

Monmouth Ocean Transgender Group  
Affiliate of Renaissance Transgender Assoc.

# Monmouth & Ocean News

JUNE 1998

P. O. Box 2972,  
Princeton,  
N.J. 08543-2972  
Telephone:  
732-219-9094  
e-mail:  
vikkimotg@aol.com

New Advertising Rates:  
\$50/quarter page  
\$40/business card.

Send articles by the date of previous month's meeting. Although we will withhold your name upon request, we will not publish any article that has not been signed.

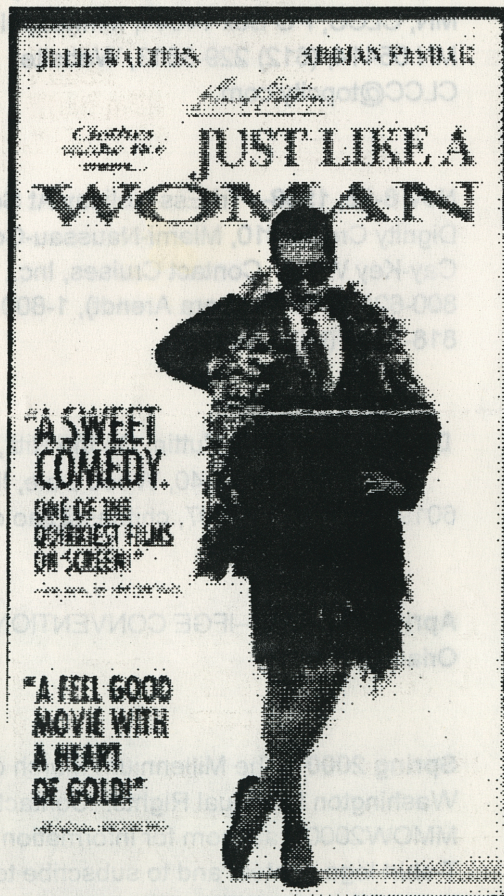
Articles can be sent by mail, or e-mail to  
hoffman1@home.com.

Articles may be reprinted with our permission. The opinions expressed here represent the viewpoints of the writers, and not necessarily of MOTG.

## JUNE 27TH IS MOVIE NIGHT AT MOTG

MEETING AT 8:30

MOVIE, "JUST LIKE A WOMAN"  
TO FOLLOW



Academy Award nominee Julie Walters, Adrian Pasdar and Paul Freeman star in this brilliantly comic, true-life story of what it means to share your life, love and your wardrobe.

Gerald Tilson is a young, about-to-be divorced banker who's just moved into the boarding house run by attractive Monica Jay. Before long, romantic sparks fly, until Gerald stops the affair cold with a startling admission: although normal in every other way, Gerald has an irresistible urge to dress just like a woman. Monica is shocked....and intrigued. And soon the two are enjoying each other's company - and each other's clothing - in an unusual romance *The New York Times* calls "A sweet comedy. One of the quirkiest films on screen!"

A great opportunity to see this movie with others who will enjoy it as much as you. . . . We'll provide the popcorn!!

## MOTG OFFICERS

President: Stephanie James  
Vice President: Diane Hutchinson  
Treasurer: Kay M.  
Membership Dir.: Porshea A. Prestia  
Secretary: Vikki M.  
Outreach Dir.: Terri  
Newsletter Editor: Gloria



## MOTG CALENDAR

## Calendar of Events

**July 15-19, 1998**—6th Annual SPICE Convention for spouses and partners, with special workshops for the men. Atlanta Airport Sheraton Inn. Contact Dr. Peggy Rudd, PO Box 5304, Katy, TX 77491 (fax 281-347-8747). Website: [www.spice@tri-ess.com](http://www.spice@tri-ess.com)

**Sep 30-Oct 4, 1998**—Southern Comfort '98, Atlanta, GA., P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta, GA 30357-1591. Call 404-633-6470. Contact [ScAt1@aol.com](mailto:ScAt1@aol.com).

**October 1998**—Planned date for 3rd Annual BiNet Tri-State Regional Gathering and Conference. Group's mission is to work for equal rights and liberation of Bisexuals and all oppressed peoples. For more information, call Robin at 732-247-0619.

**Oct 19-26**—Fantasia Fair, Provincetown, MA, P.O. Box 2734, Boston MA 02208.

**Oct 30-Nov 3, 1998**—Halloween Weekend Cruise to Fantasy Fest on Royal Caribbean's "Sovereign of the Seas". Special Rates available. Call Florence at 800-958-6299 ext. 2258. The group pin number is 388987. Or contact Carol and Babs by e-mail at BC and Co@aol.com for more information.

**Nov 5-8, 1998**—Paradise in the Poconos A getaway weekend for crossdressers (and spouses) at a new deluxe facility. Contact JoAnn Roberts, CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 9406, Phone 610-640-9449, e-mail address: [Poco@cdspub.com](mailto:Poco@cdspub.com). Website: [www.cdspub.com](http://www.cdspub.com).

**Nov 5-8, 1998**—Fall Harvest, Innneapolis, MN, CLCC, PO Box 14844, Minneapolis, MN 55414, (612) 229-3613, Website: [CLCC@topcity.com](mailto:CLCC@topcity.com).

**Nov 8-13, 1998**—Tri-Ess Holiday At Sea/ Dignity Cruise #10, Miami-Naussau-Coco Cay-Key West. Contact Cruises, Inc., 1-800-621-6699 (Barbara Arendt), 1-800-818-7830 (Mike Sinn)

**December, 1998**—Puttin' On the Ritz, Chi Chapter, PO Box 40, Wood Dale, IL 60191, (630) 262-8707, [chitriess@aol.com](mailto:chitriess@aol.com).

**April 7-10, 1999**—IFGE CONVENTION, Orlando, Florida.

**Spring 2000**—The Millennium March on Washington for Equal Rights. Contact [MMOW2000@aol.com](mailto:MMOW2000@aol.com) for information on T-shirt logo contest and to subscribe to mailing list, or call Robin at 818-891-1748.

**JUNE 27, 1998**

**NIGHT AT THE MOVIES**

**JULY 25, 1998**

**AUGUST 22, 1998**

**SEPTEMBER 26, 1998**

**ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

**OCTOBER 24, 1998**

**NOVEMBER 28, 1998**

**DECEMBER 19, 1998**

**HOLIDAY PARTY**

 **MARY KAY®**

**MARYBETH HAZEL**

**Independent Beauty Consultant**

**119 Manor Drive  
Red Bank, NJ 07701  
908-741-8142**

**GENDER IDENTITY DISORDERS  
(formerly known as Transsexualism)  
TRANVESTITES  
GENDER-RELATED LIFE SITUATIONS**

**Special help for Marital & Family Crisis and Conflict**

**For several years Dr. A.S. Nubel, gender identity, marriage & family specialist, has been providing effective help to transgendered persons as well as to couples in distress.**

**You can trust her experience and understanding.**

*Marriage, Individual and Group*

**Communication Problems \* Incest**

**Conflicts involving Affairs, Money, Sex, Parenting, Adolescents, and In-Laws**

**Depression and Anxiety, Low Self Esteem & Self Worth**

**English & Hebrew Spoken**

**908-722-9884**

**24 HOUR EMERGENCY CALLS**

**DR. A. S. NUBEL PH.D.**

**HADASSAH University Graduate**

**psychiatric & mental health clinical specialist**

**marriage & family specialist**

**BRIDGEWATER AREA**

# Only The Best

From CDS! • Books • Videos • LadyLike Magazine



Your Information Resource For The Next Millennium

Visit Us On The Internet • [www.cdspub.com](http://www.cdspub.com)

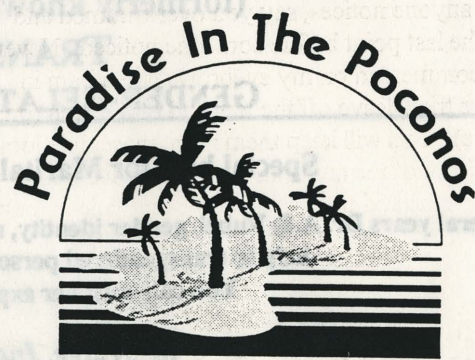
CDS, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, Pa 19406

Voice: 610-640-9449 - Fax: 610-648-0257

Ask for Catalog "M" - [info@cdspub.com](mailto:info@cdspub.com)

CDS has been serving the information needs of the transgender community since 1985.

## New Facilities ▶ New Date



It's an all new Paradise In The Poconos getaway weekend. We have a fabulous new facility with an indoor heated pool, a jacuzzi, two game rooms, a pub and a night club and it's all ours for an extended 4 day/3 night weekend of pure fun!

Nov 5 - 8, 1998

This year we have a special vendor with clothing, wigs, breastforms, lingerie and more, plus two makeup

artists. We'll also have four seminars, two of them by Dr. Sheila Kirk. And, we'll have our world-famous parties, tag sale, and talent show.

Price: \$350\* per person, double occupancy. Includes all activities, 3 parties, 4 seminars, room, meals, tax, and gratuity. No hidden charges! Register now before we fill up. Full details at our web site <[www.cdspub.com/Poco.html](http://www.cdspub.com/Poco.html)>. (\* Single rooms \$475.)

CDS, PO Box 61263,

King of Prussia PA 19406

610.640.9449 ▶ [poco@cdspub.com](mailto:poco@cdspub.com)



## ARTS

Addiction Recovery Treatment Solutions

Philip T. McCabe, CCGC, CAS, C&W

Counselor / Consultant • Certified Social Worker  
Specializing in Addictions • Survivors of Abuse  
Expressive / Creative Arts Therapy  
Lesbian / Gay / Bi / Transgender  
Affirmative Counseling

Tel/Fax: 908.774.2719  
PO Box 125, Ocean Grove, NJ 07756

**SELMA BLAKER**

**609-428-8448**

## Wig Service Shop

Specializing in the Sales and Service  
of all Human & Synthetic Pieces

Barclay Towers

1200 East Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Hours 11AM to 4PM, Monday to Saturday

## General Tips on Feminine Appearance for Crossdressers

Hello again everyone. This month I thought I would address the very basics of presenting a more feminine image. I know reading through this article some of you will be thinking that this stuff is going to take a lot of your time. I won't lie, it will. Keeping up one's feminine beauty is a never-ending, time-consuming process. Believe me, though, the extra confidence and good feeling you get when you look into the mirror are well worth the time. The following tips are in no particular order.

\* Become knowledgeable in the areas of makeup, beauty and fashion. There is a lot more to all of these subjects than most men could ever imagine. If you want to present yourself as a woman, invest the time in learning about these things. Believe me, it's worth it. A good place to start is the beauty section of the library. A great book to start with is How Do I Look? by Gale Hayman. Also, reading women's fashion magazines will be useful in keeping up with current trends. I subscribe to Allure and Glamour, both of which have plenty of articles on the above subjects.

\* Clean up your eyebrows! I can't believe the number of otherwise attractive girls with bushy or worse yet one long eyebrow (yuck!). Believe me, I know most of us can't have perfect feminine eyebrows because of real world jobs, but no one is going to complain if you are well groomed. If you do opt to make them more feminine, then be sure that any change you make is done over time. Simply trim and pluck on a weekly basis, going a little neater each time. If anyone notices, say you over-trimmed and grow them back to the last point before someone noticed. Never has a single person commented on my eyebrows when I am in male garb. One more trick, leave off the low end of the arch (on the sides of your face). This will keep them more masculine looking normally. The finish of the arch can easily be added with a smudge of eyebrow pencil and the effect will be dramatic in making your face more feminine.

\* If you need a wig, get yourself a decent one and maintain it. Cheap wigs are just that, cheap, and they will get you noticed more quickly than almost anything else. If you can use your real hair that is best, but most of us (myself included) can't. When you invest in an expensive wig you want it to last and keep looking good. To do this you must comb it out after each wear and wash it on a regular basis. If you don't feel comfortable washing it bring it to a professional to have it cleaned.

\* If you don't have hips or a female looking butt invest in a pair of padded panties. These can be bought in many places (I get mine through the Frederick's of Hollywood catalog), and will greatly enhance your female shape. They sell them with two pads (just the butt) and four pads (butt and sides). Be sure to get the pair that most enhances your shape. My friend Jean was hysterical when she found out I pad my hips and butt. She said something like "There is an whole industry out there to help women reduce their butts and you want to pad yours!?"

\* If you can't shave your arms and they are hairy, don't wear short sleeves or sleeveless outfits. What I do is use a beard trimmer to keep my arm hair short enough that it is not noticeable when I am going out as Diane. In between my outings I let it grow and just wear long sleeved shirts for two or three days after I trim. The hair grows out faster since I don't shave it all the way down. No one has ever noticed that I do this. If trimming is not for you stick to long sleeves.

\* Breast forms: I don't care what kind you use. Whether they are bought or home made they have to LOOK realistic. I stress look because unless someone other than you is going to be touching them, how they feel is not important. You can get away with birdseed or rice filled nylons that look quite natural for most blouses or dresses. Padding from old shoulder pads also works well. Myself I have several kinds and sizes to wear depending on my outfit. One more thing—be sure to size your breasts to your body. Having a size B body with size DD breasts will attract lots of attention and not all of it will be positive.

\* If you have hairy legs and can't shave, wear two pairs of pantyhose. If you can still see the hair, then try darker hose. You can use the beard trimmer for your legs too, to thin out the hair. Just adjust the trimmer to a higher level. With some experimentation you will find the proper level that allows you to get away with wearing one pair of hose while maintaining "normal" looking male legs most of the time.

\* Nose and ear hair: if you have it then do everyone a favor and trim it! Believe me, this is another thing that can only help both your female and male appearance.

\* Wash your face at least once a day (twice is better) with a cleanser. Then use a toner and moisturizer. In fact it is a good idea to moisturize your hands, arms and legs too if you want to keep them nice and soft.

\* Whether you keep your nails long or not, they should always be clean and look well manicured. A light buffing with a nail buffing cream once a week will keep them looking good and give them a nice shine (though not too much that people will notice when you are in drab).

See I was not kidding that there is a lot to do! The truth is that if you have the time there is always an additional beauty regimen to add. Start with a few of these most basic ones and add new ones once those become a part of your regular beauty rituals. Stay beautiful and happy, and I will see you all next month.

*Diane*

If you enjoyed this article and want to read more, check out my web site at:

<http://members.aol.com/diane1962/diane.html>

Email - [diane1962@aol.com](mailto:diane1962@aol.com)

**AMY L. ALTENHAUS, PH.D.**

**Licensed Psychologist # 1479**

**REGISTERED CUSTODY EVALUATOR**

**80 EAST MAIN STREET**

**FREEHOLD, NJ 07728**

**908-780-6644**

**Hours by appointment**

**Psychotherapy**

**Individuals, Couples, Families, and Groups**

*For children, adolescents, and adults*

**Custody and visitation evaluations**

**Relationship and Gender Issues**

**Board-Certified**

**Barbara A. Susinno B.S.N., R.N., C.P.E.**

*Renaissance members Welcome*

*Dermatologist approved*

*All body sites*

*Gold Ballet disposable probes*

*Center for Disease Control standards*

*Blend & Multi Pin Galvanic*

**Main Street Electrology**

**802 Main Street, Suite 4/A, Toms River, N.J.**

**(908) 341-7524**



## Other Support Groups of Interest

**Western Central/New Jersey Support**, meets 1st Saturday of the month at Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing. Call Susan at 973-334-0416 or Dorothy at 215-744-4746 (weekends only). Write to Po Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 or e-mail: Susanw796@aol.com.

**Delaware Renaissance**, meets 2nd Saturday of every month. PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone 302-376-1990 or email to: SadeCD@aol.com.

**Transit** (TS -oriented support group), meets every Sunday at 1:00 P.M. Call 908-526-2369.

**Chi Delta Mu** (Tri-Ess CD support group), meets 2nd Saturday of every month. PO Box 1, River Edge, NJ 07661-0001. Hot Line 800-484-7593 (code 4985). E-mail: cdm@carroll.com.

**Renaissance Greater Philadelphia**, meets 3rd Saturday of every month in King of Prussia. Write to Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087. Call 610-975-9119 for information. Website: <http://www.ren.org/LibertyBelles.html>.

**Sigma Nu Rho** (Tri-Ess CD support group), meets 4th Saturday of every month. Write to Sigma Nu Rho, 1092 St. Georges Ave., Suite 234, Rahway, NJ 07065. Contact: Carol Ann Lee, Phone/Fax (908) 826-5287. E-mail: snr.tris@MCIONE.com. Hot Line 800-484-7666 (code 1257).

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

**Imperial Queens and Kings of NY and NJ**, meets 1st Friday of every month. Call 212-229-1968.

### *Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork*

Roger Bosland, C.M.T.  
732-506-9758

Certified Member of Associated Bodywork  
and Massage Professionals

## A Special Note of Thanks from Elaine

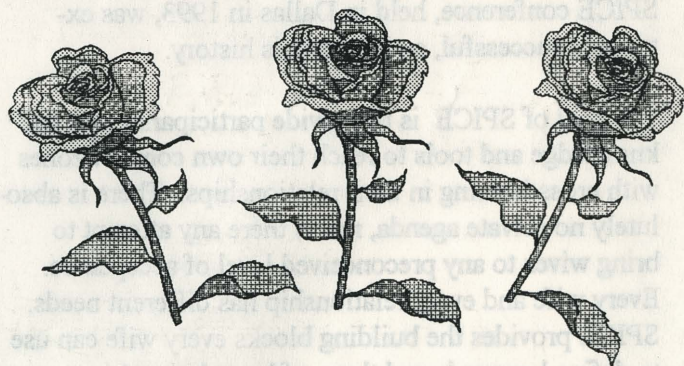


**I want to thank all my dear friends at MOTG for the very wonderful tribute at last month's meeting.**

**I feel very proud and lucky to have been involved in creating a group where so many warm, caring people join together in a spirit of friendship and support for each other.**

**The cards expressing your feelings are something that I found especially moving and will treasure.**

**May MOTG have many wonderful years ahead!!**



# It's Not Too Late to Put Some SPICE in Your Life

## Information About SPICE from Frances Fairfax

SPICE is the annual Spouses' and Partners' International Conference for Education. It is essentially the only event in Genderland that focuses on the needs of wives of crossdressers, and of crossdresser-couples.

In 1987, my husband and I became concerned about the lack of any meaningful programs for wives of crossdressers at gender community conventions. The husbands could waltz around in their finery, get made over, attend seminars, party and have a good time being their femme selves. Wives were an afterthought. We were at best "along for the ride," with no real voice in the community. Few of us attended meetings at all, since nothing was provided for us.

After a series of long walks and conversations, my husband and I conceived a convention which would focus on our needs as women married to crossdressers, and the needs of our relationships. Other wives thought this was a great idea, but the movers and shakers of Genderland were less than enthusiastic. Finally, in 1992, we proposed the SPICE conference to the Tri-Ess Board of Directors, which approved it and voted appropriate funding for it. Tri-Ess also raised funds from supportive Genderland entities, the Winslow Street Fund being the chief, and promoted local fundraising efforts. The first SPICE conference, held in Dallas in 1993, was extremely successful, and the rest is history.

The goal of SPICE is to provide participants with the knowledge and tools to reach their own comfort zones with crossdressing in their relationships. There is absolutely no private agenda, nor is there any attempt to bring wives to any preconceived level of acceptance. Every wife and every relationship has different needs. SPICE provides the building blocks every wife can use to define her needs and those of her relationship.

Presenting programs at SPICE are some of the most eminent helping professionals in America. The focus is on communications skills, relationship-building and information about crossdressing issues. At SPICE 97, for example, the following programs were offered:

Sex and Intimacy    Boundaries and Negotiation  
Growing Together, Not Apart    Building Your Self Esteem  
Getting to Know Your Partner    Ask Your Doctor, Minister and Author  
It Wasn't Always Easy!    Getting to Know Yourself  
Exploding the Myths About Crossdressers and Their Partners

The program at SPICE is designed to flow smoothly. There is usually an introductory excursion, the most notable of which was a Philadelphia Harbor Cruise at SPICE 96. The following day and a half is devoted to seminars. Then another break is provided via a menu of interesting excursions. Then another day of seminars. Every SPICE conference has a theme. SPICE 97's was "Getting to Know You."

Over the last two years, SPICE has begun increasingly to work on couples' issues. Husbands are welcome and have their own programs. For the comfort of the wives, however, no crossdressing is allowed at the conference. Programs for husbands and wives are parallel, so that couples can communicate on similar issues after they return home. The most beautiful thing about SPICE is that so many couples have found renewed hope for their relationships. There is also a spirit of camaraderie among the participants that lingers from year to year.

The conference is designed to reach as many wives and couples as possible. It is always held in midsummer, when wives can most easily budget vacation time and are not as likely to be juggling their children's school schedules. It is always held in a city that is a major air hub, at a moderately priced hotel with airport shuttle service. Registration costs are kept as low as possible, and some scholarships are given in hardship cases. Direct contributions from Tri-Ess, IFGE's Winslow Street Fund, Tri-Ess chapters and other local groups and individuals all combine to make it possible to offer scholarships and to bring in the professional presenters. SPICE is truly a labor of love by many people.

SPICE 98 is coming up in July. For those of you who desire information about it, here it is:

The Director of SPICE is Dr. Peggy Rudd, author of *My Husband Wears My Clothes*, *Crossdressing With Dignity*, and *Crossdressers and Those Who Share Their Lives*. Serving with her is a staff and planning board of other wives experienced in dealing with these issues.



The theme for SPICE VI is:

"STUMBLING BLOCKS TO STEPPING STONES"

\*\*\*\*\*  
SPICE VI

JULY 15-19, 1998  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

S.P.I.C.E. IS FOR GENETIC FEMALE SPOUSES OR PARTNERS OF HETEROSEXUAL CROSSDRESSERS, AND FOR THEIR HETEROSEXUAL CROSSDRESSER MATES.

HOTEL AND ACTIVITIES

3601 NORTH DESERT DRIVE  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30344  
TELEPHONE: (404) 762-5141  
FAX: (404) 768-1106

SPECIAL RATE: \$69.00 PER NIGHT  
PRE-REGISTERED GUESTS RECEIVE FREE AIRPORT SHUTTLE.

ATTENDEES MUST MAKE THEIR OWN HOTEL RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL.

COSTS:

\$139 REGISTRATION FOR THE FULL CONFERENCE. THIS INCLUDES SIX MEALS, ALL PROGRAMS AND ENTERTAINMENT.

\$105 REGISTRATION FOR TWO DAYS (WITH FOUR MEALS)

\$80 REGISTRATION FOR A SINGLE DAY (WITH TWO MEALS)

\$20 INDIVIDUAL LUNCHES

\$40 INDIVIDUAL DINNER

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL:  
(918) 343-1953 MARY JANE (CENTRAL TIME)  
(215) 860-9271 EVELYN (EASTERN TIME)

WRITE: PEGGY RUDD  
P.O. BOX 5304  
KATY, TX 77491-5304

FAX (281) 347-8747 PEGGY (CENTRAL TIME)

INTERNET SITE: <http://www.pmpub.com>  
E-MAIL: [melp@phoenix.net](mailto:melp@phoenix.net)

YOU MAY CHARGE YOUR REGISTRATION ON VISA, MASTERCARD, OR AMERICAN EXPRESS.

SEND REGISTRATIONS TO: L. Hester - S.P.I.C.E.  
4045 Northridge Way, Apt. 1  
Norcross GA 30093

\*\*\*\*\*  
REGISTRATION FORM - PLEASE PRINT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Male Partner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Attending? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Support Group Affiliation? \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK THE PACKAGE YOU WANT:

\_\_\_\_ Thurs-Sat (July 16-18) \$139/person (6 meals)  
\_\_\_\_ Thurs-Fri (July 16-17) \$105/person (4 meals)  
\_\_\_\_ Fri-Sat (July 17-18) \$105/person (4 meals)  
\_\_\_\_ One day (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_ \$80/person (2 meals)

\_\_\_\_ Individual Lunch(Specify) \_\_\_\_\_ \$20/person

\_\_\_\_ Individual Dinner(Specify) \_\_\_\_\_ \$40/person

\_\_\_\_ ADD \$12 for The Sweetheart Connection - a quarterly newsletter written, and published by partners of crossdressers.

TOTAL REGISTRATION =

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check# \_\_\_\_\_

or Credit Card: Visa MasterCard American Express (Circle one)

\_\_\_\_ I agree to donate 5% of total registration fee added for credit card charge.

Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Exact Name on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Surgery in Portland, Oregon

by Sarah

*(Continued from May Issue)*

### The Three Stooges (Thu, March 12)

It's been a few days. My sister left yesterday. It's rare for us to spend so much time together, and it was nice. I was sad to see her go, but she's a mom, and needed to get back to Aaron, her 10 month old baby, and Brian, her 27 year old baby (husband).

Today they took out the sutures that kept the labia majora together so I could see the surgery results and dilate. Needless to say, it wasn't much to see at this point - lots of bruising and swelling. They took the packing out, and gave me a set of three dilators. I named them Larry, Moe, and Curly and dilated for the first time with the smallest - Larry.

They also took out the drains, which was a little more unnerving. I'll spare you the gory details. Ask me if you must.

My catheter wasn't supposed to be removed until Saturday, but today when I got in the shower the darn thing just fell out! They were worried that I wouldn't be able to pee, but it wasn't a problem. I understand that this is extremely rare (though not unwelcome from my perspective).

So at this point I was almost completely unfettered, but still had two abdominal sutures in me. I never quite figured out what they were for. Dr. Meltzer called them the "Biber Stitches" (he started using them after watching Biber use them). They didn't seem to go anywhere, and just hurt a lot. Perhaps they were to distract us from pain elsewhere.

I spent time socializing with other TS patients. I met Alexis, Christine, Roberta, Kristina, and Jill. It was a pretty full house! All of us had private rooms with their own bathrooms and showers. It was cool trading stories with all these other people at such an exciting time in our lives.

### Leaving on a Jet Plane (Sun, March 15)

Fran brought me to the airport today. Fran is a cool woman who works for Dr. Meltzer, and acts as mother hen for all the TS patients. She visits most days, is always available via pager, and is very nice. If you need something, she'll probably offer to go get it for you. I think it's a great idea to have a person dedicated to the more 'emotional' side of the care and healing process, considering that many patients are alone in a strange place for this major life event.

I had a layover in Chicago, and made it home to Newark at midnight. Jessica gave me a ride home. I couldn't sleep right away, so I sorted through the mail and unpacked.

The antibiotics finished a few days later. I'm glad to be my own person again. Those IVs were gross. They had dextrose in them, which is a sugar, but it has this nasty smell, and after a few days on it, I was pretty tired of it. I could smell it coming out of my body for a while even after I got home.

After the surgery, one must 'dilate' four times a day. This is to make sure that the new vagina doesn't close up. After the first month, one must only go through this joyous process (sarcasm) twice a day. Then later on, it decreases to once a day, and so on, and so forth until one must only do it every once in a while.

I've healed up very quickly according to the doctor. I took four weeks off to recuperate before I went back to work on April 6th. It's not like I couldn't have gone back to work earlier (I've been to the gym six times, gone out partying in NYC, and I've even done my taxes!), but one stays pretty busy with personal hygiene for the first month, so there's not really enough time to work. A lot of people take six weeks off from work.

Anyway, it's back to the grind for me now, so I guess I'll have to stop writing this long article, and get ready to go back to work! Take care.