagogue in drag. He's been quoted as calling the candidate "a six-foot, four-inch transvestite."

"Basically, we're 'outing' her," Davis said, using the term that describes the practice of forcing gays and lesbians out of the closet. "She's a person who is definitely trying to harm gay people, who's got this (gender) condition and certainly took

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NewsQueen...

advantage of the right to do with one's body as one wishes."

Michael has refused to respond directly to the charges from Davis and Larkin. But she did say that she was sorry about the "gender-bashing attack" that is an attempt "to make sexuality an issue." She added that she supported "bread and butter" gay rights issues.



Outing isn't a problem for Charles McGuire of Houston. The owner of a construction company made his transgendered lifestyle public several years ago when he began living as a woman and took to using the first name Kathryn. He was thrust further into the public eye when his construction company became the target of a federal probe into alleged price fixing. And as if that wasn't enough publicity, McGuire last year made an unsuccessful bid for the Houston City Council. He also is featured regularly in the Houston

society columns as Kathryn.

McGuire was again in the papers last month regarding the closing of one of Houston's leading department stores, Sakowitz, where he reportedly spent \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year on frocks, including the \$3,000 gown he wore to one of George Bush's presidential inaugural balls.

Capturing the moral of the column that worry doesn't pay, McGuire was quoted, "I could worry because I am under investigation and because Sakowitz is gone, but what good would it do? I prefer to be concerned with those things I can fix, like this fingernail I've broken. Doesn't it look terrible?"



We're glad that Kathryn McGuire fits in so well in Houston, but we shouldn't forget that not all cities are so hospitable to transgendered people — Chicago for example. Olivia St. John, a man who describes himself as and often dresses as a woman, has become the first person indicted under an Illinois law that

makes it a crime to transmit the AIDS virus.

St. John allegedly bit one Chicago police officer and scratched another while being held on suspicion of vandalizing a car. According to the police report, when St. John attacked the officers she shouted "I have AIDS and now you have it too!" St. John's attorney claims that his client had never been tested for the disease before, and could not have known if she had AIDS.

The American Civil Liberties Union is watching St. John's cases closely. The rights organization believes that the AIDS transmission law is unconstitutional.



If your local paper prints an unfriendly story about crossdressing activities, kindly send it to Miss Sinclair at the Renaissance office. Please note the name and date of publication. Miss Sinclair also welcomes friendly stories like that sent in from Houston by René Fenner.



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Lower Susquehanna News

Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Renaissance Education Association, Inc.

Volume 2, No. 6 - Elsa Larson, Editor, P O Box 7412, York PA 17404 - August 1990

Chapter Meetings

LSV meets the first Saturday of each month at Classic Designs Hair Care Center, 250 S 15th St, Camp Hill.

Doors open 9:00 p.m. Program 10:00.

Directions: I-83 to Exit 22-Lemoyne, right at light onto Third St. (from I-83 N, you can only turn right), at second traffic light on Third St., turn left on Market St. (Hardees), bear left onto State St (Hess gas) and go about a mile to Classic Designs, on the right just past the West Shore Plaza and a NAPA auto parts store. Use the parking lot on the west end of the building. Enter door facing the parking lot.

LSV Phone: (717) 767-4095

Our answering machine has a special message segment with late-breaking news and events that can be accessed from a tone phone. To talk to a human being, please leave a name and phone number or call back most evenings or weekends.

Harrisburg callers may call Brenda on weeknight evenings at (717) 766-8527 for chapter information and carpools to King of Prussia meetings.

Call Heather at (717) 249-5841 for meeting and events information.

Classic Designs

250 S. 15th St., Camp Hill

offers full hair, wig, cosmetic and electrolysis services to our community. Private areas available for all services. Phone (717) 761-2284 or (717) 761-2285. Treva specializes in wig styling. For other salon services ask for Vicky. Phone (717) 763-8254 for Tracy Evens, Electrologist.

Chapter News

July 7, LSV meeting attendance continues to set records each month. For our regular meeting, we had a total of 29 people of whom 23 were LSV members or paying guests. Heather's S.O., Gypsy, got everyone up to learn some new dance steps. After the meeting, most went to the New Villa Inn. Some then visited the Sheraton Harrisburg-West to a less-than-welcome reception. A resolution is still being sought and will be reported here.

July 22, Elsa and Richelle staffed the Renaissance stand at Unity Festival 90 at Ski Roundtop. Approximately 1300 people turned out for an afternoon of live entertainment, sun, fun, fellowship and networking. We met the leadership of several central PA gay, lesbian & AIDS information and support groups. Two groups requested speakers from LSV. An example of the fun was "Dunk a Drag" presented by Lily & Co. Mid-afternoon, some public-spirited lesbians offered their services for "Dunk a Dyke" for an hour.

Everyone else must have been at Heather's for an afternoon party for Gypsy's birthday. Guests included lots of LSV members and Constance Slater of Constance Enterprises.

July 23, Dawn and Carol visited The Hippo in Baltimore for the Miss Mid-Atlantic pageant.

Susquehanna Calendar

- Saturday, August 4, regular LSV meeting. Directions at left.
- Saturday, August 18, Greater Phila chapter meeting in K o P. Contact Brenda for carpool info.
- Saturday, August 25, First Annual LSV Luau at Sheraton Harrisburg-West. See information below.
- Saturday, September 1, regular LSV meeting. Congrats to Brenda and Michelle who graciously declined our offers to be groomsmen.
- Sunday-Monday, September 23 & 24, Miiss Universe At Large pageant at The Hippo for FIs over 200 pounds.

LSV Chapter of Renaissance

Presents First Annual Hawaiian Luau

Saturday, August 25, 1990

at Sheraton Harrisburg-West

8:00 p.m. Cocktails (cash bar)

9:00 p.m. Hawaiian Feast

Entertainment by:

Morgan as Ann Margaret

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LSV Renaissance Hawaiian Luau Reservation Form

\$25 by August 10 (\$30 after Aug 10) payable to: LSV-Renaissance

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N *from the Renaissance* **NOTEBOOK**

TELLING THE CHILDREN:

A Transsexual's Commentary
by Paula Keiser

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In an attempt to lead "normal" lives, many transsexuals marry and have children. But because this normalcy cannot "cure" transsexualism, the continuing need to reconcile their body image with their gender identity remains with them and must be acted upon. It is often easier for a transsexual parent to decide that he or she must live in accord with their gender identity than it is to decide if or how to tell the children. Here, a male-to-female transsexual shares some thoughts on this difficult process of revelation.

One of the biggest problems faced by parents with unusual gender orientations is telling their children about their transgendered condition. The problem sometimes produces even more concern than we harbor when we decide to tell a spouse. "Will I warp their little minds? Will I cause them psychological problems? Will they tell the whole neighborhood? Will they understand? Will they hate me? Will the court take them away?" All these fears and questions are valid. The answer is found in a question that can only be answered privately; "How do I feel about myself?"

A common plan for making this important disclosure is to wait until the children are older and are, presumably, better able to reason and understand. But it is not a good idea to wait until children are just entering adolescence. At about this time peer approval emerges as a greater influence than parental teaching. The best ages for children to accept this information non-judgmentally seems to be when they are between 7 and 11.

From birth to adolescence, chil-

dren learn from many sources; parents, relatives, school, and peers. But they look to their parents for guidance in evaluating all this input. Before age 7 or so, depending upon the child, their discernment in evaluating their authority figures is sometimes faulty. And when adolescence begins, children seem to automatically question everything their parents tell them. It is during this middle period, then, that children are best able to handle very personal and very significant changes in their lives.

I have always taught my children that people of different ethnic origin, religions, and sexual preferences are just as valid as human beings as they, themselves, are. They seem to have learned this well. As a transsexual, however, I always avoided initiating conversation on this specific topic. The consequences of that aversion are mixed.

A "CASE STUDY"

I have two children, a boy, now (then) age 13, and a girl, now age 9. About a year ago, and after much anguish, I told them both of my situation. Since then the woman to whom I was married decided to leave. We agreed that the children should decide for themselves with which of us they wanted to live. Initially, both children decided to go with their mother and to live with grandparents. However, after a three-month separation, my daughter decided to return to me. My son still lives with his mother.

My daughter continues to support me as she did through my transition to a female role. Her friends also accept me, even the ones who "knew me when..." My son still communicates with me, but has expressed reservations about his ability to handle his relationship with his peers were my situation to come to their attention. Adolescent peer values permeate his judgment, while my daughter and her peers

still look at me as an adult with the authority to guide their thinking.

My daughter accepts. My son, to a degree, rejects. She has built a base of good friends who know her "Aunt" was once her Dad. She will carry these friends through her development, and they, too, will benefit from their open exposure to an unusual situation. My son is afraid of the social consequences of revealing my status. From his standpoint, his fear is probably justified.

Are my children typical? I don't know. They're individuals. My spouse and I taught them to think for themselves. I think we succeeded to a large degree.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED?

Are there lessons here? Do little girls accept females who formerly were males better than little boys? Do children accept unusual situations (by adult standards) better than adolescents? I don't know. All that I can attest is that my children reacted as I described.

It is my opinion that telling the children is just as important as telling your spouse. If one is to have any hope at all of preserving the family unit, be you transvestite or transsexual, then the family must be treated as a unit when dealing with this condition. Your gender orientation is a fact. Hiding it from the children only postpones the trauma of dealing with it outside yourself. Eventually, they will find out. Meanwhile, their value system is being established with decreasing credibility being given your input. Waiting too long can only hurt more.

How do you feel about yourself? Are you comfortable with your gender identity? If not, see a counselor and get comfortable. To do the least damage to your children, you absolutely must be able to approach them from a position of confident self-esteem. If you love yourself, they'll love you. If you tell them in tears

continued on page 9

Burn Your Bra!

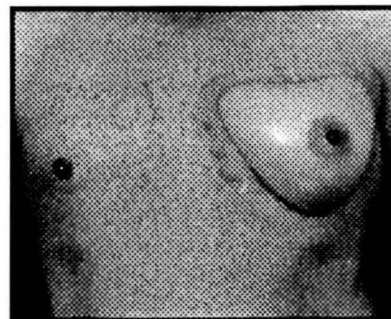
We're not making fun of the feminists, but they do have a point about the restrictions of wearing a bra. Now, you can throw away your bra, if you like, because you won't need it with our new *Illusion* breastforms.

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THE DIARY OF QUENTIN CRISP

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For the week ending April 5, 1990

Having met Mr. [Charles] Pierce disguised as himself on Oscar night, I went, at the odd time of four o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, to The Ballroom on West 28th Street, to see him as several other people.

Mr. Pierce was in exuberant form, changing his costumes and wigs at lightning speed in order to appear as Miss Bankhead, Miss West, Miss Davis, and an assortment of actresses grouped under the heading of Turbaned Ladies. Visually, his impersonations are wonderfully accurate. He can recall gestures that I had quite forgotten. Throughout these frantic changes, he maintained a boisterous rapport with his audience, mostly men of middle age or worse, all of whom seemed to know one another. It was quite a party, slightly bawdy, very campy, and, to my delight, totally free of malice—at least toward the living.

Inevitably, now that actresses have decided to become people, his subjects are dead, and, as he himself remarked, in the case of Miss Bankhead, possibly forgotten. One of the observations made by Miss Davis when she was asked her opinion of our younger actresses, was, "What is there to imitate?"

Female impersonation is on the way out, but drag shows are flourishing as never before. They have always formed a part of vaudeville, but in recent years their nature has

changed a great deal. They used to be flagrantly self-glorifying acts. The artistes who performed them spent thousands of dollars on backless beaded dresses, with trains that were still making their entrance when the wearers were center stage. Whether the audiences enjoyed these spectacles of bizarre extravagance was beside the point; the performers were having a ball.

One cannot help wondering why there were so very few turns in which women appeared as men. I can recall only one, a Miss Shields, who regularly arrived on stage in white tie and tails and always sang, "I'm Burlington Bertie." Like Miss Dietrich in *The Cafe of Seven Sinners*, most actresses, if they donned men's attire, did so to enhance their rather than conceal their gender. This suggests that there are a lot of men in the world who, at least some of the time, wish they were women, but very few women would like to be men except in the sense that they long to throw off the chains that, in that far-off time, bound them to a life of domesticity and presumed inferiority. This notion is reinforced by those embarrassing television programs on which several middle-aged men are willing—nay, eager—to appear in flowery frocks and to answer questions from inquisitive interviewers. So far I have never seen ladies in lounge suits being interrogated by Miss Winfrey. (If she can find them, she will.)

Is this imbalance occurring only because a woman's attire tends to be softer, more colorful than a man's

or is femininity a more blessed state than masculinity? Is being a man, in spite of the current parade of machismo, a terrible burden?

Modern drag shows are quite different from their predecessors. Self-adoration is out; self-denigration is in. Genuine mimics still wear the clothes that remind their audiences of the personages they are impersonating, but if a performer is only representing women as a species, he quite often looks deliberately awful and embodies them at their worst—vain and bitchy. Drag artists have tended to make verbal abuse a language as universal as Esperanto. When not acting out their hostile attitude toward women, they insult their audiences. I find this objectionable, but I am aware that other people do not. I once attended a drag show at a London public house during which a performer said to a gentlemen sitting in the front row of an audience, "You've been here before? And you sat where I could see you? You must be mad."

Every large town in England now has its resident drag queen. The same clientele frequents the place as was there in days of old. The average working class Midlander loves these shows, but that doesn't mean that acceptance of homosexuality is there to stay. Because, in Britain, sexual behavior is so secret, talk about sex is incessant—not in the form of serious discussion, but in bawdy jokes. To the English, fornication is a way of taking revenge on your partner.

Notebook...from page 7

and shame, you'll scare the Hell out of them! Remember, you are the authority figure they respect. If you are ashamed of yourself, they will be ashamed of you too. If you believe that gender dysphoria is a condition that produces guilt, you will communicate that to them. If you know

that gender dysphoria is normal for some people, and that you are one of those people, you will communicate to them an acceptance of the unusual. How you feel about yourself can influence children of this generation, the next generation, and the next, and the next....

Speaking from my own experience, tell the children at as young an age as possible and from a position of confidence. Children are wonderfully resilient. Tell them as soon as you can. I did, and I'm not at all sorry.

From around the TV/TS community NATIONAL GENDER NEWS™

PASADENA, CALIF. — Everyone wants to be a publisher, Part I...

But no one wants to do the work. The all new (?) *TV/TS Journal* is a case in point. This 40-page publication, edited by **Bobbi Starr**, is more flash than substance. Out of the 40 pages, we counted only seven of editorial content. The majority of the space was taken up by commercial and personal ads.

The front cover touts a "complete and updated list..." of support groups. Well kids, Starr photocopied the listings right out of *TV/TS Tapestry*, (I.F.G.E.), without credit, but she also missed about six pages of listings, including this organization. Thank God for small favors.

Elsewhere in the "magazine" is a photocopy of the front page from *Passages*, the newsletter of **The Gathering**, a New York-based transsexual support group. Based on its content, we doubt **The Gathering** supports this publication.

We disdain so-called "editors" who "borrow" from other sources without permission and attribution.

NGN

SAN JOSE, CALIF. — Everyone wants to be a publisher, Part II...

A real rag-mag crossed our desk

this last month: *TV-Epic*. Now, our *Funk & Wagnalls* defines "epic" as "a poetic composition centered on a series of great achievements, heroic, majestic..."

Uhhmm, someone seems to have missed the boat here. This magazine is none of the above. In fact, it is nothing more than a series of personal ads, mostly from people in search of partners for a variety of sexual gratifications.

It has always amused and puzzled us why these people don't simply write to each other. Surely, all of these ads can't be fake, some of them must be for real. Aren't they?

NGN

BURBANK, CALIF. — Everyone wants to be a publisher, Part III...

Ahhh, finally, a legitimate (our opinion) enterprise. Many of you have seen the *International TV Shopping Guide*, published by **Danielle and John Moran Photo-Graphix**. Danielle is working on the '91 edition of the Guide and has also announced a new quarterly publication *Crossdresser's Quarterly*. Clever title Danielle.

Danielle is well known to many in our community, having written many, many articles over the years

for a variety of magazines. She was most recently featured in *LadyLike* magazine (April '90).

Danielle has positioned *CQ* as a service publication for the community. Like several others currently in print, it will not contain any pornographic or sexually explicit material. Bravo!

Anyone interested in getting a copy of the shopping guide or the premiere issue of *CQ* should write to **John Moran Photo-Graphix**, P.O. Box 7217, Burbank, CA 91510-7217.

NGN

TORONTO, ONT. — Everyone wants to be a publisher, Part IV...

While we're at it, let us mention another publication that is growing in style and circulation, *The Transie Times*, published and edited by **Jennifer Graham**.

This little magazine gets better with each issue we see. If you're in Toronto, you simply must pick up a copy of T.T.T. to find out what is happening in this town.

If the ads are to be believed, we have it on good authority they can, Toronto could well be TV heaven. Check it out. T.T.T. is published 12 times a year for \$36 (Canadian).

continued next page



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NATIONAL GENDER NEWS™

From around the TV/TS community

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NGN

TORONTO, ONT. — The "Gender Worker Award" is presented for "long term dedication and outstanding service to the TS and/or TV community."

The awards are sponsored by Gender Worker and Rupert Raj-Gauthier, a female to male transsexual who is now counseling those with gender conflicts.

Among the 1990 awardees is our own JoAnn Roberts; in such good company as Louis Sullivan (F₂M), Phoebe Smith (*The Transsexual Voice*), Sister Mary Elizabeth (J2CP), Jude Patton (J2CP), Stephen Parent, Susan Huxford, Judy Cousins, Aridane Kane (Outreach Institute), Merissa Sherrill Lynn (I.F.G.E.), Sheila Kirk (TransPitt), and Roger Peo (Androgyny Unlimited).

NGN

WOODLAND HILLS, CALIF. — Tri-Ess seems to be very hard at work rebuilding its image lately. We reported last month that the Powder Puffs of Orange County were being recruited as a chapter.

This month we can report that Kymberleigh Richards, who led the Tri-Ess Delta Chi chapter in revolt, has returned to the fold.

Richards had a "difference of opinion" with Tri-Ess doyenne Virginia Prince (a very easy thing to have with Prince) over location of Delta Chi. The result was the conversion to The Valley Girls.

Now, Tri-Ess Executive Director, Carol Beecroft, is trying to heal that rift. Beecroft offered Richards a seat on the Tri-Ess board of directors. Richards has accepted.

NGN

FARMINGTON, NEW MEX. — Developments at the Fiesta chapter of Tri-Ess here are most significant.

Upon the resignation of chapter President, Donna Mobley, the

matle of leadership fell to the shoulders of Shirley Kay.

What's so significant about that you ask? Kay is the spouse (GG) of a Fiesta member and also a member of the national Tri-Ess board.

Mobley, who moved to Texas for career reasons, did not make the transition easy for Kay. Both the vice-president and secretary resigned as Kay took office, leaving her to run the chapter alone. Two new officers have subsequently been elected to fill the slate.

We met Kay in Texas and again in Boston. She's tough, capable and fair minded. Good luck, Shirl.

NGN

KANSAS CITY, MO. — "Goin' to Kansas City. Kansas City here I come. They got some crazy little women there..."

Do ya think Wilbur Harrison knew about Crossdressers And Friends' Fall Harvest '90 Weekend and Moon Shadow Ball?

Here is yet another opportunity for an extended weekend "en femme." From Thursday, Nov. 1, to Sunday, Nov. 4, C.A.F. has put together a group of activities to benefit everyone from the neophyte TV, to the experienced TV, the proto-TS, and their partners.

The Moon Shadow Ball, a 13-year tradition in this city, is an entertainment and costume extravaganza. The ball features a costume and beauty contest for female impersonators with prizes totaling \$2,400. The ball is Sunday night.

The registration fee (\$100) includes eight meals plus activities on Saturday and Sunday. The Moon Shadow Ball registration is \$20 extra as are special workshops and your room accommodations. Write to: CAF, Box 4092, Overland Park, KS 66204. Register by Oct. 1.

NGN

WOBURN, MASS. — Founder and long-time member of the board of directors of the Tiffany Club of

New England, Merissa Sherrill Lynn has resigned.

Lynn started the Tiffany Club 13 years ago after a break with another group called the Cherrystones.

In a letter to the board, Lynn said, "...it's not Tiffany that's having the difficulty, it's me. It is time for me to stop being Tiffany's mother, and become just another... member." Lynn also cited the enormous amount of time she expends for I.F.G.E.

NGN

HARRISBURG, PA. — The Lower Susquehanna Valley chapter of Renaissance is about to celebrate its first anniversary. Outgoing leader Elsa Larson and incoming leader Brenda Davidson have invited us all to join them at a luau on Saturday, Aug. 25, beginning at 8:00 PM. The location is the Sheraton Harrisburg-West just off the Pa. turnpike. The cost is \$30 per person. Call Heather at (717) 249-5841 or Brenda at (717) 766-8527.

NGN

UPPER MONTCLAIR, N.J. — Last month we gave you the early scoop on the Dressing for Pleasure Showroom set up by Constance Enterprises. We neglected to mention, at that time, the upcoming 4th Annual Dressing for Pleasure Ball.

Mistress Constance and her partner John bring together some of the most interesting people for this exotic gathering of lovers of leather, rubber, corsets and things feminine. This year, crossdressers will be treated to a special workshop just for them. A unique selection of vendors will also display their wares. Boot/leather freaks take note.

The Ball will be held Oct. 19-21 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. Registrations (\$175) received before Aug. 15 earn a hefty discount off the regular price of \$225. Contact, Constance Enterprises, Box 43277, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043 or call (201) 746-0072.

The BACKPAGE

TRAN MUSIC

MISS PAHEDRA KELLY

Prompted by TransEssex breaking in a new DJ, I thought to write a piece on transgender music. The problem is some of it's spread across the decades on obscure labels by half-known artists.

Starting in the late '60s, early '70s, there is the Great and Original Mr. Bowie, first, and for my money, the only true gender bender. One can discount such one hit wonders as Herbert Kaury (Tiny Tim).

A contemporary survivor with Bowie is Iggy Pop. His post-modern work proves more enjoyable than his acid/coke induced, slurred dirges of the past. Likewise, Lou Reed, onetime Drag Queen rocker in the Velvet Underground has emerged, clean of drugs and bullshit with a modern tribute to Andy Warhol,

Songs for Drella. (Drella was Warhol's nickname a combination of Dracula and Cinderella.)

Alice Cooper began a little later than Bowie and influenced modern Rocky Horror style Drag Rock. Watchers of MTV can witness the results. But such bands as Poison and Motely Crüe stem more from a group of original and genuine GT rockers known as the New York Dolls. Of the four Dolls, only two remain alive and well (David Johanssen and ?), the third is on skid row and the fourth is dead. NY Doll albums fetch a small fortune in second hand dealer shops now.

Of all the seventies Glam Rockers, Gary Glitter (U.K.) has emerged time and again, whereas other Brit contemporaries like Barrie Blue have failed and faded. Among the U.K. gender benders, Steve Strange

fulfilled his own prophecy and faded to grey while Boy George, Marilyn, Tasty Tim and Peter Burns, of Dead or Alive, have achieved obscurity in only a few short years. Adam Ant is currently seeing a resurgence in popularity but whether or not he survives remains to be seen.

Really obscure is Peter, a Japanese Sisterboy, who predates Boy George by ten years. Very beautiful and untraceable now, Peter's songs were sung in a good falsetto to an interesting beat. Finding one of his albums now would be a real coup.

A native of India, Loren Ring Marcell sang sixties standards. Sadly, when she arrived in the U.K., it was pointed out to her that she was born male, a detail she, in her sheltered environs, had never once realized. The shock proved too much

continued on page 4

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Fluff the Bunny - A story of differences. A great way to discuss gender issues with children: \$6.00

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