

# News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

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# Renaissance

## Family Building By Imagination\*

by Joanne Higgins

As a person, I have a basic human need to be connected to other people. But as a transsexual, I realized a long time ago that the connections I had were not relationships on which I could count. (At least not most of them—some people have surprised me). This point has been driven home to me many times during the past two years, and I have come up with my own solution to this problem. Let me explain.

### Costs of Coming Out...

At the age of 39, I was finally coming to terms with a lifetime of suffering and confusion by accepting the fact I am a transsexual. I was born with what I have come to describe as a birth defect—a male body. On the inside, in all the places where it counted (in my mind, soul, heart, and spirit), I was a girl. But being born a male, I had to hide what I felt from those that mattered to me, because I knew from their actions and comments that I would not be accepted by them if I told them how I really felt about myself. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? So, personal relationships were something which I tried to avoid like the plague. I could usually play the role of a "guy," but I wasn't always successful. I even found myself married (for 15 years!), but I "knew" deep down inside that I was living a lie by pretending to be something I wasn't. So I decided to follow my heart and start being what I really was.

I finally admitted to myself that I was a transsexual and was going to someday be living as a woman. I moved out on my own, and left my spouse and son behind. I finally told my mother and brother. I told my employer, who told the rest of the employees (one of whom even told a major metropolitan newspaper, which then told the rest of the world). I told my friends and eventually even told one of my other relatives. I was "out." And finally, in July of this year, I began living and working full-time as a woman. And in many ways, I have never been happier.

What has this cost me? It cost me my best friend, my spouse. And although I still have contact with my son, our relationship, while very good, is somewhat tenuous (but I have faith that as he gets older, it will get better). My relationship with my mother,

who passed away this year, was very strained and distant during the last year of her life. My brother has not talked to me for over a year and a half, except for dealing with our mother's death and subsequently with her estate (a fancy way of saying that we talked about splitting up her stuff and paying off her bills), but nothing else. I lost over half of the (few) people whom I had considered to be friends, and I lost my church. In many ways, I felt alone—totally, terribly alone.

### Make New Friends & Keep (Some) of the Old...

But I wasn't alone. I still had some of what I call my "carryover" friends—you know, the only true friends I actually had in that "old life" who have carried over to my new life. I was also making new friends at work and in my support group. I was just too busy dealing with transition, depression, financial, spousal, parental, physical health, and homelessness-related problems to see it. My transition has had a very freeing effect on my spirit, and I began to live with a song in my heart and, as a special friend has told me, "with a twinkle in my eye." Or, to quote the old children's song, I began to "let my little light shine." People began to see the wonderful person that I always hoped was inside of me, but was too afraid to let out into the world for fear that she would get beaten up and tossed away. Once I realized that I had these friends, and that they loved me with all of my warts and quirks, and that they were sticking with me regardless of what I was going through, I started to see how wonderful life could really be.

### Not Just A Telephone Company Slogan...

But friends and family (sorry, MCI) are two different things. After I accepted that my family was gone, I realized that there are some things that I was really going to miss. Things like buying presents for nieces and nephews (especially nieces); holiday din-

*continued on page 6*

\* With apologies to the group "Families Adopting Children Everywhere (FACE), who run an excellent class for prospective adoptive parents called "Family Building Through Adoption".

## Chapter & Affiliate Information

### Chapters

#### Delaware

**Wilmington, Delaware:** meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808.

#### Pennsylvania

**Greater Philadelphia:** Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087.

Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 pm all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

#### **Lower Susquehanna Valley:**

Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) for location and meeting times.

### Affiliates

#### California

**Orange County:** Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <ppoc@aol.com>

#### Connecticut

#### **Bridgeport/New Haven:**

connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

#### Georgia

**Atlanta:** The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

**Atlanta:** Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 404-939-2128.

#### Illinois

**Chicago:** The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-749-1202.

#### Louisiana

**New Orleans:** The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300, 504-833-3046.

#### New Jersey

**N. Central Jersey:** Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

#### New York

**Manhattan:** Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332.

**Long Island:** New York GIRL & Partners, PO Box 456, Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-5115 for info.

**Long Island:** Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 3015, Lake Ronkonkoma, NY 11779-0147.

#### Oklahoma

**Central Oklahoma:** Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Rachel Rudnick, P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

#### Pennsylvania

**Lehigh Valley/Pocono area:** Northeastern Pa. Transgender Alliance, NEPTGA, meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955.

#### **South Jersey Residents**

A new Renaissance Affiliate is forming in South Jersey to replace the old South Jersey Chapter. Former SJ leader, Terri Risley is heading up the reorganization effort. She may be reached after 6:00 PM at 609-933-2233 (ask for Tom).

As soon as a new meeting location is verified, there will be a meeting notice sent out to all former SJ Chapter members.

## Renaissance News & Views

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Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to our editorial office care of Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020-0530. Or use email to <bensalem@cpn.com>. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, make your check or M.O., payable to Renaissance and send it to our National office. Your contributions will help us continue our efforts to provide education about transgender issues. Donations can also be made through your local United Way agency.

### Local Calendar

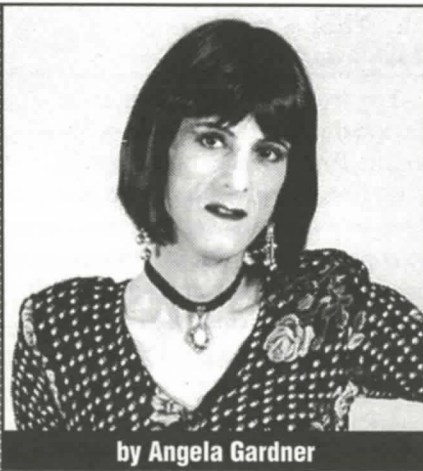
#### March

- 2 Ren. LSV meeting
- Ren. South Jersey—cancelled
- 9 Ren. Delaware
- 9 NEPTGA, Allentown
- 16 Ren. GPC

#### April

- 6 Ren. LSV meeting
- Ren. South Jersey—TBA
- 13 Ren. Delaware
- 13 NEPTGA, Allentown
- 20 Ren. GPC

# News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

Ah, the power of the media. Jenny M. wrote in last month and asked if anybody had ever heard of a television show called *The Ugliest girl In Town*. Well, it sounded kind of familiar but you know how hard it can be to remember those years in the late Sixties.

No sooner had the issue gone to press (actually it had made it to the mailing process) when **Beth Marshal** gave me a call with the following information on this short expedition into transgender entertainment. Here's the scoop.

## **The Ugliest Girl Wasn't An Illusion**

*The Ugliest Girl In Town*, according to *The Complete Directory of Prime Time Network TV Shows 1946-1995* (which Beth owns) ran from September 26, 1968 through January 30, 1969. It was on ABC Thursdays from 7:30 to 8 PM right before *The Flying Nun*, *Bewitched* and *That Girl*. There's one very familiar name in the cast: **Gary Marshal**. Other cast member included Peter Castner, Patricia Blake, Jenny Till and Nicholas Parsons.

Castner played "Timmie Blair," a photographer's brother who helps him out at the last minute when the photos of hippies the photog spent the Summer of Love shooting don't turnout. Timothy dresses as a hippy with love beads and a long wig and his brother shoots a few rolls of film. The photos fall into the hands of a London ad agency who think, due to the usual type of confusion necessary to get a guy into a dress, he's the ugliest girl

they ever saw and they decide to build an ad campaign around "her." Timothy becomes Timmie.

So Jenny, you're not nuts. There really was a show with this plot and it really did happen in the Sixties. I'm sorry I missed it. I guess I could have seen it but I may have just blocked it out. I mean, if Timmie was that ugly she no doubt offended my refined sense of esthetics. In any event Beth should get an award for digging this info out of the time capsule.

## **Speaking Of Awards**

Our contributing editor, **Dina Amberle**, has conducted her own exit poll of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter membership (she wouldn't let them exit till they answered her questions) and has tabulated the results to present the **Renni Awards**.

The Rennis are an honored tradition every year at the GPC and they are given to women who have been role models for feminine TG people and made a major impact in their field. Kind of like female meteors. So, without any further ado, the winners are—in the Newsmaker category, that royal tattle tale—**Princess Diana**. From the realm of Film, a young woman who drove her way into our hearts and onto our hard drives—**Sandra Bullock**, and from Television, the supernatural never looked better, *X Files* star—**Gillian Anderson**.

Of course Gillian's co-star could have given her some competition for the Renni. Before he landed the Fox Mulder part, David Duchovny played

the transvestite FBI agent on *Twin Peaks*. Till next year, that's the Rennis. Maybe next year we could have David Letterman host the ceremony?

## **Cavalcade Of TVs On TV**

I guess you can tell the weather has been awful in Philly. Otherwise I would have missed all these television shows with transgendered elements. (I'd have been out adding a transgender element to the local scene.)

PBS ran a series on rock and roll a while back. I missed most of it the first time it ran on our local PBS station, but it reran on another public station that comes in from the hinterlands and I happened to realize it was on and tuned in. In what I believe was the first or second show they featured a very young **Little Richard** performing *Tutti Frutti*. I had always felt there was an element of campiness (once I knew what that was) about Richard and his segment gave us a hint of where it may have come from.

One of Little Richard's first gigs (I love that showbiz talk!) was at the Dew Drop Inn in that hotbed of female impersonation, New Orleans. It's amazing to realize that Little Richard, who is still rockin', performed there in the Fifties and he was only one of the acts to appear every night on the Dew Drop stage. He did his sets in between exotic dancers and—female impersonators. What a show—very beautiful women dancing (in very hot outfits), then Little Richard burning the paint off the walls, followed by elegant female impersonators. Man 'o man, I should have been born a bit sooner and a little farther south.

## **Gender Spy**

John Lithgow was the guest on the *Late Late Show with Tom Snyder* back on February second. They chatted about John's new television show *Third Rock From The Sun*. Did ya know the woman on the show is really a male alien? Well, she's a woman who plays a male alien transformed into a woman. (Almost as confusing as *Victor Victoria*) One of the funniest scenes so

*continued next page*

## News Beat...

far was when she asked the High Commander (Lithgow) why she had to be the woman. He said, "You're a decorated veteran. I thought you could handle it." She wails, "It's hard."

Talk got around to Lithgow's role in *The World According To Garp*. I trust you recall he played a former football player who had undergone gender reassignment surgery. Snyder asked, "How hard was it to do drag?" Lithgow replied it was "an exotic experience, like being a spy behind the lines... a gender spy. It was a very sexy experience." This seemed to take Tom slightly aback and he raised one of his fuzzy caterpillar eyebrows and said in an inquiring tone, "Sexy?" Lithgow smiled and said, "Don't knock it till you've tried it." Tom went to a commercial.

### **Cabbie In Disguise, With Pumps**

On the sixth of February the plot of *Wings* had Antonio the cab driver filling in at the ticket counter for the brother's airline. He diligently follows the rules and denies a boarding pass to a famous hockey player who arrives too late. As a consequence the Boston Bruins lose the big game. Everyone on the island is out to get the hapless cabbie so he takes it on the lam. Later, a strange woman slinks into the office. Of course, it's Antonio in heels, hose, a woman's coat and a babushka. Eventually they work it all out and everybody but the hockey player is happy.

### **Oh, What A Web Those Hollywood Boys Weave**

The real big crossdressing event of the month happened in Rome, Wisconsin. *Picket Fences* on February ninth featured two interesting plot lines; crossdressing and Internet porn. Strangely enough, the two things are of interest to many of our readers. Both issues were a bit simplified on the show but they got a good old liberal Hollywood treatment.

I won't bother to outline the Internet porn plot line but here's the CD story. Max, the female police officer, met a guy in an on-line chat room. Since she hadn't had a date in months and the cyberchum seemed interesting they set up a meeting for coffee. He showed up and turned out to be tall and handsome, not the computer geek her co-workers said she could expect.

They hit it off and made plans for a date. Now it's important to note that so far nobody mentioned anything about crossdressing. The big night arrived and Max got dolled up in a hot red dress. While she was primping there came a knock at the door and she opened it to find the new guy in her life in classic Angora and pearls. He said, "Hi, ready to rock and roll?" She spent the next five minutes trying to get her jaw shut.

Here's where I had to ask myself how they could have met in a chat room and she could be left that much in the dark. The crossdresser said he thought she knew since they met in the "Mix & Match" room. Well, that's pretty vague, but if she had spent any

time at all there she would have figured it out. I also don't know of any crossdresser who could meet a woman in a wild on-line chat room, spend several days in email correspondence and not at least mention his love of dresses. But hey, that's Hollywood.

They didn't go out that night but she gets some amazingly accurate information on transvestism from the Coroner. He dated a transsexual a season or two back. He's defensive about it which is a trifle objectionable.

Max decides to give it another shot after the CD comes to her house in male attire, gives her flowers and makes an impassioned speech about how he will live his life alone if he must, but he must express his femininity. They agree to get together but not go out. She cooks dinner and the CD comes over. He gets a little romantic, she pulls away from a kiss (it was the lipstick), and he makes another impassioned speech about how women always say they want a sensitive guy who's in touch with his feminine side but when they get one they get upset. He leaves (I keep saying "he" cause he really is a guy in a dress and blonde wig. He made very little attempt to be feminine) and that's the end of the episode. Seems like the storyline may continue cause they both leave with room to grow and compromise.

Wouldn't it be nice to see the CD and the cop get together and attempt to understand each other's point of view? Maybe go for a little counseling? If you think so too and would like to add your input to the show, write a letter to the producers, Jeff Melvoin and

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### And Of Course...

How could I mention TVs on TV without using the name... are ya ready? Here it comes... **RuPaul**. Ms. Charles appeared in the opening of *Ellen* for one episode. *Ellen* makes it a running gag that the show doesn't have a fixed opening sequence. On this show, we saw RuPaul strutting around the set looking fierce. Then Ellen, who never, ever wears dresses or skirts, tottered on camera in a red sequined gown and heels holding the cardboard sign with the show's name. She made it about halfway to the camera when the heels won and she went down. RuPaul made a campy comment, but I didn't catch it. My keyboard was making too much noise as I typed. I tell ya, with all the drag on TV it must be sweeps month. Didja see *Miss Howard Stern* on Letterman's prime time special, February 19th?

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### What Is The Password?

From Riki Anne Wilchins of Transsexual Menace and Joyce Andrews of T.O.P.s, through my friend Miranda Thomas, *Renaissance News & Views* has obtained a copy of an "Eyes Only" document generated in October of 1993 for the CIA called *Sexual Behavior And Security Risk, Background Information For Security Personnel* by Richards J. Heuer, Jr. This little document talks about sexuality and how it may impact personnel operating with high level security clearances. The report states on it's opening page that "Sexual behavior of any type, including 'normal' heterosexual intercourse between consenting adults, is a security concern if it is compulsive and out of control." It goes on to discuss various sexual and gender orientations and focuses on how they would affect security concerns. It concludes, "...sexual orientation alone is not an appropriate

basis for security concern."

All the information on transsexuality and transvestism is pretty much correct. The TV info is out of date, being based on Virginia Prince's survey of Tri-Ess members back in the Sixties. However, the biggest mistake the author makes is to classify gender phenomena under the "sexual" headline. His conclusion is pretty intelligent considering the paper was written for the Central Intelligence Agency, a place you wouldn't expect too much open mindedness about sex and gender. To quote, "Findings in this report suggest a need to rethink criteria for evaluating a number of forms of atypical sexual behavior, some of which may be unrelated to security risk The report reinforces the importance of case-by-case judgments, rather than automatic disqualification of some categories; this emphasizes the need for qualified medical expertise in making many of these judgments."

It's pretty interesting and I'll endeavor to make a copy available in the Renaissance Library. You may also be able to access it on the Web at <<http://www.greatbasin.net/~kuryakin/tops/>>. In any case, after you have memorized the document we recommend you destroy it. Eating it is an option if your document shredder is out of commission.

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### Fight The Right

A new Internet mailing list, *Pennsylvania Exposé-Low Volume* has been established. This is a one-way list edited by Maggie Heineman and is a project of the Fight the Right Network (Philadelphia) in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Alliance for Democracy. It is patterned after the Focus on the Family fax-letter *Family Issues Alert*.

The next issue will center around issues important to Critical Path, Internet censorship, and the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes.

The hardcopy version of *Pennsylvania Exposé* is two pages. For depth, the e-letter/faxletter will include pointers to additional resources. To subscribe send email to <[listproc@critpath.org](mailto:listproc@critpath.org)>, in the body type <subscribe pa-explv YourFirstName, YourLastName>.

For more information contact Maggie Heineman by email at <[maggie@critpath.org](mailto:maggie@critpath.org)>

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### All Dressed Up? Here's To Do:

First up in Filthy-delphia, Pa. on April 14th it's the **Philadelphia Living Legend Award** to Benefit Project W.E.B. (Where Everything Begins) and Manna. It's a glittering award ceremony and show. Featured performers include living legends Les Harris and Tinsel Garland. No doubt ticket information and show location can be obtained from Manna, or you might try Giovanni's Room.

In London, England the girls are having a fete that's a bit similar to the USA's Night of A Thousand Gowns. Of course in England it's a **Night of a Thousand Frocks**. If you happen to be in Merry Olde on March 14th, you can toddle along to Stringfellows in Upper St Martin's Lane, London. For all the details grab the telephone and make that trans-Atlantic call: (01553) 840879 or 0171-240-5534.

Also in England you'll find **Ron Storme's Travestie Extraordinaire** at a new venue; The Mildmay, 130 Balls Pond Road (what a spot for a TV party), Islington, London, N1 Telephone: 0171 354 0611 For dates and information ring up Ron at 0181 788 4154. Ron holds his balls every month. (OK, that was a bit tasteless. Let's just move on while we have momentum.)

March 24th the **IFGE Convention "Minnesota Pride '96"** hikes up it's skirts and hunkers down in Minneapolis to stay through the 31st. Call IFGE at 617-899-2212 for the facts.

In April, first up is The Imperial Court of New York's **Night of A Thousand Gowns** on the 20th. Call Empress Philomena at 212-979-8956 for info. Later in the month it's time for **California Dreamin'** in San Francisco from the 25th to the 28th. Call 714-779-9013 for details.

Coming in May, **Paradise in the Poconos** from the 16th through the 19th. Call my pal JoAnn at CDS, 610-640-9449. Hey, maybe I'll go this year.

And speaking of going... that's all she wrote. See ya next month.



## Family...

ner with family; sending relatives Christmas and birthday cards; turning to the family elders for their experience and advice; arguing with relatives; you know, just basic family stuff. After months of grieving and mourning the loss of my family (OK, I admit it, I am still in mourning), I admitted to myself that I desperately wanted and needed a family. So, I decided to make one.

### Well, At Least It Wasn't From An Infomercial

Years ago, I was listening to one of those motivational tapes (you know, the ones that tell you how to solve all of your problems just by buying their 6 cassettes, for an outrageous fee. I borrowed this tape from the library) and heard something that struck a chord in me. The speaker was a woman telling an audience of women how to improve their individual images in the workplace. She was speaking on the topic of building self-esteem, and commented about how difficult it is to maintain a positive self image when your well-meaning family and friends constantly tell you how hard it will be for you to achieve your goals, because you don't have the education or the money or you're too old or too young or you're a woman or you're a mother or whatever. The point is, you keep getting negative messages from the very people who are supposed to be building you up. A solution? "Invent" relatives, or "adopt" a figure from history or a celebrity that you truly admire, and figuratively turn to them when you need inspiration and guidance. For example, when things get tough, ask yourself how your "great Aunt Helen Keller" would handle the situation. Would she complain that things were "too tough to handle," or would she buckle down and find a way to use her talents to get through the tough times? What would your Aunt Katherine (Hepburn) say as you whined about how hard it is to make it in a male-dominated world? When I find myself facing difficulty because I chose to live

in what some people refer to as an "alternative life-style," I have often thought to myself that if Aunt Martina (Navratalova) could survive the hell she has been through, I can take a few insults from some ignorant people. And, for me, so far, it has worked.

### Presto! Chango! You're Now My Older Sister...

This helps me with the inspiration and motivation parts of what I need, but what about the rest of the benefits of having a family? Obviously, Aunt Martina and Aunt Billie Jean (King) are not likely to invite me over for holiday dinner, so I need to come up with some more "family members." Well, if I can "adopt" people I have never met, why not "adopt" people that I actually know and like? This works too, and as a result of some creative thinking I now have a mother, two sisters (two others are considering my offer), a brother, a stepsister, and a niece. I have my sights on two more potential aunts, and some more nieces and nephews. After that, who knows? Second cousins? Great-grandparents? The possibilities are endless. (Except, of course, when it comes to male relatives; I am having a very difficult time thinking of men that I actually want to have as part of my family). And the actual costs are minimal. There are no adoption agency fees, court costs, or attorney's fees to deal with—just an occasional letter, phone call, birthday card, etc. If I find myself without a place to go for Christmas, at least I know I am not alone, because I will hopefully have a room full of Christmas cards to look at, and maybe even a family photo album to work on.

### What's In It For Them?

The benefits to me are obvious, but what's in it for my "family?" My "mother" is still kind of skeptical and suspicious, and agreed to be my mother as long as I realized that she wasn't about to change her will. But she did send me a Christmas card, signed "Mom Margaret," that I proudly displayed on my coffee table. I am giving each relative a free, 90-day trial period, with no cost or obliga-

tion—if they aren't completely satisfied being in my family, they just return the unused portion of me, no questions asked. I am a low-upkeep variety of relative, as I buy my own food and clothes and they don't even have to send me to college (although a graduate-school trust fund would be nice). If they don't want to do anything, they don't have to—and then they will be just like the relatives I had before, which is okay because at least my new relatives all accept me as I am. They benefit by having someone else to worry about, just in case they don't have enough to worry about already. They have someone else they can turn to when it comes time to show their slides from their last vacation and their neighbors are hiding from them. And I make a great "black sheep of the family," that they can share with their friends and co-workers when the discussion turns to "who has the weirdest family member?" For those who live outside of the Washington, D.C., area, I am the relative they can stay with when the time comes to visit our nation's Capital. And for those in the Washington area who want to go on vacation, I am the relative they can get to feed the cats and water the plants, because of my "family obligation." (But I don't do floors or windows.) Any relatives getting married know they have another relative they can invite to the wedding who probably won't show up but will send a present (or, if asked, WILL show up and jump in as a stand-in "Mother-of-the-Bride"). And, when you get right down to it, they get the satisfaction of knowing that someone cares enough about them to want to be related to them.

### Epilogue

(I don't know what it means, but they always use it on old TV shows.) Some people would say that by inventing a new family, I am living in a fantasy world. I would respond to that by simply saying that I have always lived in a fantasy world anyway, in order to survive the hellish existence known as "Joseph," so how is this any

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**The Community Center** — Your online source for information about transgender support organizations. If your organization would like to be on the World Wide Web, contact us at the CC web site <[www.transgender.org/tg/](http://www.transgender.org/tg/)>.

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It is with great regret that I announce my withdrawal from the race for the Presidency. After a disappointing sixth place finish in New Hampshire, it will be increasingly difficult for me to continue my candidacy while maintaining a straight face.

My spin doctors advised me to declare the sixth place showing a 'victory' since the pundits said I would never finish higher than seventh. And while it was encouraging to come in with more votes than Bob Dornan and that Keyes guy, I realize that further time on the campaign trail would only diminish my ability to write this important monthly column.

As you may recall, my major platform was a 'reverse flat tax' that would place a prohibitive tax burden on any queen who dared sport a larger pair of falsies than my own. The resulting collection of foam rubber would have been redistributed to other disadvantaged crossdressers so that we might all share the bounties of a fulsome bosom. My other major plank of placing strict sanctions on immigration of Hispanic and Asian transvestites would reduce the competition for the rest of us at Club Edelweiss in Manhattan.

Some have said that these ideas are ahead of their time. All I know is that my cadre of fund-raisers have spent enough time soliciting 'contributions' on the street corners near The Vault and Lee's Mardi Gras and I can't in good conscience ask them to 'work it' any harder than they already have.

However, in the spirit of all never-say-die politicians, I will consider a last minute 'draft' candidacy. And in a spandex minidress, a draft is never hard to come by.

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### **Homogeneity And The Cross-dressers Who Preach It**

Kymerleigh Richards is the Publisher and Managing Editor of *Cross Talk* magazine out of Woodland Hills, Calif. In issue #75, her monthly column was titled 'Good Taste and Common Sense.'

Kym writes that she has been at the forefront of the revolution in how society perceives the transgendered. She admits that she gets 'easily irritated by those in our community whose words and actions have the effect of undermining our best efforts.' A few of the types of people who irritate her are crossdressers who dress inappropriately for social events; activist leaders who take it upon themselves to protest trivial slights on behalf of the rest of us who see no offense; pseudo-linguists who need to invent new labels because they are unhappy with the old labels; and those who have a paranoid view of the world and believe that their perspective is the only correct view.

About each of these types, Kymerleigh makes her points. 'Appearing as the crossdresser-from-hell only reinforces society's perception that we are all crazy.' 'Picketing over an issue that most find a non-issue makes us look like a very angry and emotionally unbalanced lot.' 'We need to stop the constant bickering... on such matters as terminology and personal preferences.' 'Coalition building is necessary. Alienating allies is counterproductive.' These are statements that do indeed make a lot of common sense, as Kym titled her essay.

However, Kymerleigh's main thesis seems to be that we must all adopt a

kind of vanilla-flavored transgenderism so that we project an indivisible, common front to the outside world. She doesn't condemn individuals on either end of the spectrum but rather wishes they would all bunch in towards the middle, sublimate their personal expressions, and help us create a huge loaf of transgendered white bread.

It's a well-intentioned idea but I'm not sure it would work even if we all toed the line and became clubwomen in sedate clothing and polite manner. Which is not to say that being outrageous or polite will help us either. I'm not sure crossdressing or other transgendered expressions will ever really be 'accepted' any more than racism or sexism has been washed away after thirty years of enlightenment on a much broader and more publicized scale than we can hope to achieve.

It would be better, I think, to present ourselves as a diverse group of individuals who may share some common traits and goals but who express ourselves in many different colors to be agreed with or disagreed with on an individual basis.

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### **Nudist Or Transvestite - You Be The Judge**

The *News Briefs* of the Sigma Nu Rho Tri-Ess chapter in Trenton, N.J., carried an interesting item about crossdressing, undressing, and state troopers on the streets of Newark, N.J.

Two Newark cops apprehended Kenneth Ruff after observing a suspiciously-dressed character getting into an unmarked New Jersey State Police vehicle. When the officers approached the vehicle, they saw what they thought was a female lying in the front seat trying to avoid detection. The 'female' was Mr. Ruff, who told them he was a New Jersey State Trooper conducting an undercover investigation for a friend with AIDS. After the Newark cops put Ruff in their patrol car, he became rambunctious and 'the next thing we saw was clothes flying... and he emerged from the patrol car naked except for the bra,' said one of the arresting officers. The officers searched Ruff's vehicle and found identification confirming his identity as a trooper.



This incident occurred in August 1990 and is replaying again because Ruff is suing the State Police for firing him after the incident and his attorney is now trying to prove that the crossdresser arrested that night was not Mr. Ruff, but some unidentified impersonator who faked Ruff's ID.

I hate it when that happens.

But here's the thing for the rest of us to think about: how bad is it when a person would rather be arrested as a raving, naked person on the streets of Newark than as a crossdresser? It's enough to make me think my monthly columns preaching tolerance and acceptance just aren't getting across.

But nudism is also a method of self expression and there are many places on this planet that can move a person to commune with nature by stripping off the bonds of clothing to enjoy the sylvan splendor of the great outdoors.

Unfortunately, Newark is not one of those places.

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### **New Marilyn's Miss Dandies**

The TGIC group in Albany N.Y., *Transgenderist* newsletter of January '96 reprinted an article 'Where the Girls Are' that appeared in the Tokyo Journal by a reporter named Abigail Haworth.

New Marilyn is the name of a Tokyo nightclub featuring male impersonators who work as hosts for genetic women looking for companionship. The women who work there as male hosts are called 'Miss Dandies' and they offer a very realistic presentation of macho available for the price of a few drinks.

The women who go into this line of work are required to take male hormones, groom themselves, and live and dress as men full-time. The customers who come to the club are there to find anything from a diversionary evening of non-threatening flirtation to a sexual liaison with one of the 'men.'

There have been several articles in our community literature that discussed the Japanese transgender scene and I must admit that I find it somewhat confusing. There seems to be a certain amount of cultural acceptance of gender switching, but only if it is a

total switch with no overt acknowledgment that the person is anything other than the gender portrayed. Campy drag or regular crossdressing does not seem to be accepted as readily as full-scale transformations whether for art or commerce. The Japanese culture is always referred to—even in articles about these rather stunning transgender phenomena—as conservative.

Back at New Marilyn... the customers pair off with the hosts, individually or in parties. 'Many of our customers crave a kind of male attention that real men rarely provide,' explains a host. 'To me they are a kind of middle sex,' says one customer, 'I can talk to them about anything because they are women underneath, yet I can flirt with them because they are also men.'

For those who might seek more than just flirtation during the karaoke show, the hosts are available to 'date' outside the club. A young art student who visits New Marilyn weekly said, 'I have never slept with a host—but I wouldn't rule it out.' And in those instances where flirtation progresses beyond the club scene, one host explained that, 'In bed, we only think of pleasing our girlfriends.' And in any culture—east or west—that is something women rarely rub up against.

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### **Abnormal Psychology 101**

The *ETVC Newsletter* from San Francisco, Calif., carried an article by one Roxanna Rochette titled 'Speaking as a Majority of One' in the Jan-Feb issue. In the article, Roxanna wrote about her experiences speaking about crossdressing to college classes.

Some TG support groups, including Renaissance, have an active program of providing speakers to college classes and most of the speakers participating seem to enjoy it greatly. As Roxanna says, 'I felt my own brand of transgendered expression plus a willingness to speak frankly about sexual orientation and what I see as the sparkplug to crossdressing, sexuality, could be a positive addition to greater understanding of transgender issues.'

Roxanna has discovered, however, that there 'is a general shying away from asking probing questions regard-

ing personal sexuality and how it relates to crossdressing.' She senses a general uncomfortableness with the whole thing in the male students, perhaps a product of their age and uncertainties about what is male gender. The young women ask the majority of questions and students whom Roxanna knows or believes to be non-straight ask the best questions.

She says she likes to use as much 'show and tell' as possible both in her mode of dress and by use of photographs illustrating personal changes in image over the years. Like most crossdressers, I imagine she enjoys talking about herself and has found that speaking to the classes has clarified her own thoughts about who she really is.

If someone would market buttons that said 'Let Me Tell You About My Crossdressing', they would clean up. Some crossdressers have written whole volumes on the wonder that is themselves. And who has not whipped out a photo album at the merest hint of interest from another person?

Well, it's all for a good cause: education. And who will begrudge us a little vanity while we're doing good works? We go to a lot of trouble to transform ourselves and, as everyone will tell you, it's a form of self-expression. So sit still while we express ourselves in a little more detail. It's the least you can do.

Class dismissed.

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### **Errata**

I saw in JoAnn's HOT BUZZ column last month that Vernon's Specialties has closed up shop after many years of serving the crossdressing community.

In one of my early columns a couple of years ago, I kidded the proprietor of Vernon's because of one of their ads touting their line of 'realistic molded latex' dildoes in varying sizes.

It's never a good thing when one of our businesses goes under and I'm sure I speak for many of us when I say that we appreciated their service. Every inch of it.





# GenderReflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**  
M.S.W., Ph.D.

## Questions Commonly Asked by Therapists About Gender Identity Issues

When I accept an engagement to speak on TG issues to a professional audience, the part of that experience I most look forward to is the Q&A at the end. I always leave half as much time for this segment as for my presentation and it is rarely enough. I usually speak on aspects of psychotherapy with transgender clients and cover why treatment is sought, what clinical issues are raised, symptoms, my philosophy and role in therapy, setting goals and measuring outcomes.

Here are some of the most common queries and my responses:

### How did you get into this field?

I first became exposed to the transgender community when I was a marital and sex therapist in New Jersey. I met a woman who had a wig shop and electrolysis practice who hosted meetings for a chapter of Tri-Ess in her home. She invited me to a meeting to speak on sexuality, relationships, and therapy. My preparation for that talk and the meeting itself was the beginning of my interest in the experience of transgenderism.

### What is the cause of Trans-isms?

Some scientists believe in a biological root and have identified the role of the hypothalamus as crucial in its development. Others, usually social sci-

entists believe psychological factors, especially family relationships impact on the development of gender identity. In any event, it is the *distress* associated with transgender issues, not the crossgender identity itself that is dealt with in therapy and therefore the cause is irrelevant in treatment.

### I am treating a child who cross-dresses, is a sissy/tomboy, etc. What should I do?

Kids are different. They express their gender identity across a broad range of behaviors that fall within usual limits as well as beyond. Some children express themselves in a manner that flaunts traditional standards but does not isolate them from normal childhood experiences. These children do not require special attention.

Other children's behavior may be so unusual that it elicits negative responses from peers and family. It is less a question of whether the child is TG than if his/her behavior is precluding positive feedback from peers, the forming of friendships and the development of self-esteem.

### What about prospective clients who don't really want therapy, just a letter approving them for hormonal therapy or genital surgery?

I adhere to HBGDA's (Harry Ben-

jamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's) requirement of three months therapy for recommendation for hormones and six months for genital reassignment surgery. I tell such individuals that therapy is a broad term encompassing education, rehearsal of new behaviors, problem-solving, and identifying resources as well as the traditional experience of learning about one's needs, motivations and expectations. I encourage them to consider going along with the program but do not pressure them. They are free to seek their approval letter elsewhere.

### How do transsexuals differ from transvestites?

In many ways. Their histories, sexual patterns, experience of their bodies as appropriate or not appropriate to their gender, whether or not surgery is desired, all distinguish one set of individuals from the other. In fact, their only commonality is their desire to crossdress. Beyond that, they have very different needs and goals in therapy.

### How do you respond to a client seeking a "cure" for transgender behavior and feelings?

Because transgender behavior is not an illness but a statistically uncommon experience, it is not curable. However, the gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder that may accompany it is treatable with traditional therapeutic approaches incorporating education, self-awareness, building of self-esteem, locating a supportive community, abandoning secretiveness and guilt, and living in the most authentic manner allowed by one's lifestyle.



This is a sprinkling of the kinds of questions professionals ask. On the one hand, I think they should know these things already. On the other hand, I'm glad they are interested enough to seek the answers and humble enough to acknowledge their deficits.



## CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Ads are \$3.00 for 3 lines for 3 months.

Furniture, Appliances, Household goods, Records, Antiques, Toy trains and other goodies - Bought and Sold - Beth Marshall: 610-259-4945 - Leave a message

Crossdressing blues band forming in the Philadelphia area. Need drummer with a nice frock. For information call Terri at 215-763-3240.

Mi casa es su casa. Need a place to change before the Renaissance GPC meeting? The perfect location awaits you, just off Exit 33, Rte. 76. Call CDTips 215-878-3383

## CLASSIFIEDS

Prosthesis custom made for a man's chest. Dorothy M. Thompson, 215-744-4746, before 10 AM or after 8PM

Looking for amateur crossdressers with interest in modeling. Please send letter of introduction along with photo to: Christy Cage, 4807 Cedar Ave., Suite 3F, Philadelphia, PA 19143

Tired of nightclubs? CD(45) & wife looking for others in KOP, Pottstown, Reading area interested in a WINTER BRIDGE CLUB. Email 72162, 1367@compuserve.com

# Can I Get A Miss Gardner?

by Angela Gardner

Gather round sisters. I have a tale to tell, of shopping and identity, with a little credit card abuse thrown in to keep things interesting. A while back, I was passing some time crossdressed, as I often do, when the urge to peruse the jewelry sale at Lord & Taylor became over powering. I quickly motored over to the Mall at King of Prussia (It's not an accident that the Renaissance National Office is close to the mall) and made my way into the new Lord & Taylor store that acts as a cornerstone for the Plaza section.

I took my time getting to the jewelry counter by checking out the merchandise in most of the women's departments. I didn't see anything I couldn't live without, so I started to shop for metallic adornment. My favorite is Sterling Silver and they had it all on sale.

As I was looking over the merchandise, one of the saleswomen asked if I needed any help. I told her I was just looking and would let her know when I'd made a choice. It was a cordial exchange between a customer and a store employee. She didn't raise an eyebrow if my voice sounded a little low for a woman or if the hand trying on the rings was a bit more manly than it should have been.

I picked out a pinky ring, reduced to \$9.99 (as if we don't know that's a penny less than ten dollars) and took it over to where the saleswoman was standing. We went to a register and before she rang up the sale she uttered those words that have made many a crossdresser sweat, "Will that be cash or charge?"

Now, I have long been over worrying about what store help thinks when I hand them a credit card with a male name. I'll admit, for a while I would always wear a fake wedding ring. That way if anybody ever said anything (they never did) I would say it was my husband's card. But now, even that last line of defense has been abandoned for a more open approach. If asked I simply say it's my card.

So, I told the young woman, "Charge it" and handed her my Lord & Taylor charge. (I love the card, it's white with a red rose logo.) She took the card, rang me up, asked if I wanted a box—which I declined, and completed the transaction. Then she handed me my card and said, "Thank you for shopping at Lord & Taylor *Mister* Smith." (Angela's male name changed cause she ain't *that* open.)

Well, I have to admit, it bothered me. Not because I had been read. That had occurred back when she first asked me if I needed help. Our entire interaction had been a very normal customer-salesperson thing. The two of us, along with another saleswoman, had shared opinions on a new designer's jewelry hanging on a nearby display. All that went fine and after she called me "Mister" our relationship remained the same. I knew there wasn't any intent to embarrass me by using a masculine appellation, she was only trying to be as respectful to me as to any other customer. She had no way of knowing that since I was dressed as a woman and wanted to be treated as one, I would have preferred to be addressed as "Miss..."

That's when I decided to visit Customer Service. I stopped in and spoke to a woman behind the counter. I opened big with, "Hi, I'm a crossdresser and I'd like to know how I would go about getting a card for my account with another name. I would like the card in the feminine name I use while dressed as a woman."

It didn't slow her down a bit. She pointed to the terminal on her counter and told me all she could do was get account balances. If I wanted to make a big change like that I'd have to call the Credit Department in Ohio. She told me I could pick up one of the courtesy phones on the opposite wall and I would be connected. I didn't want to stand around the store and give out a lot of personal info, so I asked if there was any number I could call from home. She gave me a number at the King of Prussia store and in-

cluded an extension that would connect me directly to Ohio, thereby saving me any long distance charges. She didn't call me "sir." I liked that.

At home, I contacted the Credit Department. The woman I spoke with had a Scottish accent and seemed friendly enough. I told her I had a request that might be a little out of the ordinary. She told me I would be surprised at what some folks will ask for. Thus reassured, I told her what I wanted to do.

Now, it may be that I only imagined her voice became a trifle less friendly and a bit more professional, but she told me she couldn't honor my wishes over the phone. If I wanted to get a card for Angela I would have to put it in writing. She gave me the address and told me what the letter should say.

In the letter, which I wrote and sent the next day, I said that I wished to have a card issued for Angela Gardner on my present account. I wrote that I would be responsible for any charges made. With that assurance in their files the fine folks at Lord & Taylor sent me a brand new card imprinted with my femme name.

Of course, it's now a matter of record, somewhere in an office in Ohio, that there is a relationship between "Mister Smith" and "Angela Gardner." So what? I have a card now that may help me avoid the slight (really it's very slight) upset at being called "sir" or "mister" when I buy something at Lord & Taylor. I haven't found out yet if they'll call me "miss" when I make my first purchase with the new card. Until I manage to get the balance down to somewhere below the national debt, that little white card with the pretty rose will stay locked in my credit-cards-with-balances-that-are-way-to-high vault. Fortunately, my Macy's charge has plenty of credit available for abuse. Wonder if they'll send me an Angela card?

*Since Angela wrote this piece she dynamited her credit card vault open, used the Lord & Taylor card at their big clearance sale and got a pleasant "Thank you, Miss Gardner" with every purchase.*



# Hot Buzz

## JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"Don't dig your own grave with your own knife and fork."

— English Proverb

Hey! You all asleep out there? No one seemed to notice that last month's issue of *News & Views* had Vol. 10, No. 1 running across every page and on the cover. I guess the news was just too compelling a read for anyone to notice such a trivial thing. I sure didn't and I layout this rag.

I started last month with a caution for **IFGE** regarding *Transgender Tapestry* (or whatever they call it this month). I've heard from several people regarding the magazine and the split is running 50-50, like-dislike. See the letter in this month's Letter to the Editor column from Pauline for a typical response. Personally, I think attempts at "mainstreaming" *Transgender Tapestry*, or any other transgender magazine (Yes, even *LadyLike*) will meet with only very limited success. Look, here comes Mr Closet-TV into Barnes & Noble. He sees *Transgender Tapestry* or *Cross-Talk* on the rack. He picks it up, flips through the pages, maybe even memorizes an address of an advertiser or a support group and then puts it back on the rack. Why? Mr. Closet-TV isn't going to walk up to the cashier and buy a "transvestite" magazine out in plain view of everyone. Those who are clued-in to the community are likely to have subscriptions al-

ready. *Cross-Talk* has thrown in the towel on trying to make it on the newsstand and *Transformation* can't get on regular newsstands. I spoke to a distributor about mainstreaming transgender publications and his response was: "...the transgender magazines just don't sell well enough to take on more." This is what *Cross-Talk* experienced. However, one place our publications do seem to sell well is in gay and lesbian bookstores. Another distributor has been snapping up transgender books left and right for sales to g/l/b bookstores. As the owner put it, "Drag is hot."

Drag is hot in the media, too. **Julie Andrews** has revived *Victor/Victoria* as a Broadway musical to rave reviews if the *New York Times* is any measure. (I wonder if *Transgender* will cover that next?) **Robin Williams** and Broadway actor **Nathan Lane** will reprise *La Cage Aux Folles* on the silver screen as *The Bird Cage* this month. (By the way, we had it all wrong in these pages a while back—Williams is playing the macho Renato and Lane is playing Albin/Albert). Finally, the week of Valentine's Day saw **RuPaul** as the hostess for the SciFi Channel's *Strange Love* film festival. At the other end of the spectrum is the ad for Bijan with **Bo Derek**. To the far left is the shapely Ms. Derek in bra and panties donning a silky shirt. At far right is Ms. Derek fully clothed in a menswear suit complete with shirt and tie.

From the net comes this message by a friend, **Jami Ward**: "On another note, I want to broach a subject with you. I don't know how you feel personally about the whole **O.J. Simpson** deal, but I'm more than a little irked by it all. And now there's his video! Well, I do volunteer work at a local shelter for abused women, and one of the staff members there said that as a form of positive protest against that tape, rather than just boycotting it, folks have started taking the \$29.95 cost of the tape and donating

the money to a local women's shelter instead. Since you have a greater public presence than I do, I wanted to ask if you could disseminate this idea in a future column or anywhere else you see fit. I will also be asking **Cindy Martin** (TGForum), and anyone else I can think of, to do the same because I believe it's an idea that deserves exposure. I would like to think that with enough grassroots activism, the shelters would make more money than O.J. from this." Well put Jami and a great idea, too. Readers, it's up to you to act.

I spent a weekend last month in **Toronto** with **Virginia Prince** as guests of **Paddy Aldridge** at **Wildside**. Paddy set up a gig for Virginia and me so we could talk with members of the Ontario transgender community. I had a great time and met lots of new folks as well as renewing some old friendships. The Canadian transgender community is slowly coming into its own and its likely we'll see some important community leadership emerge from our Northern sisters. I met briefly with leaders of **Gender Mosaic**, **Xpressions**, and the **Monarch Social Club**. Xpressions expressed some interest in affiliating with **Renaissance**. That would make us a truly international organization. Way kew!

Well, I'm into column 3 and that means it's time to get down to fashion notes and news... Science and Technology triumph again. This time it's pantyhose without seams. Yes, truly an amazing feat. And **Calvin Klein**, that little devil, is the first to offer it. Sorry, no price quoted, but first-adopters of new technology never worry about what it costs.

Thank Goddess most of us (and most other women for that matter) don't pay attention to the runway crowd. I mean, really. Gobs of blue eyeshadow and unruly hair. Yecch! Most drag queens look better than the runway model. Earth to fashion world... wake up!

# HOT•BUZZ

So what *is up* with the fashion world? Here's six hot looks for Spring... Citrus Juice colors... The Trench look in both coats and dresses... Split-personality skirt lengths, either macro-ankle length or micro-thigh length... Definitely-Not-June-Cleaver shirtdresses... Slack suits... Pop-Art prints on everything. The one color I really dislike this Spring is the light, lime green. It reminds me of the color of some 1968 Plymouth Dusters.

They say Practice Makes Perfect... *marie claire* magazine had a makeup artist estimate how long it took certain fashionable women to put on their face. Leading the pack with the shortest time was **Linda Evangelista** at 1 minute: no foundation, no eye makeup, just blush and lipstick... Next was **Courtney Cox** (*Friends*) at 30 minutes... **Famke Janssen** (The latest **James Bond** arch villain) at 1 hour... and trailing the pack at 2 hours was **Loni Anderson**. Anderson's makeup was characterized as "very high maintenance, superglam Hollywood" including no less than 12 steps. Gee, I don't feel so bad at 45 minutes.

Down the aisle, past the torque wrenches... **Sears** has gotten into cosmetics in a big way with their **Circle of Beauty** section in stores nationwide. What's so cool about this for tg people is it's self-service. Just open a big drawer and pick out what you need.

Biological Bust Boosting? Researchers at the **Carolinas Medical Center** and the **University of Michigan** have experimented with growing breast-like tissue for implantation. Fatty cells similar to breast tissue were cultivated in vitro and then attached onto soft sponge-like forms. These forms were implanted in lab rats where the tissue continued to develop and even vascularize. Someday, it might be possible to create an implantable breastform from the patient's own body tissue. No rejection.

Computers and computer modeling are becoming more commonplace daily.

The latest trend is to use computers and 3-D modeling to preview the results of plastic surgery. Making the rounds of medical conventions is a software package that lets plastic surgeons "see" the results of surgery without touching a scalpel. The patient's face is captured onto the computer screen via a video camera and the surgeon can then manipulate the image.

Speaking of images, women seem less satisfied with their bodies today than 10 years ago. According to a recent study of 800 women between the ages of 18 and 70, more than 45 percent were displeased with their weight, waist, hips, buttocks and legs. Only 16 percent said they were content with their body. The same survey done 10 years ago, turned up only 30 percent who were dissatisfied. Interestingly, in both studies African-American women were much more satisfied with their appearance than other groups, probably because of African-American culture's greater acceptance of differing body shapes. We have become so accustomed to seeing images of runway and advertising models, who represent a statistical extreme in terms of body shape, that we begin to believe all women should look like them.

One designer who seems to really know women's bodies and how to design good looking clothes is **Dana Buchman**.

You know you're mainstream when they start making fun of you... **Donna Karan** sued a New York T-shirt manufacturer for trademark infringement. He was selling T-shirts with DKFU on them. But Ms. Karan has missed a few knock-offs, like the cartoon in the *New Yorker* with a couple in leisure suits reading DKNJ, and the D(Y)K(E)NY T-shirts.

Quotable: "A fashion is merely a form of ugliness so unbearable that we are compelled to alter it every six months." **Oscar Wilde**.

I'd swear a TV asked this question. Someone wrote in to *Glamour* magazine and asked if a sequined cocktail dress was appropriate for a daytime wedding.

This is a test. Punctuate the following: Woman without her man is a savage.

**Chanel** has a mission: introduce unorthodox nail colors that will double sales like **Vamp** did last year. First they tried **Pink Alert** which is the color of bubble gum. Their newest is **Metallic**, a silvery polish that gives a slight pearlescent.

Another organization with a mission is **3•D Communications, Inc.** (See their ad on page 7.) 3•D is the host for the **CDS Shopping & Resource Center**, **The Community Center**, and Cindy Martin's **Transgender Forum**. The big news is Transgender Forum is going subscription. For a mere \$25 per year on-line users will get full access to 50 issues of a great e'zine. Non-subscribers will be able to read a text-only version of the 'zine each week. Subscribers get full text and graphics, access to the Chat room, free personal ads, and more features are coming. Surf on over to <<http://www.tgforum.com/content1.html>> and take a look for yourself. Meanwhile, if your tg support organization would like a Web site of its own, 3•D is offering free Web space to all not-for-profit groups. Contact **Jamie Faye Fenton** at <[jamief@zoom.com](mailto:jamief@zoom.com)> for info. If you have a community-based business and would like to explore business opportunities on the Web, contact me at the email address at the bottom of this column. We can have a store up and running in no time. For the rest of you, stop by the Shopping & Resource Center at <<http://www.cdspub.com/index2.html>> and take a look at what we're offering.

I'm sick of seeing white (as in snow), but that's the latest word for spring—white eyeshadow, nail polish and lipstick. Everybody's gotten into the act, too, like Bobbi Brown, Chanel, Lancôme, and M•A•C. Prices range from \$17 (Bobbi Brown shadow) to \$50 (Chanel shadow). Try using chalk dust and Whiteout.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think if you turn your back on this community, eventually it will turn its back on you. Comments? Email them to <[CyberQueen@cdspub.com](mailto:CyberQueen@cdspub.com)>. © 1996 by Creative Design Services.



# BOOK NOOK

## Life With Vanessa

by Linda and Vanessa Kaye

Review by Georgia Hilbert

\$10.00 (plus \$1.50 shipping for U.S. and \$2.50 shipping overseas) from M. Kull, 6957 N.W. Expressway, Suite 121, Oklahoma City, OK 73132

*Life With Vanessa* is a how-to book, an intimate revelation, a discussion of intimacies. It's all that and more. The book is Linda and Vanessa Kaye's (Ladies First) collaboration on living with, coping with and learning to appreciate life with a transgendered person. Written from the perspective of both partners, and told with candor, compassion, tenderness and openness rarely seen in an expository book, it is both educational and entertaining. The authors cover all bases from debunking myths to disclosing, accepting, controlling and enjoying one of life's least understood phenomena.

Beginning with an introduction by JoAnn Roberts, Ph.D., the book leads off with a challenge to learn about oneself. The authors go on to explain terms such as what is a TS, FI, DQ (and that it doesn't mean Dairy Queen). Following which they dwell on "The Woman Within" discussing how to bring out and integrate that person whom the transgendered part-

ner claims to share within him/herself. In *The Other Woman* they discuss how to address and deal with the partner who wants to live in, already lives in, or "visits" the home while crossdressed.

Not content with the easy questions Linda and Vanessa delve into sexual and religious matters. In *Sensuality And Sexual Issues* they tread on ground rarely discussed and do so with honesty and openness. Yet they do so without creating the feeling of being a peeping Tom or Tomasina. When they deal with religion Vanessa comes to the foreground with her experience in oriental religions to demonstrate there is more than one way to perceive life and the spirit. She tries to help the reader explore his or her own beliefs how they color our attitudes of life and life's purpose.

*Friends and Family* deals with who to tell and who not to tell, why to tell or why not to tell and how to tell. Then there are hints on keeping it all secret even unto The Eventuality with "cross-dressing insurance."

Without answering the question of why a transgender is what s/he is in a chapter by Dallas Denny the authors follow up extolling the advantages of acceptance, with advice to concentrate on matters that make a difference.

With chapters containing specific information on where to and how to find support groups and with suggestions on controlling the cost of an extra person in the house, the authors end with an uplifting chapter and a lovely Chinese poem on life.

The book leaves the reader with the awareness that a transgendered person is someone who is a complete person with a special gift, someone to seek for a partner, not one to shun.

This reader thoroughly enjoyed the book, especially the part about "cross-dressing insurance" (and why not? She wrote it) on making plans to keep that "secret," secret. But most of all she kept looking forward to read the lead in quote at the beginning of each chapter. Quotes such as Vanessa's favorite by Krishnamurti, "The beauty of rose is that it is, what it is, without trying to be something else."

In summary, *Life With Vanessa* is a good book for you and your partner to curl up with, have a glass of wine or a Cappuccino, and discuss the questions at the end of each chapter. I think that it should be required reading for all who are, or plan to be, in a relationship where one partner is transgendered.

*Georgia Hilbert is a member of COTA and Administrator of the Renaissance Pen Pal Program. By the way, last month we listed Georgia's homepage URL incorrectly. It should be <[http://www.ourworld.com/homepages/georgia\\_h](http://www.ourworld.com/homepages/georgia_h)>*



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# ICTLEP Opens Office

ICTLEP, the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Inc., is opening an office to handle the growing flood of requests for information. Arrangements for telephones are not yet finalized, but written communications may begin at once, to: ICTLEP, Inc. P.O. Drawer 35477 Houston, TX 77235-5477 or email: <ICTLEP@aol.com>.

Ever since the organization's founding four years ago, administrative matters have been handled on a spare-time basis by ICTLEP Executive Director Phyllis Frye, working out of her one-woman law office. The workload has grown to the point that this arrangement is no longer possible. The new office, with knowledgeable staff, will be dedicated to ICTLEP business. This will permit new services to be provided, such as a nationwide registry of attorneys interested in working with transgendered clients.

According to Frye, "We're taking a great leap of faith here, hoping that the transgender community will recognize the value of our work and will support us financially as we expand our activities. We aren't asking for large donations; we're asking for comfortable amounts from a lot of people. Regular contributions of \$10 a month, \$20, or more if you can afford it, are the key. You can send us a check or a money

order each month, or you can authorize a monthly charge on your Visa or MasterCard, and we'll take care of it from there."

Dee McKellar, Secretary-Director of ICTLEP, adds, "\$10 a month is only 35 cents a day, less than the cost of a can of soda at lunch. If a hundred people around the country started drinking water with their lunch, and sent us the savings, we could expand our staff to a full-time level."

ICTLEP, Inc., is a non-profit Texas corporation, and is exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code section 501[c][3]. Donations to ICTLEP qualify for personal income tax deductions to the extent allowed by law. The organization's purposes are three-fold:

- (1) Undertake educational activities relating to laws as they relate to the transgender community;
- (2) Study existing laws and provide strategies for progressive changes which would provide relief from discriminatory legislation as it relates to the transgender community;
- (3) Provide information in order to educate the general public, as well as the legal profession about the special problems unique to the transgender community.

ICTLEP does not provide direct legal assistance or counsel to individuals.



# Sean O'Neill; A Reasonable Outcome!

*Sean O'Neill is the Colorado FtM who was on trial for sexually assaulting women, including underage women. Here are some observations by Dianna from the AOL Transgender Community Forum.*

The Sean O'Neill sentencing hearing was held Friday, February 16th. Sean **could** have received up to eight years in prison for his plea-bargain second degree sexual assault. (He could have received 48 years in prison on the original 12 charges, some of which were related to having sex with girls under the age of consent—15.)

Everyone who attended felt Sean won a great victory for the Transgender community, especially in the "home town" of the Religious Right, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The greatest victory for Sean and for the entire community was that his 90-day jail sentence was deferred until the judge could personally determine the best jail arrangement; the judge agreed that he could not be placed easily into either a mens, **or** a women's prison. Sean also received a 6 year probation, the terms of which are not too bad, (probably only 3 years.)

I am personally very proud of the conduct and activities of Transsexual

*continued on page 22*

## Family...

different? And if play-acting as a male for 40 years made me seem socially acceptable to my "friends" and "loved ones," then at least now I will realize a positive benefit from scripting and casting a new production of "My Family," with me not in a bit part but in a starring role. (And, this time, with an outstanding supporting cast). The only thing I am certain of is that, so far, this "fantasy" has not only kept me from eating the barrel of a gun, or from accidentally swallowing a bottle of 90

Prozac capsules, but has actually made me praise God for letting me experience a new life.

Because of the love and attention I received from my new "family," this past holiday season was a much more rewarding time for me than it otherwise would have been. I felt stronger and more confident about myself, because I knew that there were people who loved me and cared about me. That knowledge helped me to get through what is usually a very depressing time of year for me. In many ways, my new family, through their love, re-introduced me to the true meaning of

Christmas—a season of hope, and a season of love. Throughout this past year, they have helped me to recognize the special qualities that they see in me, qualities that make them want to love and care about me. I know that I am far from perfect, and that I have a difficult road ahead to get to where I want to be. But, with the love and support of my "family," at least I know that I won't be alone on that road. And that was the best Christmas present that anybody could have given me.





# Letter to the Editor

Dear Dina,

As the editor of Paradise Tales I was excited that our newsletter was mentioned in your column. I do, however, have one complaint. You consistently referred to Sean O'Neill as "her" and "she" which does not represent Sean at all. While he does not use the terms "transsexual" or "transgender" he does live primarily as a male and prefers male pronouns,

FtM impersonator does not describe Sean O'Neill's life. Whether or not a person uses a particular catchword (like transsexual or transgenderist) should not be necessary, what is important is how Sean O'Neill lived his life and he lived it as a man.

A demonstration will be held on Feb. 16 in support of Sean.

Emilia Lombardi  
Paradise Club

Dear News & Views,

I am renewing my subscription to your newsletter and also including a small donation to help continue the business. Renaissance was the first transgender organization that I joined, and continues to be my favorite one. I have also joined two other groups, but I find that yours always reports what seems important to me, and usually reports it first. One group sends out a large quarterly maga-

zine which I find almost too much to read, and half the articles are ones I've already read in News & Views.

I have applied to the Renaissance part of COTA (which I first heard of in News & Views) but I have not heard from them yet. I just wanted to say I enjoy your publication, always look forward to reading it, and keep up the good work.

Regarding the list of songs referring to crossdressing, I have one to add although I didn't learn who performed it.

I was staying up late Christmas Eve baking some pies. I was feeling very feminine, although not dressed. I was enjoying a drink, listening to music, (and) then slipped in among very traditional Christmas music, with no announcement or follow up comment, was a parody of *Walkin' In A Winter Wonderland*. It was titled *Walkin' 'Round In Women's Underwear*.

It went on for the full usual time and had several comments on crossdressing. It was performed by a male group similar to early Sixties style. I have never heard it before and may never hear it again, but I thought some of your readers might know about it. I wonder about the DJ who played it, could he be?

Thank you,  
Pauline Wolf

Dear Pauline,

I have heard about the song in question but I don't know who performs it. The album title, though, is *Twisted Christmas*. How about it readers? Anybody know who did this?

I was a DJ back in Ancient Times and I'd say the DJ who played this song

was just having a little fun. When you're stuck in a traditional Christmas music format it can get a bit boring. I was on a Country Music station at one time and we would routinely slip in Rock artists who were doing Country parodies. I played a song by Frank Zappa and The Mothers of Invention called *Lonesome Cowboy Burt*. It had all the elements of C&W music but if you listened to the words you could tell it was a parody. People used to call and request it.

So, the DJ was probably just having a little clandestine fun, which is why he didn't say anything about it. Of course, there's always the possibility that he is one of us.

**Ed Note: The Mystery Bathing Beauty in last month's Swimsuit Pictorial was no other than Dr. Bill Stayton. Great gams, Bill!**



### Please Note:

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Ms. Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

# Making Sense Of It All

## The Search for Meaning

My whole life has been a search for personal meaning. It's a search that will continue, to a greater or lesser extent, till the day I die. In itself, this life-long search, whether consciously or unconsciously undertaken, makes me no different than anyone else at any time on the face of this earth. Generally speaking, we all seek love and security in the midst of life's challenges, and we all develop one means or another with which to face those challenges. We go to school, develop skills and interests, find careers, try to have fun, and look for friends and partners with whom we can share our struggles and pleasures. All of these efforts constitute our search for personal meaning.

While it is true that we each find meaning in individual ways, what really differentiates me from most of my fellow searchers is my gender confusion, which has served to intensify my own search for a personally meaningful life. I am not alone, of course, with my gender issue. I am part of a small, though not insignificant, minority of gender-confused people. But the fact remains that such an issue is mine in terms of my own life, and I must come to terms with it if I want my search to be as productive as possible. If I were to deny the existence of my gender issue, I would be denying the meaning of my existence as a whole person, for I would be burying a significant part of my self and my identity. Actually, it is probably safe to say that anyone's search for personal meaning is intensified by one or more complications in his or her life. The search is difficult enough without such complications, but the added problems can, and usually do, deepen the meaning we each seek.

It has been in the context of this search for meaning that my understanding of myself as a gender confused person has been possible. For

most of my life, however, I have buried my gender confusion, keeping my fantasies, my hopes, my fears, and my behaviors a secret from everyone, especially a secret from those closest to me. I even seem to have kept it all a secret from myself, for I could not recognize, let alone accept, myself for who and what I am. Ironically, when I finally faced my gender wishes, when I finally faced the very thing I thought would destroy my life, I suddenly found myself beginning to live, to feel alive, to feel entitled to be alive. In other words, it was not until my search for meaning embraced my gender confusion that I began to find some happiness, some personal fulfillment in life. It is true that I do have a wonderful marriage partner who is fulfilling to me, but even that relationship can only fare as well as the individual happiness of each partner. One happy person cannot make two happy people. A happy marriage requires two contributors. So rather than trying to search for personal meaning in a way that would exclude the fulfillment of my gender needs, I have found that a direct facing of those needs has somehow brought me back to the overall fulfillment I have been seeking all along. The very thing I thought was a stumbling block to happiness has turned out to be the key to that happiness.

Now I am not saying there are no problems attached to the decision to face one's gender confusion head on. The fact is there are many problems, especially social ones, in the areas of marriage, work, and friendship, along with problems of documentation—obtaining various legal documents which facilitate legal identification, whether one is driving, flying, getting a job, and so on, all of this varying in degree depending upon the extent of one's transgendered behavior and overall lifestyle. But these problems pale in significance compared to the inner joy and fulfillment I experi-

ence as the gender-realized person I am now.

There are undoubtedly many ways to slice the cake of personal meaning and the search it involves. In other words, there are many perspectives one can bring to a discussion of such a search and to the actual search itself. In a fundamental sense, we need to be aware of our goals and the means for their achievement. Personal wholeness is a basic goal, along with the achievement of self-recognition, self-acceptance, self-integration, and self-transcendence. We must also address the social aspect of these personal accomplishments.

And then, we should look at the method by which we undertake such a search, for the methods and the attitudes behind them have a direct bearing on the outcome we seek. Where do we look for answers? Are there, in fact, answers as such, or is there just an ongoing process with temporary solutions? If solutions are somehow only temporary, then how much of such a process can we tolerate in the midst of our search for stability and security?

The fact remains that a search for personal meaning is what life is all about, whether one is gender confused or not. But it is the confusion about one's gender, regardless of whether one is a transvestite, transgenderist, or transsexual, that can ironically shed significant light on the meaning of one's life and on the nature of the search itself. It is in terms of such a search that we are helped to make sense of it all.

*The editors would like to welcome Lee to the stable of regular contributors to News & Views. Making Sense Of It All will appear every month.*





# Dear Doctor

*Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.*

*Send questions to PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020*

Dear Doctor Bill,

I guess the first thing I need to say is, I like to wear women's clothes. I would like to wear them all the time, but right now I am only wearing panties under my jeans.

I have never told anyone about this but I think my roommate knows that I wear ladies' underwear. I also feel that I am bisexual. I feel like it would be fun to have sex with anyone, female or male.

Are these things related? Am I bisexual because I'm interested in women's clothes or is it the other way around? What can I do to help me understand?

Confused.

Dear Confused,

There are several issues that you bring up in your letter. I will try to discuss each of them.

First, it is important to sort out issues around gender and issues around orientation. They are not related. Your desire to wear women's clothes is a gender related issue. This does not necessarily mean that you want to be a woman, but there are certain satisfactions you enjoy by identifying with wearing women's clothing. You may also experience yourself as different when you are wearing women's clothes, such as more communicative, more sensitive, more nurturing, more relaxed, and/or more sexually aroused. If your interest is more in wearing women's underclothing, then you may experience liking the way they feel against your skin. Again, you may feel more relaxed or sexually interested and aroused.

Sexual orientation is centered around who turns you on. If you are turned on to both genders, then you are bisexual. Most people have the capacity to be sexual with members of both genders, however, they may feel a stronger preference for one gender or the other.

A person can be exclusively heterosexual, with no sexual interest in persons of their own gender; a person can be predominantly heterosexual with some interest homosexually. Persons can be predominantly homosexual with some interest heterosexually, or they can be exclusively homosexual. In other words there is a continuum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual. Some choose to act on their sexual orientation with more than one person; others use fantasy to explore their sexual interests and never act on them. Some totally repress some of their sexual interests.

Regarding your roommate, you need to ask yourself the question, do you want your roommate to know about your crossdressing interests. If you do, then you need to consider how to tell him/her in a way that will promote acceptance and understanding. If you do not want your roommate to know, then don't tell and wait until your roommate brings it up, if ever.

Dear Doctor,

My girlfriend has been very accepting of my crossdressing. In fact maybe she has been too accepting. She buys me presents of outfits and high heels. For my birthday she got me a really nice rhinestone pin that spelled out my femme name What has me a little concerned (I'm sure everyone is saying what's there to be concerned about) is she wants to spend most of the time with me when I'm en femme. Of course I love it, and I love her. That's where the problem arises—if we start living together I won't be able to dress up all the time. I have to go to work, I enjoy some "manly" hobbies, and there are times when it's just too much bother to get dressed. I guess my concern is, what if she is just into me as a woman? Al-

though I have spent a lot of time developing my femme side, there is still a masculine side of my nature that needs expression.

Lori

Dear Lori,

It is very important for you to be in control of your crossdressing. You need to talk with your girlfriend to find out the answers to your questions.

My guess is that she likes the female qualities in your personality that may come out more strongly when you are crossdressed. She may feel more deeply connected with you and understood by you. You are probably more vulnerable when you are crossdressed which may also be a turn on for her.

Because you also like the masculine part of yourself, you need to also nurture and express that part of you. It is my belief that it is important to nurture and express both sides of your gender identity. If you concentrate only on the feminine side of your gender, you eventually will get less satisfaction out of it because you are neglecting the masculine side. Finding the right balance between your femininity and your masculinity is a good goal for health and maturity. It is important also for your girlfriend to understand this about you. Good luck. It sounds like you really could have found the ideal partner.

## Ask The Professionals!

If you have any questions for Dr. Bill or the Dermatologist, Dr. Jane Ellen Fairfax, fire up the word processor, typewriter, or crayon, and send them to us.

We've set up the two columns, "Dear Doctor" and "Ask The Dermatologist" to provide you with an accurate, safe, and simple way to get you answers to your questions. Your confidentiality is assured.

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# Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Greetings, girlfriends! One of my all-time favorite actors is **Clint Eastwood**, especially in his portrayal of stone faced, hard bitten San Francisco police detective "Dirty" Harry Callahan who did most of his talking with a .44 magnum. In *Magnum Force* (Clint's second go 'round as Dirty Harry), one of the more memorable lines he said in the film was: "A man's just gotta know his limitations," and that's this month's theme.

In regard to shopping, unless you happen to be filthy rich, (and who among us is) it's important to set limits on how much money you should spend on your crossdressing endeavors so you don't strain your finances. To give you an example, while I was still in the Navy, I had to maintain three separate wardrobes: one for my male-self, a second for my femme-self and a third for the sailor whose income provided the means to buy clothes for the other two.

And make no mistake, it was no walk in the park. Even though I was single and didn't have to take care of anyone except myself, it was still a struggle because, like you, I had bills to pay and a house to keep in good repair, and you **don't** get rich working for Uncle Sam! For those of you who are married and have mouths to feed, it's even rougher since it can be disturbingly easy to lose control when it comes to spending money on women's clothes. This I know all too well.

I feel it's crucial not to go overboard when you're shopping, mainly because it's really not necessary. Unless you're living full time or regularly attend events tailored to the transgendered,

just how many outfits do you need to buy at any one time? Speaking for myself, I've never bought more than two outfits at once since, with precious few exceptions, my only outings are the monthly meetings of Renaissance.

Right off the bat, I'm not going to tell anyone how to spend their money, just as I wouldn't want anyone to tell me how to spend mine, but you don't have to break the bank to look nice. You don't have to shell out \$300 for a single outfit from Macy's or Bloomie's when you can purchase two or three from places like Sears or Penney's. But, if you choose to spend huge amounts of cash on one outfit to impress your friends at a meeting, go right ahead. That's not my thing.

The same goes for everything else. Do you need a \$400 natural hair wig when a synthetic version will look just as good for a mere quarter of the cost? Must you fork out \$800 for a leather coat when outlet malls sell the same thing for three times less or better? Is it essential to have enough cosmetics to supply an Avon lady, or enough clothes to stock a boutique when you only go out once a month? The key here is weigh "want" versus "need" and spend accordingly.

Of course, I know that sometimes you have to spend a lot in order to get quality. Two years ago, I shelled out \$125 for a pair of black leather pumps from a shoe store in New York. At first, I felt bad about having spent that much, but those shoes were supremely comfortable. Normally, women's shoes start to pinch after only a couple of hours, but I've worn those pumps for

upwards of six hours without so much as a twinge. So that expenditure was worth it since I wear them a lot.

Armed with common sense, look for department store sales, especially before, during, and after any major holiday, as I often do. You'd be surprised at the bargains you can find. If you live near an outlet mall (as we lucky Philly area girls do with the humongous Franklin Mills Mall), check them out. The savings you can get at such places border on incredible, and I'm talking first class merchandise all the way! Be a wise and frugal shopper.

Now, this doesn't mean you should be a relentless, seven-days-a-week penny pincher like moi. It doesn't hurt to splurge on something ultra-nice or extravagant every now and then. For me, once every three or four months, after I've scrimped and saved and spent wisely, I treat myself to something special, usually a flashy suit. (God! How I love suits!) I consider that a reward for all those weeks spent being frugal and cost conscious. This you can do, too.

When I say, "be smart, buy smart and look smart" at the end of my column, I'm not trying to be clever, I'm saying use your brains when you shop. No matter what your marital status, you should establish a ceiling on how much to spend every month on women's clothing based on how much you earn and stick to it. Unless your income is derived solely from crossdressing (i.e. female impersonators), by **no** means should it be the largest single expense in a household budget.

To end my sermon on spending limits, I don't want to discourage anyone from shopping to your heart's content, I merely suggest you think before you whip out the plastic. Crossdressing is supposed to be a pleasurable, enjoyable experience, and believe me, it's awfully hard to enjoy yourself when guilt ridden over having spent way too much on the dress you're wearing.

Until next month, refer to the quoted phrase above and make it your mantra!





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# The Renaissance Volunteers

What keeps Renaissance alive, serving the need of transgendered people around the country, is the spirit of volunteerism. No one involved with the running of the National Organization (which produces this newsletter, publishes Background Papers and finds better ways to reach more folks who need our assistance) or the local Chapters and affiliates gets a salary.

Most of the people in positions of responsibility took the jobs because they didn't want our outreach work to stop. They remember when they were in the closet, all alone with their transgender feelings, and thinking they were the only person in the world who felt like this. Then, they found Renaissance and had a chance to be reborn as whole human beings. They decided to give something back, to continue the effort to reach the lonely people who share the transgender label and to provide a safe, caring place where transgendered people meet others who have been there before.

These people volunteered and we feel they should get several rounds of applause for their commitment, effort, and energy on behalf of Renaissance

and the Transgender Community.

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## '96 LSV Board:

- Kathy Michaels-Chapter Leader
- Erica Edwards-Secretary
- Dawn Gus-Treasurer
- Linda Williams-Program Director
- Caroline Reid-Newsletter Editor
- Yvonne Sullivan-Director at Large
- Sharon Dee-Director at Large

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## '96 Gr. Philadelphia Board:

- Jessica Brandon-Chapter Leader
  - Lorraine Boyce-Secretary
  - Joanne White-Treasurer
  - Diana Sorenson & Michelle Lynn-Programs
  - Elizabeth Jarrell-Outrch/Meetings
- There are many others who help keep this organization running; from the people who bring food for the meetings, to the writers who donate their time and effort to keep *News & Views* (and the chapter newsletters) filled with useful and entertaining articles, to the folks who stuff the newsletter into envelopes, to the Phone Crew at the National Office, to the member who takes the time to talk to a new person at the monthly meeting. Many thanks to all of you.



## Sean O'Neil...

Menace, throughout the day, and of the extent of their help in getting the judge educated! The Menace Men were great.

Observations: Riki Wilchins turned her Transsexual Menace shirt inside-out before coming into the court room, to not irritate the judge, except during the reading of the sentence; then it was out on display. The demonstration on the courthouse steps was as well mannered as possible, no problems whatsoever. The judge, during his reading of the sentence, **did** take a (good-natured) swipe at the transgendered crowd—"You cannot lobby for a sentence in my jurisdiction", he said.

I believe the judge was expecting the worst from the crowd all day, but

everyone was **very** respectful of the proceedings. James Green absolutely blew away the family and friends of the "victim" in the courtroom when he revealed his FtM past. Their jaws all hit the floor in unison.

And then Tonye Beretto-Neto testified. Tonye jammed the District Attorney into stupidity with the cool way he deflected the cross-examination questions and hypotheticals. After all was over, the DA shook hands with James Green, and apologized for the nature of the questions he had asked!

The "victims" and their parents played into *Dumb and Dumber* all through this thing: one girl Sean is alleged to have sexually assaulted admitted to having had sex with Sean 51 times, and testified she thought Sean was a boy all along. She thought Sean's breasts were just fat rolls.

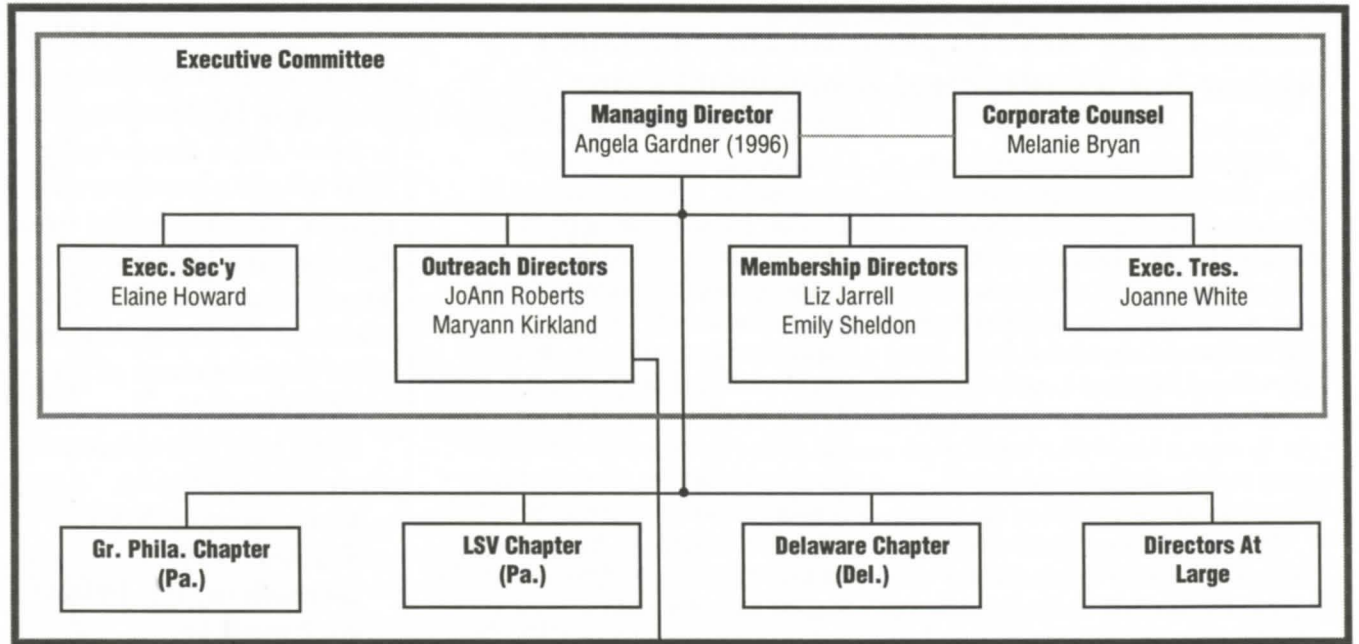
One father and mother, while crying that their daughter was now so "traumatized" by the assaults, admitted on the stand that they had never gotten married, and didn't even live together. The girl Sean had the most sex with is still chasing him. She called him at home on Thursday night. She mouthed a death threat in the courtroom to Sean's current girlfriend!

The judge almost spent more time chastising one of the "victims" for going on the *Jerry Springer Show* than he spent reading Sean's sentence! For a case that should never have gotten so out-of-hand in the first place, this one had a very reasonable outcome. And again, I want to say how proud I am of Riki, and of the Transsexual Menace people, and of all they contributed! Great Job, y'all.



# Renaissance Organization Chart

## Renaissance National Board of Directors



**Monmouth/Ocean TransGender**  
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561 Hudson St.,  
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York, NY 10014  
201•794•1665,  
ext. 332

**Gulf Gender Alliance**  
PO Box 870213  
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**Atlanta Gender Explorations**  
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**Northeastern Pa. Transgender Alliance, NEPTGA**  
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# Press For Change Makes Legal Headway in UK

## Decision May Make Employment Discrimination Against Transsexuals Illegal Throughout Europe

London - January 7, 1996

A British transsexual rights group, Press For Change, reports a breakthrough decision at the European Court of Justice which apparently renders employment discrimination against transsexuals illegal throughout the European Community. In the case of P v S and Cornwall County the Attorney General has recommended to the European Court that "equal treatment for men and women" should cover transsexuals as well.

If confirmed, the Court's decision will make unlawful discrimination against transsexuals on the grounds that they are going to have or have had gender reassignment. It is rare for such recommendations to not be rati-

fied. The case of P v S and Cornwall County Council involved a MtF transsexual, P, who was terminated from her job when she applied to come to work as a woman.

The apparent breakthrough comes just as a Parliamentary MP, Alex Carlile, has announced his introduction of a bill enabling transsexuals in the U.K. to legally change their sex. Great Britain has remained one of the few European countries where transgendered individuals are still held to be legally of their birth sex, in spite of having undergone social transition and full surgical reassignment.

For more info: Stephen Whittle, <STWhittle@mmu.ac.uk>



## Attention Chapters & Affiliates

News & Views wants your news and views. If you have an event, let us know about it before hand. (At least one month before.) After the event make sure we get a review and some photos. The important word in Renaissance News & Views is Renaissance. Let the other members of Renaissance know what your segment of the organization is up to.

Send your press releases, reviews and photos to:

**Renaissance N&V**  
**PO Box 530**  
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