Cross-Port InnerView

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Vol. 4 No. 5 May 1988

Cross-Port Basics

by Heather

There was a smaller than usual turn out for the April meeting of CrossPort. Everone must have been out "Fooling" around. Everyone who did come seemed to have their usual good time.

There was no business meeting as there was little to discuss. I did mention to some of those present that I would like some company at UC on May 9th.

No one signed up for Kings Island so I guess it will be just Alice and myself. I am beginning to feel it is time to move to California and join ETVC. At least they do things together.

We had four new people who were supposed to come to the meeting and did not show up. We sometimes forget how scary the first meeting can be.

Finally, I wanted to update everyone on my job situation. I have been working between 9 and 12 hours a day and dressing more and more. I wear makeup, earrings, women's slacks, shirt type blouses and a slightly padded bra. All of this gives a pretty feminine appearance. Many of the people there know what is happening and I have had very few comments made directly to me, though I am sure there are some. They still look at me and treat me as a male though my supervisor does use my other "Femme" name Stevie much of the time. He does not feel, however, Heather would be welcomed at this time.

The even brighter side is that I have been offered another job by someone who says he does not have a problem with it. The only drawback is I would be working at home. While I have always wanted this type of position I am afraid that I may tend to hide from the rest of the world and that is not something I wish to do.

Well that is enough for now, I'll be saying enough in Can We Talk.

Innerview's New Look

From the Editors

InnerView is taking on a newer look. Beginning this month we will be using a two column format. Though we always had this capability, I have avoided using it for two reasons. First, it is a little more work and that is the last thing I need. Second, many of the nice cute fonts that I have been using are too big to use in this format.

OK, so why change now? I feel that with the addition of Linda's Page which is done on another computer the overall look will be more uniform. Also I have taken the time to learn a little more about how to use the advanced features of this program. Many of you will remember that I had to learn this on the fly in the space of a month when I switched computers about a year and a half ago.

The basic format will remain the same, with the same main titles, but we will be doing some experimenting in the future with ways of adding more pictorials, I hope.

NEWS FLASH

Look for Alice and I on the Ira Joe Fisher show on May 19, 1988 at 9:00 on TV 12 WKRC. We just found out and most of you will get this in time.

For anyone who got this early, on May 16 at 11:00 on Channel 19 there will be a show about transsexualism.

Farewell Not Goodbye

By Alona

Oh how time passes so quickly. It does not seem like it has been two years since my first Cross-Port meeting. But indeed it has been. As I write this "farewell letter," there are so many emotions and memories that flood over me. I shall miss you all so very much. No I'm not dieing (or do not think that I am). I am just moving up near Pittsburgh, Pa.. I will still be in West Virginia, but only an hour or so South of Pittsburgh. Which will make attending meetings at Cross-Port almost impossible (it will be an eight hour drive), on much more than a once or twice per year basis.

You have all played such a large part in Alona's coming out of the closet. I remember the first time that I talked to Heather on the phone. I was scared to tears (not an unusual reaction is it). I told her that I probably wouldn't dress as Alona for that first meeting. But, as the week wore on the need to be Alona got stronger and stronger. So, on Wednesday, I went to Lane Bryant and bought a new outfit. After which I went to Pay- Less Shoes and bought a new pair of heels to go with the outfit. With this, and my usual ton of other outfits, heels, and accessories, I anxiously waited for the next day, Thursday, to arrive. On Thursday I checked into a motel and started getting ready for Alona's coming out. By 6:30 pm. I was ready, and so scared that I was shaking. As I did not want to be the first person there I decided to wait until 7:30 pm. to arrive. I was still the first to arrive. So, I sat in the car until I saw someone who looked like they might have something to do with Cross-Port. That person was Linda. That night was one of the most memorable of my entire life. I was finally free. There were many other firsts in my life as a member of Cross-Port. And to each of you who contributed to those times and others I say thank you.

The most memorable time of all was attending the 1988 I.F.G.E. Convention in Chicago, Illinois, with Heather, Linda, Alice; the girls from IXE, Yevonne, Danny, Emily, Bobbi (my adopted daughter); and a hundred or so other girls from all over the world. I had the experience of being Alona for an entire week, night and day. I couldn't have been my male self if I had wanted to. You see I didn't have a stich of male clothes with me. I had taken Heather's advice and brought no "emergency suit." This way I would have to experience the good and the bad as my feminine-self. There could not be any retreating into the shell of my male-self. It was good advice and I was so greatful for it. Not being able to change made it all the better. The problem was that afterward I didn't want to change back when I had to. If you are at the 1989 I.F.G.E. Convention, in San Francisco, California, look for me, I'll be there.

In parting let me leave you with these words. Contrary to what the majority of the world tells you, you are persons of worth. You are not trash or junk to be spat upon or to be put down. You are creations of the most high God. And do you know what? God don't make no junk! Most of the world would have you believe that you are not worth anything. They are wrong. You are something very valuable, you are a child of God. So valuable, "that He gave His only son to die on a cross, that whosoever believed in Him, would not die but have everlasting life." My sisters note the word whosoever. It does not say that only a few of those who conform to societial norms will have life everlasting, but anyone who believes in Him. This is the love of God expressed in the Holy Bible. We are also called to love ourselves. Yes, that's right to love yourself. We are called, "to love our neighbors as ourselves." How can you love someone if you don't love yourself. How can you give that which you don't have. Accept yourselves, love yourselves, and love others. Even if others do not extend love to you, love them. Love breaks down barriers and returns love. Hatred builds walls and returns only sorrow. The final thing is, " to love God with all of your heart, mind, and strength." If you can do these things, even in skirts, makeup, hose, and heels, you will know peace.

Amen!

Publication Notice

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CAN WE TALK!

By Heather Peerson

I received a letter dated April 21, 1988. It reads as follows:

Dear Editor, I am writing this letter in reference to the cartoon strip in your last issue (Vol. 4, No. 4, April, 1988) of Cross-Port Inner View. At Women Helping Women we receive your newsletter monthly and read it carefully as it provides us with useful information that we can use for our information and referral services. Therefore, I was disappointed to note the pictorial sexist reference to a woman as a "beaver." I don't find this reference humorous as it promotes harmful labels and stereo-types of women. I would have expected that as "sisters" you be more careful and sensitive to issues of sexism and labels.

I am writing this letter in the hopes that in the future you will be more sensitized to the issue and will not allow degrading references about women to appear in your newsletter. Sincerely, Helen Mager
Executive Director - Women Helping Women
Hamilton County Rape Crisis Center

Thank you Helen for your letter. I am truly sorry that you had to write it, though I am sincerely happy to receive it. I apologize for the cartoon. I was not aware that it could be offensive but as an editor I do not feel that it is right to censor material on that basis anyway. I do not believe that censor-ship solves problems. It only creates more. Education solves problems and it is letters like yours which provide education.

There are a number of things I wish to say about this incident. I did speak to Linda the author of the cartoon, about her intent. She has assured me that was not the meaning she intended to convey. As any one who has worked with these computer programs knows, they come with a limited number of pictures. Her intention was to convey that the "Big Dose" did not work and the only pictures she had were a monster, a frog and a beaver. The beaver was the cutest. She admits in retrospect that it may not have been as good of choice as she thought. She also apologizes.

Any one who has been reading this newsletter more than a couple of months knows that the one thing I believe strongly in is the need for each of us to respect the rights and dignity of each other. I believe for instance that the women's cause will not be truly won until the rights of blacks and gays and crossdresser and ... all people, including the rights of men, are addressed. Human rights is not a minority issue, it is a Human Issue. Unfortunately the human rights issue is a lot like religion, it is easier to preach than it is to practice. We tend to think that by doing our Sunday duty, going to rallies and marches that we will some how change the world.

We tend to forget or choose to ignore the fact that what really changes the world is the love, respect and sensitivity we show each other day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment. Our willingness to stand up for the rights, not just of ourselves, but of others, not only when it is easy or convenient but when it is hard, has the power to change the people around us.

Many sat and laughed as ¥¥MASH entered their homes every week, yet I am sure there are a number of transsexuals in the military who did not find the crossdressing displayed in this show funny. I was never able to watch Bosom Buddies. I am quite aware that the only time most people are able to deal with crossdressing is when it is displayed as being funny. A show like Bosom Buddies only reinforces that kind of thinking. I doubt that too many others feel the same way or are as sensitive to these issues as I am especially women. How many women have ever been laughed at just because they wore a dress?

I am also aware that different people have different levels of sensitivity about different issues, and we can not expect everyone to react to the same issues. What we can do is to write letters and articles to make people aware of our own sensitivities.

I thank you once again for writing and making us aware of your sensitivities. Even though it was not intentional, had we been aware of your feelings, we would have been able to foresee the potential for the offensive connection to be made and it is this kind of sensitivity which can ultimately change the world.

Moving on, David Wecker of the Cincinnati Postdid an interview with me on the last Tuesday in April. The article appeared in the May 5th issue under the local news section. I did not know it had been printed until 3 days latter. It is reprinted on the next page along with some pictures I added. *Heather*

The Cincinnati Post,
Thursday, May 5, 1988

David Wecker

Taking a new look at life at age 37

He's not sure about the surgery, but he's leaning in that direction. One thing at a time, he says.

It was hard enough telling his personnel director a few months ago that he'd started the hormone treatment. Already the hormones are redefining his stocky body His hips are wider, more rounded. He has begun to grow breasts. But he still has to shave twice a day.

His bleached perm falls in tight curls to his shoulders. The way he sees it, he's keeping up appearances at work. He wears slacks and oxford shirts when he's on the job, working as a CAD short for computer-aided drafting — coordinator.

But he has taken to wearing makeup, too.

"The people at work also are aware I wear a bra," he says in a voice that's too soft, too high. Not quite under control. He's working on the voice, trying to get the upper registers to come more naturally

"I am, after all, developing. And I don't intend to hide it.

"I have to give my co-workers a lot of credit for the way they've responded to me so far. But I think that if I went to work like this, I might not have a job tomorrow."

"Like this" means a skirt, nylons and high heels. He settles into an armchair in his living room in Pleasant Ridge and lights a long, low-tar cigarette He has just returned from another session with his psychologist. He has been seeing one therapist or another for eight years now, going over what he calls his "gender identity problem."

After all that time, he has decided to stop fighting his feelings. He says he has found a psychologist who's helping him work toward his goal of being happy with himself, of being happy with a woman's body.

"I want to be respected for who I say I am now."

He is 37. He talks about being a little boy, dressing up in a witch's costume. He talks about how hard it is for his mother to accept what he has become — and the guilt he feels because of her pain. He doesn't have to worry about his father's feelings; his father is dead. His wife sits cross-legged on the floor and listens.

Seventeen years ago, when they were married, she said "I do" to a man. She has tried seeing things his way. She talks about him as if he were a woman.

"There are times I'm angry that the chances for us to have that perfect Ozzie-and-Harriet life are gone," she says.

"But I admire her courage, the fact she's willing to go with her feelings. Still, it's difficult to understand why someone would choose to be a woman. I mean, it's a man's world."

She sighs. She's waiting to see what happens between them next month, next year

"Mostly, there's this huge sadness that the person I married has died.

"But then, there's this new person I'm getting to know. And I think that maybe we can form a bond. Like sisters. Considering all the bonding we've had . . . "

He wishes he could tell his wife what to expect, wishes he could help prepare her for whatever might happen. One good thing, he says, is that they don't have children. Thank God for that, he says.

And he wishes he'd never gotten married.

"Not that I'm sorry for the time we've had together," he says.

"But I feel guilty for the suffering I've caused her When I got married, I kept hoping these feelings would go away But they didn't."

He should have been born a woman, he says. The way he sees it, he can't change the way he feels.

And his wife wonders if any pieces of their past can be salvaged.

Heather at age 27

Heather at age 33

Today age 37 taking a new look

That's about it. Every year as it go from warm to hot, many crossdressers hang up their wigs. Lets face it, since most of us have to wear wigs, long sleeves and heavy makeup, its just no fun when your dripping wet. Also many of us will let the hair grow back on our bodies so it's harder to feel feminine.

What's this all mean? Well probally attendance will drop off at the meetings. Or will it? Many of our members, as in other groups, have become friends. If you don't feel like dressing, well don't. But you can still come to the meetings to say hi. When we put together the newsletter, most of us don't take the time to dress, and we all have a good time. (By the way, on newletter night, we have a nice hand full of people, and we would like to see you there if you can spare the time.)

Valerie came one whole summer as a baseball player. We don't care how you dress, just take a shower after the game.

Also, don't forget, the meeting place has 3 restrooms we can use to dress in if you don't want to leave your house dressed in the daylight. Whatever, we still want to see everyone this summer too.

DON'T GET CAUGHT

If you hide your dressing habits from someone you live with, I want to tell you one more way to stay out of trouble.

If you dress at home, when no one is there, you probally walk around afterwards to make sure that evertyhing is back where it belongs. One also doesn't want to leave any tell tale sign that a new woman has been around, especially if your married.

I work in new homes for a living, and most new kitchen floors are the new cushion vinyl type. Did you ever see a kitchen floor after a woman has walked around on it with spiked heels. Yes, she leaves little indentions in the flooring which usually will not come out.

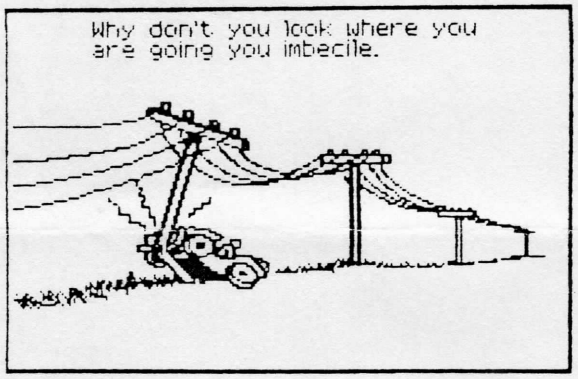
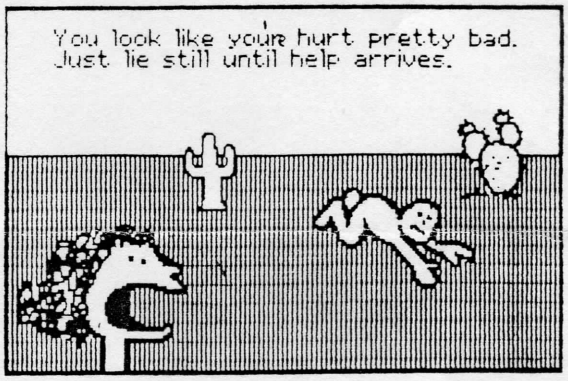
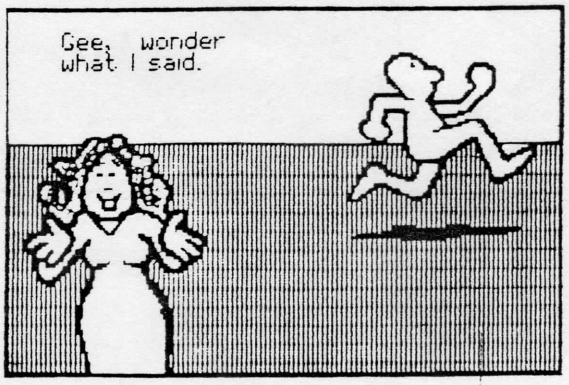
A 200 lb. man in dress shoes will exert less than 30 lbs. per square inch on to the floor. That same man in stiletto heels will exert a force in excess on 2000 lbs. per square inch. This will dent hardwood floors, rip and dent vinyl, and puncture carpet and pad.

If your wife is one to get down and see the floor close up, its just a matter of time before she figures out what makes these funny little marks.

This might seem trival, but sometimes thats what it takes. Wives are smarter then we would like to think.

I remember when I was caught. I though I was so clever. I told her I would never do it again. ha ha She had traps set all over the house for me, and I think I fell in to each one.

She use to measure her makeup. Arrange jewery and items into certain patterns to see if they were disturbed. These things I caught on to. Where I got caught is she used to take peices of thread and lay it across her clothes. If I borrowed something the thread would be moved and I was in trouble.

Thank goodness those days are over In fact, I tell her everything now. No matter how bad it might sound, in the long run it has made for a much better marriage. I no longer carry around the fear of discovery, and she had learn to trust me more.

I also share my dressing with my childern, who have known since they were little. Next month maybe I'll share what it's been like over the past few years.