TRANSgenderist

Monthly Magazine of the Transgender Independence Club

June, 1999

First House Party a Success!

Nine of our TGIC members came out to a house part held by Leslie in her townhouse on May 22. This was our first house party, and the attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet and a lot of interesting conversation. We hope that this becomes a regular event.

Also May 13 was also a success, as JD and Rosie again celebrated the T* community. Thank you, JD and Rosie!

House party 2 (TGIF for TGIC) will be held on Friday night, June 18 from 6 to 11, at my apartment in downtown Troy. By chance this happens to be 32 days before my SRS surgery in Wisconsin, so I will be providing two appropriate dishes, roast wienies and my Traditional Transsexual New England Dinner. For those not into "dogs," I will also have some hamburgers available.

House party 3 does not have a place yet. However, we are doing some tentative planning to have it in connection with the Palace theater showing of "Shakespeare in Love" in early July. Ideas and volunteers are sought, especially those in Albany. --Vix, Vicky

Capital Pride Schedule

The Capital Pride Chorus announces that it will be having its Spring Concert, Since Stonewall, on June 5 at 7:30 at Page Hall in the downtown SUNY campus. Tickets are \$12 at the door. This is a very interesting concert with dramatic narrations about the Stonewall riots, and how that pivotal event helped form the modern gay pride movement. There will be all sorts of special effects presented, including, I am told, an appearance by the fab Stonewall Girls.

Also on Thursday, June 17 there will be a fund-raising free concert at Borders Books and Music on Wolf Road. Come out, hear some of our concert music again, pick up a donation slip, and when you check out with your books or music that night, Borders will donate 10% of your purchase to Capital Pride. Please support a local GLBT-friendly group; thanks --Vix

In This Issue

Relationships with fathers are sometimes very difficult for T* people. This newsletter explores that sometimes difficult relationship, along with an interesting article on a new breast-expansion technology and some suggestions for transition in the workplace.

News Briefs

At Arlington High School in Indianapolis, a federal judge permitted Dale Stewart to wear a black evening gown to his senior prom.

Sue Pidgeon has issued a controversial report in "Boys and Reading," a report published for Language in Primary by the Centre Education in England. She contends that boys would become much better readers if they could pretend to be female characters in stories. 'Parents don't mind their little girls dressing up as pirates, but boys are not allowed to be princesses," Ms Pidgeon told BBC News Online. "Part of understanding what you read is about being able to see a particular point of view, and to do that we need to feel familiar with different characters, male and female. If boys are only offered a limited understanding when they are young, then we shouldn't be surprised if they have a limited understanding later on."

A Costa Mesa man who sent a package bomb to a transsexual, killing her roommate instead, was sentenced in Los Angeles federal court to two consecutive life terms.

Bill 32 in Quebec would afford near-total and equal rights for same-sex couples as for heterosexual couples. It is considered landmark legislation in North America. It is expected to be passed before June 24th.

Boy Scouts frequently discriminate against GLBT people, says Phyllis Randolph Frye. She recommends an organization called 'Scouting for All!" The organizer has a great web page at www.scoutingforall.org and a petition at www.scoutingforall.org/oldsite/petition.htm.

Noted lawyer Dana Priesing has published a large group of workplace papers for GLBT employees on the HRC WorkNet site at http://www.hrc.org/worknet. The new guide, Transgenderism and Transition In The Workplace, is the latest tool from HRC's WorkNet, a national source of information on workplace and corporate attitudes and policies surrounding sexual orientation.

[Rumor continues to circulate about a Budweiser ad showing **two men holding hands** and the slogan, "Be yourself and make it a Bud Light." I have no idea whether this is real or not, but if true it would mark a milestone in GLBT advertising.]

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) announced its third annual national conference, **Teaching Respect for All** '99 to be held October 1-3 at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in Atlanta, Georgia.

[Trivia Quiz: In how many cartoons did Bugs Bunny crossdress? Answer next month....]

[Cohoes, May 12] A former Cohoes High School football star accused of murder said he attacked a family friend because the man made unwanted sexual overtures after the two left a bar, law enforcement sources said Tuesday.

[REALLY Out] Australia's first transsexual politician, Leigh Varis-Beswick, figures she's the most honest pollie in the country as there's nothing left to come out of the closet. Ms Varis-Beswick was elected as a local councillor in the rugged West Australian mining town of Kalgoorlie-Boulder earlier this month, despite her occupation as a brothel madam and being a former stripper and drag queen. In 1986 she had a sex change operation in Singapore. "I don't have any skeletons in my closet, they're all out," she told AAP from the Club 181 brothel in Kalgoorlie, famous for its Hay St red light district. As Australia's first sex change politician, Ms Varis-Beswick has no qualms about using her notoriety and speaking her mind to get things happening in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Transsexual Israeli singer Dana International, winner of last year's Eurovision song contest, defied threats from ultra-Orthodox Jews and made a recording in Jerusalem's Old City. "I am giving the world a message of freedom from Jerusalem, the city of freedom, on the threshold of the third millennium," she said. The choice of Dana International to represent Israel in last year's Eurovision contest and her subsequent victory outraged Israel's influential ultra-Orthodox community, several of whose leaders denounced sex changes as 'worse than sodomy'.

April is the first month this year when a transgendered person has not been murdered. On average, the transgendered murder rate is sixteen times the national average.

Toronto's decision to unilaterally not pay for sex-change operations is now being challenged in the courts by Michelle Josef and Cynthia Petersen. Josef is a successful 45-year old transsexual lawyer.

Vicky Steele was elected to the Board of Directors of the women's group at her work.

There were 116 anti-gay murders in Brazil in 1998 reports the Bahia Gay Group (GGB), which has kept violence statistics for several years. Seventy-three of the victims were gay men, 36 transvestites and seven lesbians. "Most of the gay men were shot dead inside their own apartments, while the transvestites were mainly killed in the street," said the group's Luiz Mott. "Many of these crimes are committed with excessive cruelty, with many stab wounds, strangulation, suffocation and torture." Mott said arrests occurred in only 10 percent of the cases and convictions resulted in only four percent.

"I say to you, walk a mile in my pumps."
--Gay Catholic San Francisco Board of
Supervisors President Tom Ammiano March 29
as the Board voted to ignore loud Catholic
objections and let the Sisters of Perpetual
Indulgence [Drag Queen society supporting
charitable causes] close Castro Street on Easter
Sunday to celebrate their 20th anniversary.

[Southland, CA] Postal inspectors say four Southland residents--the ringleader has already been convicted--stole more than \$1 million between 1996 and late 1998 with fraudulently obtained credit cards. The twist: Men in the group ordered cards under women's names and sometimes dressed as women to make purchases with them, said Postal Inspection Service spokeswoman Pamela Prince.

[Western MA] On April 29,1999, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders ('GLAD'') filed suit against Park West Bank & Trust Company on behalf of Lucas Rosa, a transgendered individual who was denied a loan application by a bank teller because Rosa did not appear dressed in traditional male clothing. According to GLAD attorney Jennifer Levi, who along with GLAD's Civil Rights Director Mary Bonauto filed the complaint, "The United States Supreme Court said in the 1989 case Hopkins v. Price Waterhouse that sex stereotyping is impermissible sex discrimination.

The Advocate, a leading gay & lesbian magazine, features the transgender movement in

its 25 May 99 issue, title 'What is Transgender?'

The Adventures of Sebastian Cole is due to be released on June 25, 1999. According to the article, the film portrays a "regular-guy stepfather," who "matter-of-factly" tells his family of one's decision "to become a woman." Says Tod Williams, the writer and director of the autobiographical movie, "I did have a close family friend who was a transsexual." Williams says that experience was the inspiration for the movie.

Amount New York's Department of Corrections spent last year on estrogen for 61 inmates who want a sex change: \$9,000.

At its 64th International convention in Ontario, April 28-May 1. The Ottawa. Newspaper Guild (AFL-CIO, CLC) amended its human rights policy to include gender expression. The Guild, which represents about 30,000 workers in print and electronic news media, is an autonomous sector of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) with its own national structure, officers and policies. According to one knowledgeable unionist, it was the first time a national labor union has explicitly included transgender people in its human-rights policy. The amended document reads: "In all aspects of union activity it is our commitment to create a culture of respect and tolerance and a workplace free of discrimination because of irrelevant factors such as race, religion, ethnicity, language, sex, age, orientation, *gender expression*, disability, family, parental, marital immigration or citizenship status." (emphasis added)

The British Government today admitted that it was difficult to provide any good reason for maintaining its policy of banning lesbians and gay men from serving in the armed forces. The admission came as the Ministry of Defence failed to provide convincing arguments in facing the most serious legal challenge to its blanket ban. The case (Smith v MoD) had its full hearing before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg today. +++++++

A Message to My Father

by Victoria

Please include the following article in the next issue of your newsletter. I really appreciate your continued efforts to outreach to the transgendered community, and thank you for your good work. If you need to contact me, I can be reached by e-mail at jimm735741@aol.com Peace.

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Dad,

You may not ever see this. Maybe you'll find it someday, or someone will tell you about it, or maybe I will even send it to you, sometime. But I'm writing it just the same.

I cannot describe the pain you have caused me in life. You were always at home. You never abused me. You wanted to go camping, to ballgames; spend time together. You provided for me financially as I grew up. Christmas was always merry. More food than we needed. You were harsh, but loving. You corrected, punished and taught. Much of my success in life I owe to the things you taught me about work ethic, character and honesty.

You were faithful to take me to church. You taught me from the bible. You tried to instill in me good Christian principals. Later, when you left the business world where you were so successful, and became a pastor you exhibited a desire for me to follow your footsteps.

As a father to a son you never failed me. Only, though you never knew it, I was your daughter.

I remember you scolding me at very young ages about playing with "girls toys". I remember you teaching me at 9 years old about the sinfulness of homosexuals, their shameful lifestyle (even before you were involved in church). How they should be shunned. They were not worthy of rights. Rejected by God and condemned to hell. I recall how you told me that

no homosexual was worthy of any trust. How all you would have to know about a man was that he was gay and you would have nothing to do with him. I remember you turning in disgust at "cross-dressers" on TV and making reproachful and hateful comments about what they were doing. And I was only a child when I heard these things.

I was three or four at my earliest recognition of being transgendered. Only, at that age I didn't understand what being transgendered was; nor ever heard the term. I can remember playing with the girls that lived nearby, with their dolls, clothes, tea sets. And I remember how natural it was for me. I remember the rejection at school as I grew older. Being called queer, faggot, fairy, and worse. Being bullied during break times and after school.

I never recall a time I "made a pass" at any male peer. Yet, somehow everyone seemed to sense something different about me.

By high school I began full rebellion. Against the school, the church (which you never failed to take me to), you, and worse, myself. I hated myself. I couldn't understand what was wrong with me; why I was so bad. I tried to bury my feelings. Deny who I was. I followed everything you taught me; I accepted Jesus, I gave him my soul, will, and sin. I rebuked myself and the devil when I was tempted by thoughts that I was a girl. Praying to God "PLEASE remove this from me. Please give me strength". But he never did.

I dated girls, though I had little interest. I rarely was welcome to hang out with the guys while in hi-school. I had few friends. Now you know how I made through school without pre-marital sex, drugs, etc. No one hung out with the fag.

I did meet a girl and fall in love. You know her, my wife. Since the time we were first married she has known my secret. She has always kept it and supported me. I have confused her and I'm sure left her partially unfulfilled since, like any girl, she needs a man for a husband. But she has stayed with me and does not condemn me.

4

Dad, how could God make me this way and call it sin? Why wouldn't he give me strength to overcome it? Why wouldn't he in his mercy remove it when I cried out in repentance and anguish for mercy?

How could I ever ask you? How could I ever tell you? You, like your God, hate queers. You hated me; and rejected me; before you ever knew me. I was despised as different my whole life. Hated, beat, rejected, and condemned. Yet the one person who swore that he would always support me, love me and be proud of me did the same. The person who said I could always count on counted me out.

You rejected me by rejecting who I was. Though I never told you, and maybe you never suspected, you preached your hateful message and isolated yourself from me. How could I come to you when I was so vile? How could I come to you when I knew you would hate me and never trust me? Did you not ever ask yourself: What if one of my sons were gay? Did God not make me this way so that the works of God could be made manifest through me by one of his faithful? Now will I remain lame through the sins of my parents.

We no longer share common ground. I have had to reject the bible, Jesus, and God you believe in. IF you are right, I have been given over to a reprobate mind. If you are right, a soul is lost to eternity in hell because your message of hate over shadowed your message of love. When I could be reached and needed someone to help me, you, the only one who might have reached me, weren't there. Now, if you are right, I am lost.

Dad, I am transgendered. I was born a woman in a man's body. It's really not that uncommon; there are many others like me. It is not psychosis, demon possession, or perversion. It may be for lack of a better term, a birth defect. But it is natural. As a woman, I am attracted to men; have been with men. I identify with homosexuals because I believe them to share my issues and because society stereotypes us as a group. They too are born homosexual and no more make a choice regarding sexual

preference than heterosexuals do. If they are born into it and it's not a choice, then it is not sin.

You believe in a God that has manifested no visible power in my life, though I have prayed vigilantly for it. Neither have I seen his power in the life and works of others. I've seen deacons stand in the pulpit before the church body and lie. I've seen preachers engaged in sex with prostitutes and worse, laywomen. I've seen all the various interpretations of the bible text. How verses can be used to forward one agenda and how others are forgotten. I remember a time very recently sitting with you at lunch while you were eating pork, wearing a blended fabric shirt and condemning "queers". "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:16). Does man now decide which verses are "still" valuable and which are not? Christians today seem to only value those that they prefer. If they can't believe the verses that say wives submit to your husband as unto God, how can they believe something as fantastic as a virgin birth and resurrection.

No, the bible is TOO open to interpretation. And worse, it stands as it's only witness. The bible is the whole, complete, perfect word of God; because it says so in the bible.

The bible is full of contradictions. Not mistakes like how many days Jesus wondered in the wilderness. But philosophical contradictions. Are we saved by faith, grace or works? Do you have to be baptized to get into heaven? Are we predestined by God to go to heaven or is it totally a freewill choice? Why did God harden Pharos heart if we are creatures of free will? Does God tempt man? The bible was written during a period in time when men were little more than primitive cavemen. Superstitious and lead by a few. Its instruction is more akin to keeping a people in slavery than leading them to liberty; and to question its authority means eternity in hell.

But all those arguments aside, I know its fiction because of who I am. Not who I choose to be, for I tried to choose something else many years ago, but who I was the day I was conceived. And you, my father, given over totally to ancient fiction, lost a relationship with your daughter that neither time nor heaven can restore. You left me alone, isolated, beaten, rejected, scared, confused, tormented, and crying at the doormat of the world. You took from me not only the opportunity to realize those beliefs that you hold but also the chance to be happy with myself.

I am happy with myself now. I feel no guilt about who I am. I keep this secret from you out of respect for you as my father and for your position. One day you may find out. Maybe like Matthew Shepard I'll be a victim of a hate crime inspired by your word of God. Maybe I'll die in an accident and the coroner will tell you about my shaved legs and under arms, and the women's panties that I wear. Maybe you'll never know. I'll tell you to day that I am sorry about how you'll feel. I hurt to know the hurt you'll feel. I'll again be disappointed that you're disappointed in me. But I'll feel no shame about who I am. I'll feel no remorse for being myself. I didn't fail you; you failed me. Whether your Christian beliefs are right or wrong, you failed me.

And I love you, and I forgive you.

Your daughter.

Victoria

New Breast Enlargement Method Offers Alternative to Surgical Implants

DALLAS--(BW HealthWire)--May 17, 1999
-- Clinical research results that confirm the efficacy of a natural, safe, non-surgical method of breast enlargement that meets all FDA requirements were announced here today by Dr. Thomas J. Baker, lead investigator and clinical professor of plastic surgery at the University of

Miami School of Medicine. Dr. Baker made the presentation at the 32nd Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS). "These findings have dramatic implications for the 19 million women between the ages of 18 and 49 with bra cups C or smaller who, U.S. research tells us, would like to have larger breasts," said Dr. Baker. "Less than 1% of these women see surgery as an acceptable option."

After wearing the bra-like device approximately ten hours a day for ten weeks, the women's breast volume increased 55% on average from their original size. This change translates to an increase of 1 bra-cup size and has been maintained at 30-weeks follow-up.

Dr. Baker explained that conventional augmentation mammoplasty, now routinely performed around the world, involves a surgical procedure which requires elevating the skin and breast tissue and then inserting a saline-filled silicone implant into the cavity. The implant pushes the breast tissue outward resulting in the augmented breast appearance.

Dr. Baker's research shows that "external" tissue expansion can instead accomplish true breast augmentation. The device, developed by Miami-based Bio-mecanica, Inc., consists of two domes which are placed over the breasts creating a seal, a microchip-controlled mechanism which exerts a gentle three-dimensional pull on the breast, and a bra-like garment to support the system. It is comfortable, simple to use and worn like a bra.

The company's breast-enlarging technology is based on the well-known principle of tension-induced tissue growth. Sustained mechanical tension has been proven to induce growth in skin, skeletal tissue, peripheral nerves and muscle. This principle is already widely employed in reconstructive medical devices today such as tissue expanders, Ilazarov devices, and cranial and mandibular distractors.

The clinical study also looked at self-image and self-esteem issues by administering pre- and post- psychological tests to all participants. The tests confirmed that women who completed the program had a statistically significant increase in self-esteem at **the** end of the study. In addition, the research identified a statistically significant correlation between weight loss demonstrated on long-term follow-up and increased satisfaction with body image.

"The response of the participants was overwhelmingly positive," said Dr. Ana Pando, PhD., psychological consultant for the study and a psychotherapist whose area of specialization is self-esteem issues. "There was a surprisingly significant improvement in their attitudes about their bodies, about how they dressed and about how they felt in social situations. In fact, their whole image of themselves changed. The data also showed that their partners were overwhelming satisfied with the results."

Bio-mecanica, Inc. was founded by Phillip T. George, MD; Roger K. Khouri, MD, the inventor of the product; and Carlos V. Freyre in July 1997 to develop a non-surgical device for breast enlargement. The company holds five U.S. patents with two additional patents pending on apparatus relevant to soft tissue enlargement tissue expansion devices. and external Bio-mecanica's product, which has met all of the FDA's marketing requirements, is in the final development stage and is due to be released in the U.S. later this year.

CONTACT: Conover & Co., Jeanne Sklarz, (617) 872-3698 or Barbara Holtz, (781) 237-3640.

Pot Luck at Leslie's!



Melody commisserates with Bobbi Jo.

Nine Transition Ideas

--Author Unknown

(1) I strongly discourage the idea of asking (even implied) for the company's permission to proceed. This weakens your bargaining position and gives the moral authority to the company. (2) I'd keep the "human compassion" element of your situation on the back burner for the present time. (3) I guess my professional training tends to make me to look around the corner, and to imagine how things will appear in hindsight. Why concede anything in writing unless it's strictly necessary? (4) I don't like the idea of putting disruption of the workplace on the table as issue up front. It's too easy an out for the employer. (5) Here's my oft-repeated Bellwether Person theory (tm), and I believe it is =the= single most important tool in effecting a successful transition in place. If at all feasible, I urge you in the STRONGEST POSSIBLE terms to identify one or more opinion makers within your company -- people who you can trust -- and approach them privately and in person before you go much further. Get them on your side. Let them go to bat for you. (6) Make sure you are available to talk with anyone who will listen. Transition in the work environment is a public relations campaign, and =must= be viewed as such. If you are seen as withdrawn or isolated, the rumor mill will absolutely grind you up. (7) Don't forget to maintain a sense of humor. (8) Cultivate kinship with female co-workers. (9) I'd go ahead and get a legal name change promptly. It's easy to do and will clarify paperwork and identification issues.

DEBORAH H. SHEEHAN ATTORNEY AT LAW

P.O. BOX 38014, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12203 518-458-8767

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Fantasy Crossdresser's Weekend



Nov 4 - 7, 1999

It's time for another all new *Paradise In The Poconos* weekend. We have a fabulous facility with an indoor heated pool & jacuzzi, game room, an authentic English pub, a night club and it's all *ours* for an extended 4 day/3 night weekend of pure crossdressing fun!

This year we will again

have a special vendor with clothing, wigs, breastforms, lingerie and more, plus two makeup artists, a hair stylist and a nail artist. We'll also have seminars, and we'll have our world-famous parties (including our special surprise reception), tag sale, and talent show.

Cost: \$350* per person, double occupancy. Includes all activities, 3 parties, seminars, room, meals, tax, and gratuity. No hidden charges! Register now before we fill up. Full details at our web site <www.cdspub.com>. Couples Welcome! (* Single rooms \$475)

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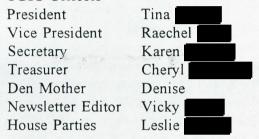
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Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

TGIC Officers



The Transgenderist is the newsletter of TGIC, published monthly and mailed First Class to members, prospective members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications. Copyright 1999 TGIC unless otherwise stated. No part may be reproduced without prior permission from the originator.

Readers are invited to submit articles relevant to the Transgendered Community for consideration. You may bring or mail typed pages for publication to the TGIC clubroom. Format should follow that shown in the current newsletter. You may also e-mail the articles to . The article should be part of the body of the e-mail.

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 PM to 10 PM. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the local night spots after the meetings.

BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER

The International Foundation for Gender Education is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Basic membership is \$25 per year. Subscriptions to Transgender Tapestry are \$40. Brochures and forms are available in the TGIC Club Room. Call or write to:

IFGE (617) 899-2212 PO Box 229 Waltham, MA 02154-0229

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked.

(NYS Health Department)

Call: (518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

TGIC On-Line

All transgendered people are invited to join TGIC On-Line, an informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC). Messages exchanged on TGIC On-Line focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Newburg. If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about TGIC, send an e-mail message to: TGIC-request@hartebeest.com with any subject line and in the message body, the text:

JOIN TGIC STOP

(Please note: JOIN TGIC must be on line 1. STOP must be on line 2) You will receive an automated acknowledgment (Journal) of your request, which must be approved with the list moderator.

Calendar and Events

TGIC meetings are held Thursdays at 7:30 in the clubhouse. * See explanation in this issue.

June 2-6	17th Annual Be-All,
	Cleveland, OH
June 5, 7:30-9:30	Capital Pride Concert,
	Page Hall, SUNY
	downtown campus,
	"Since Stonewall."*
June 12, 2-5	Twenty Club, Hartford
	Note: Change of location
	to GLBT film festival
June 17, 7:30-8:30	Capital Pride free concert
	and fundraising night at
	Borders Books, Colonie*
June 18, 6-11	"TGIF for TGIC",
	Second TGIC House Party
	(and weinie roast)
	Vicky *
10 0 10 -	
June 19, 9-12	Tri-ESS Meeting, Yours, Schenectady
June 26, 2-5	Twenty Club, Hartford
November 10-14	Creating Change Conf.,
Arowien learnes by	Oakland, CA
November 4-7	Paradise in the Poconos
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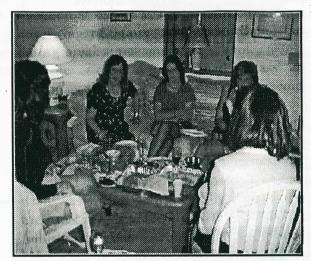
(1 to r) Kimberly, Tina, and Bobbi Jo

Tracy Oppelt

Master Barber and Cosmetologist Located at:

Maria's Hair Care 1573 A Central Ave. Colonie, New York 518-869-5604

Pot Luck at Leslie's!



Buncha white gyrls still sittin' around talkin'. (I to r) Bobbi Jo, Karen, rachel, Denise, and Kimberly.



(l. to r.) Bobbi Jo, Karen, Rachel, Denise, and Leslie squeeze onto the couch.