

Cross-Port Inner View

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CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230

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Next Meeting March 17 At 7:30 **CROSS-PORT BASICS**

February's meeting was held on a very frigid night but was well attended by twenty-five ladies in all including four first-timers. The business end of the meeting was minimal and everyone simply felt the spirit to drink, dance and converse. I had a great time, so there.

Speaking of great times, those who attended the convention in Chicago reported a wonderful excursion to the Windy City. Stay tuned for the raison d'être report from Heather and the mirth and mayhem news from Linda.

This month, the "Crossdresser's Pal" award goes to Lance and Deb with honorable mention going to Pat Robertson. Thanks, Pat, you're a real sport. The rest of you, keep your hands off the candidates as the field is winnowing fast.

Those of you who have not paid your dues are not reading this (they got a "pink slip" and you didn't) so I should take this opportunity to talk behind your back. But I won't, I'll just think fine thoughts of your falsies turning into porcupines at the most inopportune time. Till then, I am your most obedient, Jennifer.

THE SUNSHINE OF MY LIFE

By Heather Peerson

This article will be the most difficult one I believe I'll ever write. I want to write about a subject that many transsexuals avoid because it is too painful to address. Namely, the loss of our loved one during the transition. In my case I am speaking about my wife, who I am currently still living with and who I'll call "Sunshine".

I first met Sunshine in 1968, but we did not begin dating until January of 1970. While I did not know the true extent of my crossdressing then, I did know that I could not and would not try to live my life without it. I felt I had already lost one girl because I had told her, but I knew the risk had to be taken. On what was our first big date, I told her about my dressing. She admitted she did not understand but felt she could deal with it.

February of 1972 we were engaged just a week and a half before my father died. A week later, I was arrested for stealing clothes from a laundry room. Somehow we made it through all that and were married in October of 1972. We truly loved each other then and we still do.

We had many happy times together, but for me there was always an under riding sadness. More than once during our marriage she remarked that I had such "Sad Eyes". Even I couldn't understand why. I always dressed at home whenever I wanted. What more could I need?

Rough times hit us in 1982 when we both found ourselves out of work. I believe we found, that of all the friends and family we had we really could only depend on ourselves. I still don't know how she did it but she managed to keep us afloat even though we were going further and further into debt.

In January of 1985 I found myself in a deep depression. I needed to do something about my feelings and the dressing but didn't know what to do. I cried as I never have, as I watched the Home Box Office special "What Sex Am I?" I had to do something. I had to find others and talk to others. In June I started Cross-Port.

Through all of this Sunshine was there helping, supporting, encouraging. Always hoping that somehow we/I would be able to find the happiness that seemed there on the surface but was lacking deep within.

My search for myself became more intense. I began to take her for granted. I did and said things that hurt her and I didn't even know how much. I was all wrapped up in myself. But she stayed, and kept hoping that I would find out who and what I was. Much of the joy had already gone but she still had hope that somehow we would find it again.

Then in November of 1987 disaster struck a final blow. I realized and admitted I was a transsexual. I didn't want to be, but I was. For me suddenly everything made sense. All the discomfort, searching, and sadness began to lift. But in Sunshine's eyes I saw the last ray of hope give way to a melancholy that said "At least you'll be happy". The realization that our time together is short has made us look at each day as if one of us is dying.

I have ask myself why someone so kind, tender and loving has to be hurt so much in order for me to live my life as I was meant to live? Why should she bear the burden of my identity dilemma? Why must she lose her life (the one she expected to live) so that I can have mine? It isn't fair. No life isn't fair if it were I would not have been born like this in the first place. I have not found the answers and I'm not sure I will because I don't believe there are any.

Why must I leave? I have decisions which must be made. Staying would mean making those choices together and this one I must make alone. This new life must be right for me, not influenced by what affect it has on others, because in the end I will always have to live with me.

It is hard to lose friends that can not accept who you are so they turn away from you but to lose someone who loves you so much because it just has to be is the hardest loss of all. It is easy to start to play the hurting game in the hopes of making the lost easier. If I can just hate her I won't miss her. But I can't hate Sunshine, there is too much love in her for me.

Sunshine now has the "sad eyes" and I can hardly bare to look at them. I know I must for I must try to comfort her as she did me for so many years. So we live each day as if it were our last until the time when I can financially afford to leave. It is very much like dying, yet from this death a new creature will emerge and the real me will live for the first time. When I do I know I will feel warm and alive because I was loved by Sunshine.

Cathy and Jennifer's Night Out

By Laurie

Cathy had never gone "out" before, but the acceptance and esteem she had gained

from the Crossport group helped her to fulfill a long time desire to express this facet of her life publicly.

The good experiences with the group and a little help from her friends, that is. Cathy and I had gone shopping earlier in the week for the right clothes which was great fun in itself; partly because I get new clothes too (positive reinforcement if I ever saw it) and partly because the salesgirls are envious of my attentive husband, sometimes even commenting on how hard it is to get their boyfriends to go shopping and I just have to smile. Cathy in action has an innate sense of color and style, and I value her opinion for both our wardrobes.

We decided to go out with our new friend, from Crossport, Jennifer, who has been supportive, has a natural grace in social situations, and whose keen wit would keep our minds off beginner's nerves. We also invited our old friends, Lance and Deb, a trusted couple who are accepting and generally (do I mean genderly?) aware. Cathy went to their Halloween party one year and later in that week Lance asked me about my husband, "He does this all the time, doesn't he?" realizing by the care taken it wasn't just a "costume". So, we had a group to go.

We met at our house for talk and wine by candlelight, then off to dinner. We went to the Gondola, a small Italian restaurant in Reading. My mother-in-law recommended it for the good food (although the atmosphere is unintentionally camp--stereotypic). The five of us were seated at the same table. The restaurant was fairly empty as we enjoyed a late supper. The service was polite and responsive. By the end of the meal I felt relief of my hunger and of--I couldn't name it exactly. Perhaps that was it--the release from those nameless vague fears. Not only was everything ok, we were having a good time.

On to drinks at Checquers, a hotel bar with dance floor in the Tri-County area. It was there that it occurred to us how it looked for Lance to be out with four women, all dressed to kill. We had a chuckle over that, and again when we finally asked for the tab. Lance had gone to the restroom when the waitress came with the total. "Oh," she said, "I'll wait till he comes back" and she did! There was no containing us after that, and we made Lance bring the car around to the door as it was a cold windy night. Cathy and Jennifer enjoyed it for what it was worth, and the whole evening was worth quite a lot, as it added to the self acceptance of Cathy inside by going out in public dressed as Cathy on the outside.

CAN WE TALK!

By Heather Peerson

Well, the 1988 IF6E Convention is now pasted but certainly not forgotten. As with any activity of this size, it was not without some problems, but those problems were minor compared to the many improvements and the higher quality of most of the programs.

The guest rooms were close to the conference rooms which helped cut down on walking and allowed most talks to start on time. The sound system seemed to work better and the over all organization showed preparation. There was also a better mix of TV and TS programs as well as the general categories. It was evident that IF6E listened to and addressed many of the complaints voiced last year in the Open Forum. Many thanks on a job well done.

Merissa Sherrill Lynn spoke as the keynote speaker on Thursday and was presented the Virginia Prince Achievement Award for her tireless efforts within the TS/TV community at the banquet on Saturday Night. She is the second to receive this award which was presented last year to Ms. Prince.

Doctor Richard Docter was on hand with his unending wit and humor. As the guest speaker at the luncheon Friday, among other things, he talked about his soon to be

released book about transvestism which he expects to be at the top of the worst sellers list.

The real highlight of my weekend came for me as I found myself having a private breakfast with Ms. Christine Jorgenson, who spoke at the Saturday luncheon and was also honored Saturday night. I found her to be a wonderfully warm and caring woman with a delightful sense of humor. She described to me some of the highlights of her past such as her book and a movie (which she described as dreadfully dull) about her life. It was very obvious from talking with her that she has enjoyed her life and has few regrets.

It was truly a joy to meet with many of the friends I made last year and to greet the many new ones. It really helps to reinforce the term "Support".

If you are thinking about attending next year, you need to start saving now. It will be in San Francisco, April 5 - 9.

IF6E now has booklets available with reprints of articles from past Tapestry Magazines. There is a booklet on Religion (5.00), Significant Others (10.00), Transsexualism (10.00), Hormones (5.00), and Transcripts of last year's convention (10.00). I purchased one of each for the Cross-Port library and I'll have some of them at the meeting for any one wishing to look at them.

During this past year, there have been a number of changes in my life, both in the way I live and in how I think of myself. It has been a real growth experience to say the least. One of the things I've been doing is living as Heather almost all the time when not at work. This has forced me to go places and do things that one year ago I never would have thought of doing.

I have been surprised by the very open attitude this conservative town has taken, just about everywhere I have gone. I have dined at Prime and Wine, In The Woods, Florenz, Garcia's, Larosa's, Blue Moon, Pizza Hut, and Casa Lupita, just to name a few. I have shopped at Northgate, Eastgate, Kenwood and several shop shops like Fashions at Large. In all these places and more I have never been treated with any thing less than respect, and dignity.

Oh, I've received some looks, a few stares and a giggle now and then but after the strangeness wears off and those persons become content that I mean them no harm they go about their business and I go mine.

I do however, avoid places that I know could be potential trouble. I stay away from neighborhood bars and single's bars. I have never been a bar person and if I really feel that I must go to one, there are plenty of gay/lesbian bars where I can go and feel welcome without testing the water. Of course, I am not going to pick up someone, but just walking into a single's bar alone or with one other person, seems to imply that you are in the market.

In all, it has taught me that conservative is not always bad and certainly not always something for a TV/TS to fear. I have also found that with each place I go, I build my confidence in myself as a person and as the woman I am.

Heather



Christine receives her Scroll of Honor.

I . F . G . E . 1988



Linda, prepares for a Bard night.



Allona, poses for the camera.



Alice, ready for the night.



Merissa receives her award from Virginia Prince

Convention



Heather and Rita discuss the days events.



Linda recovers from a hard night



Yvonne, hard at work, as always

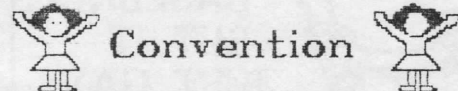


Linda, Alice, Heather and Allona



Robbie says, "Hello Cincinnati"

Linda goes to the
Convention



Well this makes two conventions for the I.F.G.E., and I must say they are getting better each year. The programs are divided into sessions for cross-dressers, transsexuals, and helping professionals. I attended mostly the ones which pertain to crossdressing and group organization. Hopefully I will be able to put to use some of this knowledge to help make Crossport better than ever.

Again I had the opportunity to meet some of the more prominent people in our para-culture. I got first hand knowledge from many other groups, and made many new friends around the US. Its almost unreal how fast new groups are popping up all over. Existing groups find their memberships are getting quite large. Groups like ETUC in San Francisco have a mailing list of over 600 alone. There are now at least four or five cities that have more than one group just for TVs. When you add the TS groups, I count over 125 such groups in the US alone. I know of 10 more in Canada. When you think that we have only touched about 5% of all crossdressers, just think what it will be like 10 years from now.

Everyone hopes that someday we will be able to dress anyway we want and no one will care. Well I don't know if this will happen, but I will say that I am always running into individuals who now have elected to live full time as women. I now know personally quite a few. They do not wish a sex change. Many have a wife or girl friend, and live in a lesbian type relationship. Most are professional people and they make the change at work and everyone knows. I can't say it works for everybody, but for those I know, I'm very happy for.

Since Linda loves to party, getting away for 5 full days would wear out anyone regardless of sex. I got up about 7 every morning and went through the dressing routine. (no flats for this girl) I just love eating in the nice restaurants and walking through the motel just like the other women. After lunch and afternoon sessions, I would go back to the room to dress all over again in my evening clothes, higher heels, and more provocative makeup and hair. After dinner (quite often people had open house parties) it was off to the lounge to dance until 3 or 4 in the morning. My feet would just get their feeling back when it was time to start all over again. I think I got a total of about 12 hours of sleep the whole 4 nights, but I just didn't seem to run out of energy.

I want to explain that even though I lived this whole time as a female, sometimes its hard to feel female all the time. Why? Because there is so many of us at the motel, it doesn't take long for the average person to wonder whats up. Many get curious (especially in the lounge after a few drinks) and want to know why you find yourself in many conversations with all kinds of people.

I personally love all the attention, so I will talk by the hour. At one point, I had over 30 people standing around me in the hall as I preached. When groups of us get out like this and touch the public, you get a real good feeling that perhaps we are making some progress in a sometime hostile world.

Now you do have some rough times. I did run into 4 guys who wanted to fight. (Its funny, but usually they are little guys which I could take out in one punch) You just have to play it cool and nothing ever seems to happen. I also ran into a few girls in the lounge. One group I joined talked about penis sizes of the men they had been with. Strange but very interesting.

I was picked up twice by women and was propositioned both times. My, how things change when you're wearing a dress.



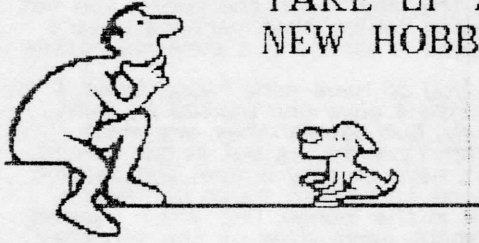
One of my favorite events is the big banquet. This is where everyone comes in their formal gowns and jewels. I have included some pictures to give you some idea of what when on. It's not unusual to see gowns some girls paid hundreds of dollars for. Many are covered with real diamonds and mink. This is an all out affair.

Another thing I really enjoy is meeting with the different people who are there to sell their wares. They have makeup, wigs, (wait till you see me at the next meeting) clothes, shoes, breast forms, you name it. They will help you try it on, and they will usually give you special pricing while at the convention.

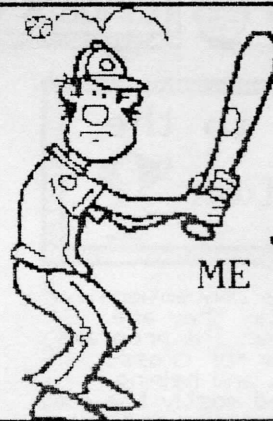
While talking with the other girls, you also get an insight for what one likes at meetings. You learn what has made some groups prosper and others fail. You learn about others and yourself. In all you have the best time of your life.



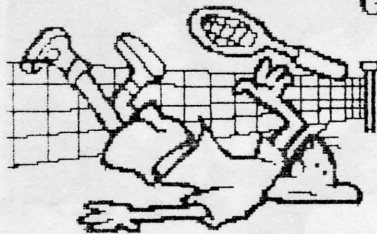
I JUST WASN'T HAPPY
WITH MYSELF, SO I
THOUGHT I WOULD
TAKE UP A
NEW HOBBIE



I FIRST
FOUND
BASEBALL,
BUT IT
JUST GAVE
ME HEADACHES



TENNIS WAS FUN, BUT
SOMETHING SEEMED TO
BE MISSING FROM THE
GAME



I FOUND
BOXING

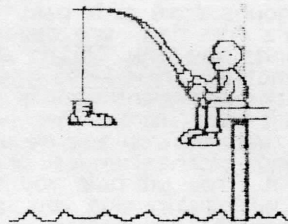


&
BOXING
FOUND
ME

FISHING HAD
IT'S GOOD
TIMES



AND IT'S
BAD



THEN I FOUND
CROSSPORT.....

NEED I
SAY MORE...



Luella 3/88

Publication Notice

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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of crossdressers, transsexuals and their family and friends.