

Renaissance Newz



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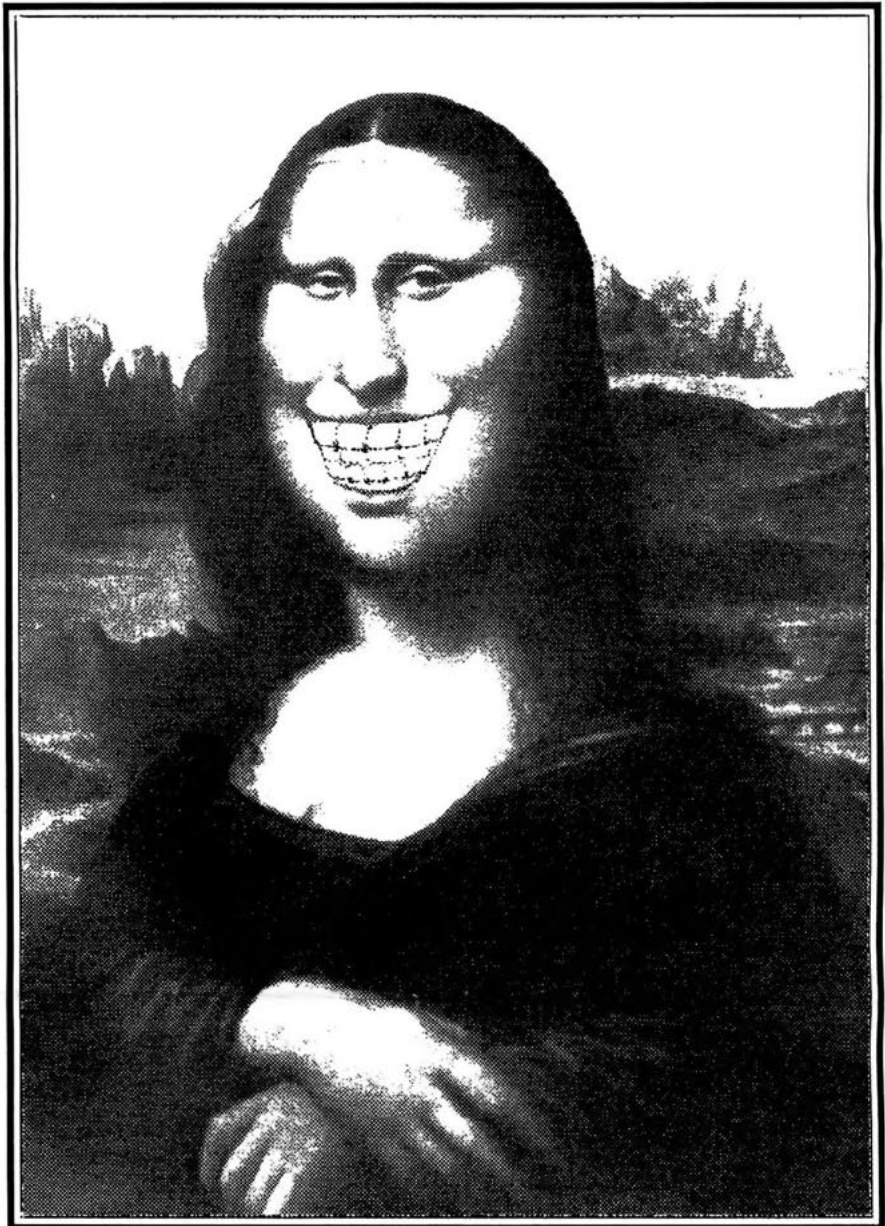
Real Mona Lisa Portrait Is Discovered ! An exclusive report.

The art world was shocked today over the announcement by Italian officials of the discovery of what is purported to be the real portrait of *Mona Lisa*.

Readers of this newsletter may recall that Volume 1, number 1, carried a story about an art historian who concluded that the portrait we know as *Mona Lisa* is in fact a portrait of Leonardo DaVinci in drag. A computer analysis of the *Mona Lisa* and of a self-portrait of DaVinci showed a high degree of correlation in facial features between the two paintings.

Now the real story has come to light due to the recent discovery of a letter written by DaVinci. The letter describes in excruciating detail the agony that DaVinci experienced over the commission to paint Mona's portrait. (She was the daughter of a prominent Italian businessman.-Ed.) The letter says that "...she is so ugly, I am tempted to just paint myself into the picture. Surely, I cannot look worse!"

The painting now believed to be the real *Mona* (see photo at right) has been known for almost a century, but was always thought to be nothing more than a per-



Portrait of the real Mona Lisa

verse joke by a clone artist. (One can see why!-Ed.) Now, it appears that DaVinci carried through his threat of substitution.

Authorities of the Louvre, where the ersatz *Mona Lisa*

is on display could not be reached for comment. It is not yet known how this discovery will affect the value of the portrait there, but some estimate it will increase.

You heard it here first!

All the news that fits, we print!

Highlights From The March Meeting

Emily Kahn, friend and associated member, was our guest speaker for March and her topic was AIDS Awareness. Ms Kahn noted that our group was more attentive than most of her audiences. Emily is an AIDS educator with the city's health department.

Our thanks and appreciation to Amy Peak, owner of K-D's Intimate Boutique in Cherry Hill, for bringing what looked like half her store to the meeting. Amy displayed lingerie, shoes and jewelry for us. She has been very suppor-

tive and we'd like you all to support her shop on Rt 38.

The SOS group seemed to have faltered somewhat. Were the ladies all talked out from last month? The important point to remember is that this is their group and if they don't want to talk they don't have to.

We have scheduled a Color Analysis demonstration for the April meeting. This will take approximately 90 minutes. It should be a very interesting evening for our model and our guests.

Renaissance to Present Workshop at SSSS

The Eastern Region Conference for the *Society for the Scientific Study of Sex* will hold its annual conference in Baltimore, at the Sheraton Inner Harbor on April 22-24, 1988. Renaissance will be participating at the conference by providing a workshop titled, "Transgender Issues and the Family: Who Listens to Whom." The two hour session will take place on Saturday, April 23rd.

Dr. Richard Friend, of the University of Pennsylvania, is one of the conference program coordina-

tors and it was he who was instrumental in getting this workshop into the conference program. We thank Dr. Friend for creating this opportunity to help the professional community understand us better.

Other notes of interest from the agenda are: a pre-conference workshop on Gender Dysphoria conducted by Leah Cahan Schaefer; keynote addresses on Saturday by Richard Green and Don Mosher; and the concluding address on Sunday by John Money.

Getaway Events Bloom For Spring/Summer

"Spring is sprung. The grass is rizz. I wonder where the TGs is?"

Well, you certainly have a wide choice of places and events to choose from. The first event of the season is the Tiffany sponsored P-town Spring Outing, May 31st to June 6th. The fee schedule is a little complicated but it is very flexible, so contact Laura Granger, c/o Tiffany, Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778 or call (617)-358-2305 for more details.

Overlapping the Tiffany outing is the "Paradise in the Poconos" weekend sponsored by JoAnn Roberts. The PIP begins June 2nd and runs to the 5th. Cost for PIP is

\$225 per person. A fifty dollar deposit will hold a reservation until May 1st. Contact JoAnn at our mailing address or call (215)-640-9449.

Following on the (high) heels of PIP is probably the best of all the getaways, the 6th Annual "Be All You Want To Be" convention. This event is sponsored by Chi-chapter Tri-Ess, Paradise Club, Crossroads and Transpitt. The "Be All..." will take place June 8th through the 12th, just outside of Detroit, MI. Contact "Be All", c/o P.O.Box 196, Garden City, MI 48135, or write to any of the sponsoring groups.

TS In Prison Wants PenPal & Support.

Another letter recently received here was from a TS in prison. She has been seeking some help from TS support groups with little luck she says. Renaissance was one of

the few to reply to her at all. If you are sol inclined, please write to her; Paul (Pamela) [REDACTED] 153862 FCC 40-24, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington, MO 63640

For Your Information

For up to the minute information about Renaissance events, call 215-640-9449 any time. Our new answering machine will have brief details about activities. If you need to speak to someone, just leave a message and we'll get back to you ASAP.

Mona Lisa charms in sterling silver are available to all members of Renaissance for \$25. Non-members may purchase them for \$40. Contact JoAnn Roberts at the number above or write.

Business Report Thru Feb 29th

February Attendance: 58
Paid Members: 103

Starting Balance: \$1214.66

Income:

Donations	\$25.92
Sales	\$8.00
<u>Member Dues</u>	<u>\$444.00</u>
Subtotal	\$1692.58

Expenses:

Feb. Meeting	\$84.51
Newsletter	\$53.00
Postage	\$21.89
<u>Misc.</u>	<u>\$39.96</u>
Subtotal	\$199.36

Ending Balance \$1493.22

Coming Events:

April

16th, Renaissance Meeting
Color Analysis, SOS,
Open Rap Group
22-24, "Dressing for Pleasure"
New York City

May

21st, Renaissance Meeting
First Anniv. Party
9:00PM Start
31st-June 6, 8th Annual
Tiffany Spring Outing.

June

2-5, "Paradise in the Poconos"
weekend
8-12, 6th Annual "Be All..."
weekend, Detroit, MI
18th Renaissance Meeting
To Be Announced

The Opinion Page

To Pass Or Not To Pass. Some Thoughts by JoAnn Roberts

I so often hear from TV sisters about how they went out somewhere and "passed". They are so excited that they were able to be out in public and be themselves that I just don't have the heart to tell them the truth. The truth is that very, very few TVs are able to pass. What is happening is that the girls are confusing social tolerance or indifference with being accepted as a female. More often than not, John Q. and Jane Q. Public are too wrapped up in their own worlds to notice us as we "pass" by them. If we have done a good job of makeup and our clothing is appropriate for the time and season, they will assume that we are what we appear to be; women. That, however, is not passing as a female. One slip is all it takes to jar the attention of the casual observer into the realization that something is amiss, and that you ain't a miss.

At the risk of creating unnecessary labels, one can postulate a series of stages which, with a great deal of practice, can lead to passing. The first stage is one which I just described, being casually mistaken as a female. The next stage

is when your appearance can withstand close scrutiny, say from within two feet of another person. The third stage is more difficult, but obtainable for many, and that is a brief conversation. If you can reach stage three you're doing great and you probably are one of those people who really can "pass". The next obvious stage is to be able to engage in prolonged conversation and not have your listener "read" you. The last and ultimate stage occurs when you are accepted for a female regardless of your mode of dress.

Now think about this. It takes most transsexuals about two years of living full time as a woman to develop their new personas. They spend 24 hours a day working on their movements, actions, speech patterns, etc., so that they will be able to live and work within our society and be accepted as a female. Isn't it a little presumptuous to assume that a TV who gets out in public once or twice a year, or even once or twice a month, is passing? I have had sisters recount to me their exploits in shopping malls or downtown areas and I tell you they

would not fool my three year old niece into thinking they were women.

So what happens? They delude themselves into believing that they can now go anywhere, anytime when crossdressed. And, the next time they get "read", they're crushed.

The goal that both TVs and TSs should be working toward is one of self-confidence and internal validation. I have heard stories about TVs who "look down" upon those who do not appear totally feminine and I have heard stories about TSs who have committed suicide because they could not make the grade as a woman. In both cases these people are overlooking the more important aspect of self worth. Your value as a human being is intrinsic and not in any way related to whether or not you can pass.

Being the best you can be is a laudable goal in any endeavor, but "passing" should not be the end all of your existence. The question to ask is, "Can I pass for a Human Being?" When the answer is "YES", then be proud of yourself!

Other News

Ph.D. Candidate Needs Respondents For TV/TS Survey

We recently received a request for participation in a survey from a gentleman who is doing his Ph.D. thesis on aspects of transvestism and transsexualism. Being overly cautious, but willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, JoAnn Roberts requested a copy of his credentials and his thesis outline for review. He replied promptly, and professionally. JoAnn, who also has an advanced degree, reviewed his materials and is satisfied that his thesis is a legitimate research project. Therefore, Ren-

naissance News has agreed to publish the necessary information to contact him if you are interested in participating in this worthy project. All confidentiality will be respected.

Write to: Glenn W. Humphrey, 135 W. 31st St, Box 11, New York, NY 10001. Ask for a consent form.

Mr. Humphrey also needs a non-TV/TS control group, so if you have friends that know about you but are not part of our community, you might want to ask them if they will participate also.

Dr. Benjamin's Book To Be Re-issued

In the early 1950's, Dr. Harry Benjamin published a milestone work in the field of Human Sexuality: "The Transsexual Phenomena". This classic has been out of print for sometime now.

Renaissance, in cooperation with the Human Outreach and Achievement Institute in Boston, will be raising money to have the book reprinted in softback.

If you care to contribute money to the project or want a copy of the book, please contact Renaissance at our mailing address.

News & Notes

Edited by Paula Sinclair

Transvestites and pre-operative transsexuals in Greece last month [FEB] formed a political party which they hope will stem the tide of police harassment against crossdressing men, the *Philadelphia Gay News* reports.

Haralambos Tamoutsides, a 6-foot gay TV in his late 30s who is also known as "Aloma," was elected president of the Panhellenic Non-aligned Movement for Equality. He said that since the first case of AIDS was reported in Greece in 1987, the police have stepped up their harassment of the crossdressers, many of whom work as prostitutes. Police said more than 100 of them work in the Athens area alone.

The group has applied to the Greek Supreme Court for official recognition. In their application, the five-member executive board for the Panhellenic Non-aligned Movement for Equality pledged that they will not undertake any actions against the state and that they will not try to overthrow the county's democratic regime.

Greek transvestites and transsexuals who work in the sex industry already have organized an unofficial union. In addition to holding regular meetings, the union sponsors and annual ball and a beauty contest.

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Looking for a special treat for yourself or for someone special? Then how about the Panty-of-the-Month club?

Former model Lila Williams started the business two years ago and already has more than a thousand subscribers in all 50 states. For \$16.50 per pair per month (or \$32.50 for the deluxe membership) "members" receive a pair of nationally known panties guaranteed to be worth more than the monthly charge. Many subscribers have

the panties sent to someone else.

Although Williams says the service is designed for men who want to give something special to their wives or women friends, women could also use the service for their crossdressing spouses.

Williams says that most of her subscribers are men and that the average customer is a 37-year-old married man. It is probably a safe bet that some of those "average" customers are buying panties for themselves. That wouldn't surprise Williams who recognizes that it's more fun to buy and wear panties than briefs. "There is so much more range of color and style in panties than in briefs," she says.

For more information, write Panty-of-the-Month, 6752 4th Ave., Suite 137, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220

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And speaking of "unmentionables," Fredericks of Hollywood reports that 75 percent of its customers are men, and that most mail orders are placed by men. Hmmmm.

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Danny LaRue, the British female impersonator whom Noel Coward called "the most professional, the most witty, and the most utterly charming man in the business," is writing his biography. It will be called *From Drags to Riches*.

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A Colorado woman was recently acquitted of first degree murder charges after she testified that she killed her transvestite husband hours after she heard him having sex with a man because she was afraid that he would infect her with AIDS.

Kay Eichheim told the jury that after she heard her husband having sex with a man who was never identified, she became despondent over her fear of AIDS, and that she

took a gun in to the bedroom where he was sleeping, intending to kill herself. Instead, she said in a report published in the *Philadelphia Gay News*, she pulled the trigger while the gun was pointed at his head. Although no evidence was presented that confirmed that Daniel Eichheim had AIDS or had been exposed to the deadly virus, the jury in rural Weld County, Colo., an area just south of the Wyoming border, apparently believed that his sexual activities put her at risk.

Eichheim's crossdressing, although a surprise revelation at the trial, was well-known to his wife of 27 years. According to testimony, when the two went shopping, Daniel would comment on women's clothes that would look good on him and also fit her. Photos of him crossdressed were presented at the trial.

Kay testified that she "endured" her husband's bedroom activities. But the couple's daughter told the court that her mother once confided that the pair enjoyed a wonderful sex life.

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An Air Force physician stationed in San Antonio, Texas, is facing military charges after he was given a traffic ticket and police found him in drag.

While he was reportedly cruising a San Antonio bar area, the 28-year-old captain was pulled over by police for having expired license plates. When stopped by the civilian authorities he was wearing a denim miniskirt, a matching blouse and hat, black lace stockings and high heels. He told police that he was crossdressed on a bet, the *Philadelphia Gay News* reports.

San Antonio police turned him over to military authorities who later said that he would be charged with violating Air Force regulations.

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IFGE Convention 88 Report

By JoAnn Roberts

I don't know that I can give you an accurate picture of the 1988 IFGE convention since I was very busy while I was there. I am sure I missed a lot of activities. Upon arrival, Alison Laing and I checked into our room and immediately began to get ready for the Wednesday buffet/social/orientation meeting. I met many new people and had a chance to renew some old acquaintances. I spent a lot of time with the people from ETVC and the Chicago Gender Society.

Upon introduction I received many supportive comments about the Renaissance News and the editorials on IFGE. As a result I was conscripted onto two IFGE committees, Publications and Marketing. Both of these met for almost a total of 8 hours each during the course of Thursday, Friday and Saturday. We made a number of recommendations about the Tapestry and marketing, some of them pretty radical. I could not stay for the entire Board meeting on Sunday, so I don't know the outcome of the recommendations. If I hear soon, I'll let you all know.

We really kicked off the convention Thursday with three one-hour sessions on How To Form An Organization. It was well attended and Gloria Peters of ETVC did an excellent job of assembling panelists and useful materials. I also participated in panels on Marketing and Networking. Alison's "Positive Action" session was a big hit since it was one of the few sessions to have view graphs and handouts. Her session inspired several people to brainstorm their own positive action projects. One group from Canada, TAM, is going to try to raise money for a Universal Unitarian Church that was burned down by a disgruntled and disturbed TS in Montreal.

My session on "Producing A

Quality Newsletter" was lightly attended but enthusiastically supported. Again, overheads and handouts helped. My panelists were Wendi Danielle (A Rose, Az), Gloria Peters (ETVC, Ca), Linda McKim (CHIC, Ca), and Jan Rupard (B&P, Tx). They also did an outstanding job of discussing and explaining their approaches to their newsletters.

On Friday morning I spent most of my time in the professional sessions with Ariadne Kane of the Outreach Institute. Over lunch we discussed some mutually beneficial projects (more on those later). The professional sessions which were opened to general attendance were packed, particularly the Niela Miller/Mariette Allen session and Dr. Docter's session. I think this points out the need to get the two cultures into a mixed medium for better communication. (BTW, Mariette announced that she has a publisher for her book!)

I understand that the D&S panel was very good as were the TS rap groups. These were scheduled Ad Hoc and still attendance was high. IFGE needs better coordination for next year and has to put more emphasis on the TS community and personal development to maintain a good balance.

No, it wasn't all work and no play. The Chicago Gender Society provided a bus tour of Chi-town which stopped at the famous Baton club and other welcoming sites on Thursday night. Friday night a bunch of us invaded a little bar called Charlie's Angels and had a marvelous time. And again, after the banquet on Saturday, the hard-liners went off to the wee hours of the morning. I could not keep up with Alison and soon gave up trying. That girl has more energy than any three people I know!

Other events of interest: Merissa received the 2nd Virginia Prince Award for Lifetime Service

to the community. I honestly and sincerely believe she deserves it. Now, if she would just let go of a few reigns, we'd make a little more progress. But the "piece de resistance" and "coup de grace" for the entire convention was honoring Christine Jorgensen at the banquet on Saturday night. Sheila Kirk had us all sign a scroll and it was presented to Christine after dinner. She was a marvelous speaker and was very proud of us and proud to be with us. I will always remember shaking her hand and having a chance to chat with her, however brief it was.

So, you are probably all wondering about all the noises I made prior to the convention. Well, to be honest, there are still problems. The production of the Tapestry is still in the Stone Age, at least for the next issue, which Merissa promised would be out by April 1. Tapestry does have a computer and PageMaker, but I'm not sure that they know how to handle either. So, we've still got nuts and bolts problems. I have been assured that anyone who paid for a four issue subscription will receive four issues. If some of our recommendations are accepted, look for some changes in the schedule and format of Tapestry.

The convention format needs to be overhauled before it will be interesting to the mainstream of our community. There is just too much organization stuff that was rehashed from last year and not enough personal or professional development. IFGE learned the same hard lesson that we learned about the professional community; not much response because of poor marketing and short lead times.

IFGE as an umbrella organization has some serious kinks to work out before it will be embraced by the majority of groups around the country. For example, I could not find anyone with a copy of the
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News & Notes Too!

According to designs debuted at the International Men's and Boy's wear Trade Show in Paris this February, males will sport a feminine look this coming fall and winter.

Flowers will be a major motif in menswear. Paul Smith, a British designer whose traditional clothes are popular with young professionals, showed vests decorated with lilies of the valley and other blossoms. Other designers present models wearing shawls or scarves draped over their pinstripe suits. Soft bow ties, lace hankies tucked into hip pockets, ruffled shirt cuffs for day wear, and crocheted suit lapels also blurred the line between men's and women's fashions, according to a report in the *Philadelphia Gay News*.

So, how does it feel to be a trendsetter?

Be thankful that you weren't a crossdresser several hundred years ago. Back then some of the standard beauty practices used by women could have made you sick or possibly killed you. For example:

♥ To get a fair complexion, women in ancient Rome, Mesopotamia and Elizabethan England used an ultra-white face powder made from lead oxide.

♥ Cleopatra reportedly used a facial mask made from crocodile dung and goat's milk.

♥ Arabian women poured camel urine on their hair to make it shine; while Venetian women believed that lion's urine applied to their hair while they sat in the sun would produce golden highlights.

♥ Women in Edwardian England were so eager to have a narrow waist that they infested themselves with tape-

worms to keep the food they ate from turning to fat.

♥ In the 19th Century, English women took arsenic to give their skin an interesting glow.

♥ Babylonian women got rid of unwanted facial hair by sanding their skin with a pumice-like stone.

♥ And finally, women in ancient Rome used a type of brown seaweed for rouge while some of the fashionable women who attended Shakespeare's plays at the Globe Theater rubbed a concoction made of mashed bugs on their lips to give them a red tint.

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Witnesses in Selma, Ore., had no problem describing the man who robbed the Home Valley Bank there recently and escaped by stealing a teller's automobile—he was wearing a pink miniskirt!

...Convention 88 from page 5

Constitution or the By-laws, Board members included. That is ludicrous! The Board voted to increase its size from 15 to 21 and I am still trying to figure out that rationale. I am also wondering how that can happen without a vote of the membership, unless By-Laws have not been ratified. If that is the case, it's open season for the Board and they can do anything they want. See what I mean about kinks? Alison & I proposed a "congress" of groups with a subsequent reduction of the Board and although I have not heard the results, I am certain that it was defeated, since they had already voted to increase the Board size to twenty-one.

There were a couple of smoke-

filled room meetings among some of the group leaders, and we discussed a number of common goals. I was especially impressed by David Maxwell of CGS.

Postscript: I received a call from Wendi Danielle, Chairman of the IFGE Board. While the board did not act on our "congress" proposal, Wendi is making it one of her priorities for 88/89. Her top priority, of course, is to get *Tapestry* back into production. She will be sending a letter to all groups shortly and plans to make quarterly reports on IFGE activities to the community at large. BRAVO Wendi!

Maybe now there is a chance that IFGE will pull through.

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Subscription and Associate Membership is \$12 per year. Full Membership in the group is \$30 per year.

Renaissance is a non-profit corporation which has the purpose of providing education about transgendered behavior to the general public and professional counsellors.

Renaissance meets once a month, on the 3rd Saturday of the month, unless otherwise noted. Starting time is 9:00 PM in the late Spring/Summer, and 8:00 PM in the Fall/Winter. Regular meetings are held in the Valley Forge area. Occasionally, we will meet other places and these will be noted in the newsletter.

This newsletter is produced by Creative Design Services.

Please Note: The May meeting will begin our Spring/Summer schedule. Meetings start at 9:00pm