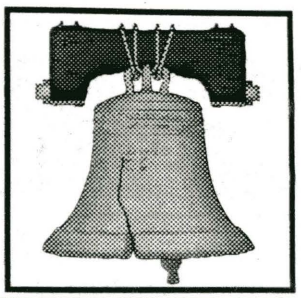
# Liberty Belles

The Newsletter Of Renaissance
Greater Philadelphia



**Jessica Brandon: Editor** **October 1995**

# HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

## GREATER PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER INFORMATION

**CHAPTER LEADER:**
Elizabeth Jarrell

**SECRETARY:**
Lorraine Boyce

**TREASURER:**
Joanne White

**MEETINGS & PROGRAMS:**
Diana Sorenson

**OUTREACH & NEWSLETTER:**
Jessica Brandon

For information on chapter meetings and programs, write to Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087, (610) 630-1437. To submit articles, letters or comments for the GPC newsletter, send to: Jessica Brandon, P.O. Box 28891, Philadelphia, Penna. 19151, or by e-mail to: jessica681@aol.com.

Materials must be received one week prior to the GPC meeting for inclusion in the newsletter. Typed articles are preferred, but handwritten text can be accepted as long as it is legible.

**SCHEDULE**

NOVEMBER:

| | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Renaissance LSV |
| 4 | Renaissance South Jersey |
| 11 | Renaissance Delaware |
| 18 | Renaissance Greater Phila. |
| 25 | Baltimore Affiliate |

DECEMBER:

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Renaissance LSV |
| 2 | Renaissance South Jersey |
| 9 | Renaissance Delaware |
| 16 | Renaissance Christmas Party |
| TBA | Baltimore Affiliate |

JANUARY:

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 | Renaissance LSV |
| 7 | Renaissance South Jersey |
| 14 | Renaissance Delaware |
| 21 | Renaissance Greater Phila. |
| 28 | Baltimore Affiliate |

# From The Editor's Vanity Table

**Hello, Darlings!**

Jessica Brandon here! Welcome to October, and our national holiday, Halloween! I hope everyone has their costume all ready for the big night! To start things off, I just thought you'd like to know that I'm in the midst of transitioning.

Now, before everyone jumps to a conclusion, it's not what you think, I'm not about to make the big gender jump, what I'm jumping to is from military life to civilian life. But, in some ways, I believe there are certain similarities between the two.

By the time we all meet at the Woods for this month's meeting, I'll be less than two weeks away from being officially retired from the Navy, in fact, my final day is Halloween, and I plan on celebrating at Henri David's bash that evening.

But I digress. I've been a loyal employee of Uncle Sam since I was seventeen when I left for boot camp only a month after graduating from high school. And now, after 19 years, I'm about to embark on a new journey in a brave new world.

In regard to the similarities I spoke of, here's what I mean. A person who qualifies for SRS has to undergo months of therapy and preparation prior to the surgery, everything has to be in readiness before going under the knife.

In my case, I've had to undergo preparations months before my retirement: physicals, loads of paperwork regarding my personnel records, job hunting and attending seminars designed to help the career military person adapt to civilian life.

Of course, perhaps the biggest hurdle is in getting used to something that isn't there anymore. After two decades in the Navy, the only employer I've ever had, it's hard to get used to not being part of a ship's company, and it's strange.

Just like a TS who becomes a whole new person, I too, in my own way must face the perils of being on my own, of having to scrape and fight in order to survive because I don't have the security blanket of my past life to fall back on.

I won't kid you, so far, it hasn't been easy, but I mean to survive, just like a TS needs to earn their place in a world that might not accept or understand them. If anything, I relish a challenge, and this figures to be the biggest one of my life.

Oh, before I forget, this is Election Night. Tonight, you will have a chance to elect the officers who will run the Greater Philly chapter in 1996. So, go out and vote! Well, that's all for now, girls. Until next month, be kind, be thoughtful, and be your best!

Your Friend In A Frock,

*Jessica*

## from where I sit on THE HOT SEAT

by Elizabeth Jarrell

Well, gang, is it October already? Where did the year go? As you know, the most hallowed holiday in all the crossdressing queendom is this month. Yes, I'm talking about Halloween!

Halloween gives some of us the excuse to get some extra dressing time in. So, if you can, why not get your fill and be seen in public in your femme finery. Your first chance will undoubtedly be an office party or a friend's party. There you can wow 'em with how well you dressed and made yourself up.

"Did you have any help?" folks might ask. "No," you can reply, "I did it all myself." After you've done the party circuit, come out with the big dogs downtown at the largest Halloween party on the east coast, none other than Henri David's Halloween Ball.

It will be held this year at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel in Center City. Last year was my first time and I had a blast. So, if you can attend, I strongly suggest that you do so. Also, October means it's time for chapter elections.

Next month will be elections, so get in your nominations to determine your leadership here in the Greater Philly chapter for 1996. Don't forget to vote! Also, remember the Holiday party in December. After all, parking is free there. I hope to see a good turnout.

That's about all for now, so get out there and infiltrate the masses on our most hallowed holiday.

Hugs and Kisses and Happy Halloween,
Liz

*Editor's Note: In keeping with the spirit of Halloween, our beloved Chapter leader will most indeed dress for the occasion come the 31st. Below is an artist's interpretation of the look Liz will be sporting on the big night....*

## THE CHI-CHI CONTROVERSY

By now I'm sure every self respecting crossdresser has seen *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar*, if you haven't, shame, shame, shame on you! Not only was it a good movie, filled with plenty of laughs, courtesy of an all star cast, it also had something of a controversy.

John Leguizamo's character in the film, Chi Chi Rodriguez just so happened to be the name of a real life senior tour golfer who, according to sources didn't take too kindly to his name being lent to a drag queen. In fact, from what I heard about this on ESPN's *SportsCenter*, the real Chi Chi raised a bit of a stink.

Now I'm sure that Douglas Carter Beane who wrote the screenplay and probably isn't a golfer never intended to insult Mr. Rodriguez. It was simply a coincidence. Hell, I never would've made the connection myself if I wasn't familiar with the sport which I follow on TV from time to time.

Then again, in the closing credits of every film is that familiar disclaimer that states that any character named after real people is purely coincidental. While I can understand Mr. Rodriguez's annoyance, it's really no big deal, unless of course the real Chi Chi may have dressed himself as a young man. You never know.

# CHAPTER CHIT-CHAT

## ONE HELL OF A BUSY----AND REWARDING WEEK!

### by Jessica Brandon

Usually, I rarely have time to dress and go out as much as I'd like. More often than not, the only time I do is when the monthly meetings roll around. Recently, I had an opportunity to go out more, and the week of October 8-15 gave me more chances than I knew what to do with!

The week began on Sunday the 8th when I volunteered to (wo)man a table sponsored by a local transgendered group at Outfest. Outfest, for anyone unfamiliar with same is an event where gay, lesbian and bi-sexual people gather to raise funds for worthy causes, enjoy plenty of entertainment and be with their friends in a friendly, non-hostile environment.

This was the first time I've been to the event, so I didn't know what to expect. What I experienced was a great deal of fun and togetherness. Much to my surprise, Elaine Howard showed up, followed later by Terri Arnaldi, so I had someone familiar to talk to and we had a high old time while we "stood watch" at the table, passing out literature on Renaissance.

From our vantage point, we saw many interesting things and many fascinating people. The stage was only fifty yards away and we had a good view of all the acts that performed there, such as the three woman pop group called "Betty" who were great, and, later on in the evening, the crowd was treated to an electrifying performance from Paris Dupree!

When I arrived in town at one PM, I was planning to only spend a couple of hours there since I'm a huge football fan and wanted to get back home in time for the late games, but I wound up staying until seven when things finally wound down. I had so much fun, I didn't miss football! Outfest was a tremendous experience I'll never forget!

Ahh, but that was only Sunday. My schedule as Jessica got even busier later on in the week. Having free time on my hands, I volunteered to help Angela Gardner at the three day convention for the National Association of Social Workers which was held at the new Marriott hotel in Center City. That too was a most memorable experience.

Six organizations (Renaissance, Tri-Ess, IFGE, I.T.C.L.E.P., Outreach Institute and AEGIS,) joined together as the Transgender Alliance for Community, and our goal at the convention was to pass out literature such as back issues of Tapestry and Tri-Ess's Femme Mirror and, more importantly, talk to the social workers gathered there about transgendered behavior.

Again, I was a babe in the woods, having never participated in any convention, so I was nervous at first, and not just because the hotel was only a half mile away from where I used to work in the Navy! The people I worked with, Angela, Maryann Kirkland, Yvonne Cook-Riley, Lynda Frank, Jane Peabody and Sharon Stewart made the convention rewarding!

We met and talked with many people who experienced lots of genuine interest in who and what we are and saw us as people, not just "men in dresses". That feeling reached beyond the confines of the hotel, everywhere I went, I was treated with respect and courtesy, especially when I went window shopping at Hecht's and was mobbed by the perfume ladies!

I volunteered my services all three days, start to close and had a fabulous time. I learned a great many things during that time (the least of which being to wear comfortable shoes for prolonged standing!), both about people and myself. In the beginning, I was just a casual crossdresser out to have fun. Now I see myself as a role model in the transgendered community.

So, after, three consecutive days dressed and out in public, I was disappointed when the convention ended Saturday afternoon. But the memories of the people I met and the work I had done for our community will last with me for a very long time.

# PLACES TO GO!

**RENAISSANCE GREATER PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER**

Coming In October: Election Night. Call 610/975-9119 for chapter information.

**GATSBY'S**

Popular nightclub and disco features something different each night of the week. Monday nights: amateur drag talent (lip synch) contest for cash prizes, Ladies Night on Tuesday's. Gatsby's, Cuthbert Boulevard between routes 38 & 70, Cherry Hill, N.J. 609/663-8744.

**THE CARTWHEEL**

"Drag Search" every Monday night, 11:30 PM. Amateur contest leading up to Miss Cartwheel pageant in September. The Cartwheel, route 202, 1 mile west of New Hope Center, New Hope, PA. 215/862-0880.

**KEY WEST**

Multi level gay establishment with the top floor being a dance club in center city. Key West, 207 south Juniper Street (between Broad and 13th; Walnut and Locust streets), 215/545-1578.

**LES FEMMES**

Next door to Key West, Les Femmes features a friendly staff in an elegant atmosphere for Philly's discerning women. Happy hour from 5 to 7 PM. On Tuesday nights, Mr. David Blake presents: "Drag It Out Tuesdays" drag show. Les Femmes, 209 S. Juniper Street, 215/545-5476.

**HEPBURN'S**

Always something happening here, dancing upstairs, entertainment downstairs. The restaurant features good food as well. 254 S. 12th Street, 215/545-8088.

**RODZ**

A cozy restaurant and piano bar, good food and fun in the latter. Lots of local talent show up to play and sing. 1418 Rodman Street, between 15th and Broad Streets, 215/546-1900.

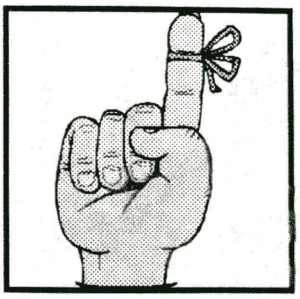
**BLACK BANANA**

An after hours club with three different bars with dancing upstairs. Memberships are required but are reasonable. 3rd and Race Streets, 215/925-4433.

**BOB AND BARBARA'S**

A nightclub with drag shows on Thursday nights beginning at 11 PM. Though small, the club comes highly recommended (see Elizabeth's column on page 3). Location: South Street near 15th, 215/545-4511

# ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER ESOTERICA



Friendly reminders: Don't forget about the discussion groups for spouses and/or partners and the rap group for newcomers. Also, it's not too early to start thinking about elections for GP chapter posts in 1996. Unless otherwise stated by current office holders, all positions will be up for grabs, so if you wish to take a more active stance and become involved in the leadership of Renaissance's largest chapter, or if you know of someone who does, this will be your opportunity to make your voice heard.

Diana Sorenson, GPC's Meetings and Programs Director has for sale, a pair of Jodee silicone breastforms by Camp. These are weighted breastforms, right and left side and are in excellent condition. The breastforms are size 10 and are suitable for the following bra and cup sizes: 36DD, 38D, 40C, 42B. New, these forms sell for upwards of $550.00 a pair, but Diana will make them available for only $275.00. For additional information, contact Diana at (908) 750-2854 or at the GPC meeting.

Riki Ann Wilchins of Transsexual Menace will be speaking at the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers University on Wednesday October 25th at 7 PM in the Art History building, room 100 on the Douglass College campus. For more information, you can e-mail Riki at riki@pipeline.com.

## UPCOMING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS:

21st Fantasia Fair: Provincetown, Mass. October 15-22. For info, contact D. Laing, FF Registrar, P.O. Box 941, Southeastern, PA 19399-0941.

6th annual Fall Harvest: St. Louis, MO, October 26-29. Sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by St. Louis Gender Foundation. For info, contact StLGF, Box 9433, St. Louis, MO 63117, (314) 358-0410.

Henri David's Halloween Ball in Philadelphia, the largest party of it's kind on the East Coast will be held this year at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. Call (215) 732-7711 for information.