



News & *views*

Vision • Integrity • Quality

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RENAISSANCE

Hanky Panky On Winslow Street

by *Judy Osborne*

The transgender community was a kinder, simpler place only a decade ago. Our idealism was pure and simple, we had begun to realize our power to change things, and our institutions were shiny and new.

The same idealism permeated the atmosphere in Chicago House on Winslow Street in Provincetown, Massachusetts at that time. The season was late October, and Fantasia Fair was in full swing. A small group of transwomen, mostly wealthy and astute business people in their other lives, met to create yet another new and shiny institution. They named their creation after the street in front of Chicago House. The Winslow Street Fund was born.

The new organization brought hope that our community could grow in creative ways by having an endowment fund. The goal was a million dollars, the income from which would be granted each year as seed money to support a variety of new and needy projects of value to our community.

Still another new and shiny institution at the time was the International Foundation for

Gender Education. IFGE had been formed a few years earlier as a national transgender center to connect our community together, guide our progress, and give us a face to the outside world. IFGE's chief vehicle for this purpose was *Tapestry*, a glossy magazine which gave substance to our personalities and activities in a proud and prestigious manner.

The Winslow Street planners looked for an organization which could hold and guard the new fund and decided, under certain conditions, to place the Fund within IFGE. The conditions stipulated that the Fund would have its own separate trustees, who would have sole authority over all money in the Fund; that the principal never would be touched; and that none of the income would ever be used for IFGE operating expenses.

IFGE fell on hard times as time went on, but the chronically-broke organization never touched the Winslow Street money. They couldn't. The faith of our community was at stake. Donors sent in their money knowing the

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Renaissance Renews Itself In 1998

[King of Prussia, PA, November 1997] — The Renaissance Education Association, Inc. officially changed its name to the Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc. by vote of its board of directors. "It gives everyone a much better idea what we're about," said outgoing board chair JoAnn Roberts. "Our purpose is still to educate, and that is reflected in our Mission Statement," she continued. Roberts is succeeded as chair by Lisa Cross, former Managing Director of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of Renaissance. Ms. Cross's term will mark the second time in a decade that Renaissance has been chaired by a transsexual person. The board also added several new members and is planning several new commu-

nity projects. Joining the board are Carol Cobb-Nettleton, Ph.D.; Diane Dale; Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.; and Phyllis Frye.

Ms. Frye is best known as the Executive Director of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP). One of the new projects involves ICTLEP and Renaissance formulating a Transgender Rights Initiative (TRI). The mission of TRI will be to provide a political voice for the transgender community on a national level. TRI will also work with other transgender rights organizations, like *Its Time America!*, to educate transgender people about

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Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: 302-376-1990 or email to: sadeCD@aol.com.

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 at 8 pm all year 'round, Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Renaissance Lehigh Valley, PO Box 3624, Allentown, PA 18106. Meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) or send email to: <lsv@ezonlline.com>.

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: connecticuTVView, 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 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701. Call 908-219-9094. Email: vikkimmotg@aol.com

Western Central New Jersey: New Jersey Support, call Susan at 973-334-0416 or Dorothy at 215-744-4746 (weekends only). Write PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 for information. Email: Susanw@aol.com. Meetings are the first Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing.

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: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 1311, Water Mill, NY 11976-1311. Phone 516-283-1333. email to joed2viola@aol.com

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Vanessa Kaye, Oklahoma City: COTA, 6957 N.W. Expressway, #121 Oklahoma City, OK 73132, email to <mhk@ionet.net>.

Renaissance News & Views

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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.

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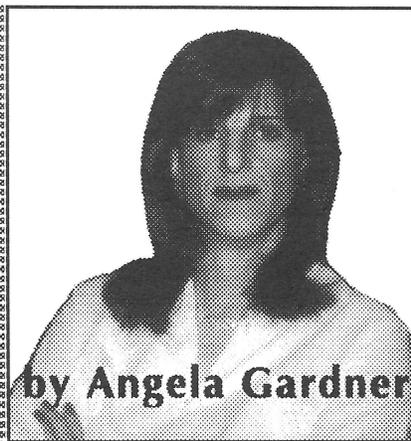
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Local Calendar

January

3	Ren. LSV - Harrisburg
3	NJ Support - Trenton
10	Ren. Lehigh Valley
10	Ren. Delaware - Wilmington
17	Ren. GPC - Wayne, Pa.
24	MOTG - Red Bank, NJ

News Beat & Reminder



It's December. Renew, renew, renew! OK, we got that out of the way. I hate such crass commercialism but... we're a non-profit organization, so it's OK. If you renew now, then in February when you don't get your issue of *News & Views* you'll remember and say, "Oh, I forgot to renew." If you send the cash now (actually check, money order, or credit card number) you won't have to worry about it again till the end of next year. So, take a moment now and assure the uninterrupted appearance of *News & Views* in your PO box.

How's the volunteer program and revitalization project going? It seems to me that the level of excitement about how Renaissance is all set to grow by leaps and bounds is itself growing by bounds and leaps. Folks are returning their Volunteer Forms and that info is being filed for easy access. As we put together the various projects and initiatives that are going to help us double our membership and increase our outreach to the general public, we are going to need staff people to handle the details. (It's the details that'll get ya.) Once all the info is on hand it will be a simple matter to contact those who are interested in assisting in those areas. Also, when you renew you'll get another form that asks for info on what you do for a living and what your hobbies are. All of the returned data from both forms are, (as always) is strictly confidential and will be added to your file so we can call (or write, or email) if we need assistance in your particu-

lar area of expertise. We might not call on your skills, but if we don't know what they are we won't be able to get your assistance if we do need it. You don't have to fill out the form, it's strictly optional, but if you can give us the additional information we would appreciate it.

Just think what progress toward acceptance and respect (both internal and external) the transgender community might make if, for the benefit of the community, we all used the abilities and skills that we use to make our living.

A Transgender Organization by Any Other Name

It's official, or will be as soon as the PA Department of State coughs up the right paperwork. Renaissance has changed it's name. At the last meeting of the National board the decision was made to become **The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc.** Most everybody will still call us just plain Renaissance, but the rest of the planet will now have a better idea of what we do. I can't tell you how many calls and letters we've had in the past ten years from people who wanted information on the Renaissance period of history. One woman called to ask if we could arrange a Renaissance wedding for her. We could have, but I don't know if it would have been what she had in mind. Anyhow, from now on we're RTA, Inc., not REA, Inc. And we still smell as sweet. We should with all the perfume.

Over Easy

Strange things are happening on

this little ball of mud we call planet Earth. A French scientist has come up with a way to predetermine the sex of a child. He's devised a procedure which determines the alternating negative or positive polarity of the membrane of the woman's ovum, or egg. A positively charged ovum attracts sperm with the X (girl) chromosome; a negatively charged ovum attracts the Y (boy) chromosome. Is the world ready for this? Let the philosophers decide, but please don't let 'em debate it on the *Jerry Springer Show!*

Could these positive and negative charges have anything to do with why we want to wear pumps and carry a matching bag? Who knows what the wonders of science may reveal. Get out the voltmeter Frenchie and bring on the eggs.

Yesss!

In other strange goings on, Marv Albert returned to the *Late Show With David Letterman* last month. He arrived on stage to big applause, and it was clear that the audience was on Marv's side. He told the world the whole deal was a setup, which I can believe, 'cause the old lover was peeved that Marv was getting married and wouldn't be having anymore sex romps with her. He denied any biting, claiming that the marks on his lovers' body were hickeys. Maybe yes, maybe no. I leave that to the forensic experts to decide. The really cool thing was that Marv admitted knowing a transvestite. Not only that, but he defended a man's right to explore sexual variations, and said he met the TV when he was in a "curious phase."

Letterman said, "I've known you 16 years, and I never knew that you knew a transvestite." Well, Dave, I guess it just goes to show that there's more that moves in heaven and earth than we mortals ken. Or something like that. (Wonder how many TVs Dave knows, but isn't aware of?) The audience, again, didn't seem too upset with Marv for this revelation. I predict that Mister Albert will be

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back broadcasting sports within a year, and while you will continue to get the occasional Marv Albert joke, for the most part people just won't care about his sordid past.

Marv *did* deny wearing ladies underwear, however. C'mon Marv, ya know ya love 'em! And what's a panty fetish compared to dating a TV? Maybe later Albert will admit to a fondness for Victoria's Secret. There's still time for him to pick up big bucks as an underwear model. Marv as the newest angel? It could happen. Remember what pantyhose did for Joe Namath?

Tish! You Spoke French

More on strange synchronicity. I was offered a job on Halloween. Being an actress one is called upon to perform many demanding roles. The producer who called me actually wanted me to be a Halloween costume character in a mall for four hours. The choice of costume was up to me. The gig required arriving at 4 p.m. (in Delaware) and being out on the mall floor for 50 minutes greeting shoppers with Halloween welcomes, having a 15 minute break, and doing it all again till around 8.

Well, being a starving actress I toyed with the idea. Since the Henri David Halloween Ball was that night, my original thought was to do the gig in the costume I would wear to Henri's. The idea that came to me was to be Morticia from *The Adams Family*. Then, reality started to seep in. This role would not challenge my highly trained acting abilities. It would not provide an opportunity for me to grow in my chosen profession, expanding my range and honing my instrument. Besides, the pay was lousy. Another thing; after gliding around (you know how Morticia walks) on the marble floors of a mall all afternoon, I'd have been in no shape to have any fun that evening. So... I backed out.

It's good that I did, 'cause the phone rang that afternoon with a last minute booking for a quick voiceover that made me much more money. After the voiceover, I hurried home and pulled everything out of the closet to come up with a stunning costume that was basically my underwear on the outside. I did dress it up with a Spear of Power and passed the whole look off as the aspect of the Mountain Goddess. I descended from my mountain fastness to anoint the poor folk of the lowlands with the wonder of my presence. Or some crap like that. The tip of my spear was made from a great cut crystal from a chandelier (or floor lamp) that was given to me by Joanne White, our Renaissance treasurer.

I arrived at the Ball in a much more relaxed mood and less of an aching body than I would have had if I'd done the Halloween mall greeting gig. And there was as the star of *The Adams Family*, **John Astin**. Mr. Astin was in town to perform Poe's *The Raven* with the Philadelphia Orchestra. (A gig that's a little better than walking around the mall.) He is a friend of Henri's (as are so many) and stopped by the party at Henri's request. Since we're members of the same union I walked right up and we chatted at length. I even met his wife. He's a charming man, and I was tempted to speak French in his presence so I could get my arm kissed up to the shoulder, but his wife was standing right there. Instead I subtly signaled my photog (Yo Randi! Take a picture here!) and I'll always treasure the picture of myself and Gomez. Just think how cool it would have been if I'd actually gotten that Morticia outfit together. Ah well, that's this strange world for ya.

Disney: Gay Nights & Men in Dresses

The Walt Disney corporation has gone places Walt would probably not have dreamed of, even in his wildest visions of Tomorrowland. They have given gay employees health insurance for their domestic partners, and taken

flack from the Baptists as a result. They have had gay nights at Disneyland and Disney World. Talk about a Magic Kingdom, Mary. Now they bring us a film about a man in a dress.

It's filming now in Canada and is called *Mr. Headmistress*. It airs next season on *The Wonderful World of Disney*. The plot? That old chestnut about the guy on the run hiding out in drag. *Some Like It Hot* and *Nuns On The Run* spring to mind as examples of the genre. In this particular case Harland Williams (star of Disney's recent release *Rocket Man*), returns from Mars to play the movie's hero Tucker, an "ex-con and con man" who, on the run from his creditors, hides out in an all-girls school while pretending to be its headmistress, Ms. Bascombe. Costarring in this fella-in-a-frock-flick is former *Married With Children* star **Katey Sagal**. (Don't tell Dina.) She plays the no-nonsense assistant headmistress Harriet Magnum, nicknamed "Dirty Harriet" by the academy's students. The producers are using a 120 year old college in the Great White North as the set for the girl's school, and the weather has been crisp. This has, of course, led to jokes about the wind whistling up the star's dress and I'm not talking about Katey. That's a line I believe I used last year in this column. They're stealing my material. Get my attorney on the phone! Anyhow, Williams and Sagal shared makeup tips on the set and tried to stay warm. Keep your eyes peeled for this one next year, and remember, N&V told you about it first. Unless you already read about it somewhere else.

The Last Words

Those who read this column on a regular basis realize by now that this is the place where I feature those kernels of dish that are the juiciest and most scandalous. Or it's where I slip in all the stuff I get at the last minute. In any event, did you hear about **Lady Chablis** and **Clint Eastwood** on the set of *Midnight In The Garden of Good and Evil*? In the

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words of one crew member Clint made Chablis feel like an "empress." Apparently Dirty Harry liked Chablis' vintage. When a television crew came to the set Clint puckered up and made Chablis' day with a smooch for the camera.

Clint considered casting an actor to play the role but felt that while anyone could get dragged up, it took someone "real" like Lady Chablis to really get into the part. Since she was playing herself, I guess it's the ultimate in type-casting.

Crossdressing is the flavor of the Fall on the soaps. (And did anybody catch **Robert Goulet** in drag for a Mercedes commercial?) Last month a transgendered bartender character was introduced on *Days of Our Lives*. This month it's a couple of soap hunks getting into drag at the Budapest airport to elude the authorities and enter the country. Yeah, right. I know the soaps are a gigantic exaggeration of reality, but do you think two guys who haven't dressed up before could manage a convincing transformation with all the facilities of the Budapest Airport men's room? And two girls their size are going to walk right past the authorities who are trying to stop them? Sure, why not? Who are these lovely ladies? It's Tad and Edmund of *All My Children*. Who's their makeup person? Where'd they get the wigs? I Love their gloves.

They were coordinated to the other girl's outfit. How chic.

Did your Summer fun and frolic produce any good shots of you in a swimsuit? Some folks have a Summer that mixed femininity and sand. They've already sent their swimsuit shot for the **February Swimsuit Issue**. If you haven't get them in the mail to the National Office. Write "Swimsuit Issue" on the envelope.

A few months ago we had a fantasy survey for a reasearch project stuffed in with your newsletter. After the researcher offered money, in the form of a prize drawing, everybody filled their's out and sent it to her. Nina Barnes is the researcher and she dropped me a line to let me know that she has gotten all the info and is running a statistical analysis. After she writes up the results she's going to share them with us. If they're not too racy we might even publish them in these pages. Hey, this columns' pretty racy and we publish it. No problem, Nina.

Now, a serious moment. The Gender Identity Project of The Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center in New York City (now that's a mouthful for ya) are having an event called "They Lived It OUT!" to remember and honor all transgen-dered people who have died from "AIDS, illness, suicide, violence, addictions, and old age." That means, practically speaking, if you knew anyone who was part of the transgender community and they passed away, they can be included. The Center is

putting together a collage and would like to get pictures, names, or articles on our TG sisters and brothers who have passed on. They suggest you make photo copies of the original items and send the copies since they won't be dismantling the collage to return things. The collage will be shown at The Center on Friday evening, January 23, 1998. There will be entertainment and a celebration of everyone included in the collage. If you have stuff to send, mail it to: The Gender Identity Project, The Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011. (If anyone has a photo of Suzanne LeBec, who passed away unexpectedly and generously donated her clothing collection (through her daughter) for the National Benefit Auction and sale last month, please send it in for the collage.) Take a moment to remember and honor those from our community who have made the final transition.

I tell ya, it must be this living alone on a mountain, but I'm gettin' too serious, kittens. I gotta get out more. I must go my petite ones. A bientôt. Tish! You spoke French...



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Winslow Street...

Fund would be a permanent asset for our community, the income from which would be available forever to help start worthwhile transgender projects. People named the Winslow Street Fund in their wills. Ellen Summers, one of the giants and dearest spirits of our community, named the Winslow Street Fund as her memorial. Those of us who loved her made large donations to honor her life's work for us after she passed away.

The Fund eventually grew to \$80,000 dollars, far short of the planners' goal but significant nevertheless. Many worthwhile projects were supported over the years from the Fund's income.

But ideals, promises, even sacred obligations, have ceased to mean very much to the current trustees of the Winslow Street Fund and to IFGE's employees and board. Two keepers of the Fund are the same people who have assumed primary responsibility for keeping IFGE solvent, and they need to balance their budget. To do so, they have rammed through a \$15,000 dollar "loan" from the Winslow Street Fund principal to bail IFGE out of its latest crisis.

"Loan" is in quotes because the terms are questionable. I have attempted to contact Linda Buten, Chairperson of IFGE, and Abby Saypen, Chairperson of the Winslow Street Fund, for updated information and confirmation. Neither has responded. In the absence of their input I can only offer my understanding of the terms of the loan and the current situation. I ask the reader to allow for small inaccuracies and for events which have happened since the information came to me. In fairness, it should be noted that there is nothing illegal with the above transaction. The Winslow Street Fund is an asset account of IFGE. It is not, as some people think, a trust fund or a separate foundation. What is questioned are the ethics of how it was done and why.

What I do know has been gleaned from several diverse sources, and I

feel confident of the basic accuracy of the following information:

- \$15,000 was transferred from the Winslow Street Fund to IFGE without the concurrence of all the Winslow Street trustees, and without a loan instrument having been signed.

- Proposed terms include a one-year loan at eight and one-half percent interest. Winslow Street Fund dividends will be used to pay a portion of the interest by means of a complex calculation.

- There is no repayment schedule, although two people have promised to raise enough money next year to pay off the loan and still meet IFGE's operating deficit.

- No announcement will be made to those who donated their money to the Winslow Street Fund after being assured that the Fund would never be used to pay for IFGE's operation.

The last item is important. Laura Caldwell is a member of IFGE's Budget/Finance Committee and a Winslow Street Trustee. All fund raising in the last few years has been oriented toward IFGE's operating deficit, but even as recently as mid-1995 Ms. Caldwell was soliciting Winslow Street donations by saying, "But one very important fact must be emphasized. That (Winslow Street Fund) money can never be used by IFGE for any other purpose. And it certainly can not be used to soften IFGE's budgetary needs! In fact, this organization (IFGE) could be free of its financial difficulties if it had that money. Instead, IFGE has put that amount to work in an investment plan to benefit the community, and at times finds difficulty in securing adequate income to meet its monthly expenses. I ask you, is this service to the community? — I think it is."

What are the realistic prospects that the loan will be repaid or worse, that more of the Winslow Street Fund will be taken? It's necessary to examine a little bit of the history of IFGE to reach an accurate estimate.

As noted earlier, one of IFGE's early goals was to foster cohesion within our widespread community so

we could come to know each other, understand how our community was developing in other places, even catch a glimpse of our successes so we could repeat them in our own home towns. By building on the knowledge it gained in the process, IFGE could begin to offer a realistic view of our community's people and issues to the professionals who treat us, to academics, to the government, and to the public.

During a rancorous session at an early IFGE convention in Texas, egos were bruised and IFGE decided it would not be the vehicle to collect the successes and failures of the clubs across the country and then reflect them back for the further guidance of each. The Foundation did feel it should continue to represent our community to the outside world, but sometimes it did so with less than complete information about what was going on in the hinterlands. The members of clubs in the hinterlands soon forgot what the initials meant, and donations dropped off.

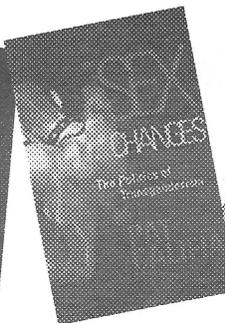
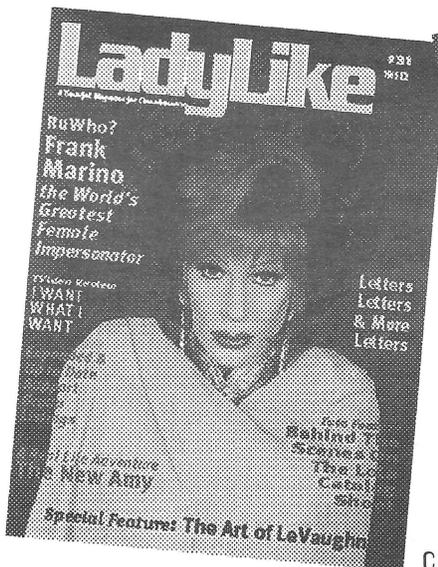
IFGE had accumulated by then a paid full-time office staff of four or five transpeople. When rent, travel, and other expenses were added in, the budget became substantial. A succession of generous and deep-pocketed benefactors stepped up to balance the budget. IFGE Staff talked the IFGE board of directors into acquiring, at a very substantial long-term cost, a shiny new headquarters building reflecting the prestige of our community. Two "angels" on the board promised to make large annual contributions to offset the cost of the building. However, these "angels" became disaffected by events in IFGE and removed themselves and their money after bitter disagreements with other members of the board. The first one left in early 1993, a scant year after signing the lease. The second left in late 1994.

IFGE lost momentum in other ways. In an era of participatory management, IFGE clung to a top-down management style. Many potential

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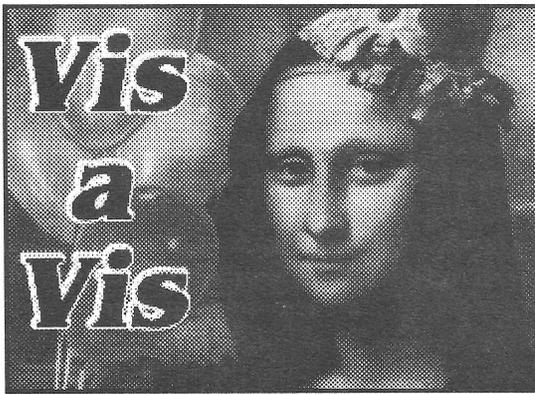
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by *Dina Amberle*

I'm a pro football fan and here in Philadelphia that means the Eagles. After 11 disappointing weeks of so-so play, and yo-yoing the quarterback position between two veterans, we are now starting our former third-string quarterback, Bobby Hoying.

Hoying got the job through the incompetence of Ty Detmer and Rodney Peete. The fan support for Hoying had been swelling for weeks before he got his start. We just wanted to see a new face.

This phenomenon is similar to the reaction some crossdressers have been lucky enough to experience in certain social situations. There are times when we are the most attractive women in a social setting—not so much through our own natural beauty, but rather through the lackluster performance of our competition.

Whatever the end results, we do put in an effort to look good. Many of the 'veterans' (i.e. real women) just don't put the effort into their appearance. So when we show up, and the first stringers are having an off day, we can sometimes win the position on merit.

Many crossdressers have received glowing compliments on their appearance from women who claim they "could never look that good." It's not really true, of course. It is simply that they don't invest the time and effort that we must. That having been said, it is also true that there's more to being a woman than having a nice coif, makeup, and falsies, as much as we might wish it to be that simple.

So here's to us third stringers who occasionally get our day in the sun. Even if our running game is weak, we can always "pass" our way to success.

Watch Your Language

The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS) in Decatur, Georgia, published a concise style manual defining the various transgender groups. The purpose of the release was to assist the media when making references to transgendered persons.

The listing included capsule definitions of transsexuals, transgenderists, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, androgynes, intersexed, and the transgender community, plus a sidebar about the proper use of pronouns in reference to any members of these groups.

Noticeably absent from the list was the venerable term, "transvestite," which I suppose has been completely banished by the poohbahs in the TG community. The term "crossdresser" has a softer edge to it, even though it has the same literal meaning as "transvestite." I happen to like the term transvestite, simply because it has a bit of shock value. "Crossdresser" seems like a euphemism, and a bit of a wimp out. Of course, nowadays it's hard to say the word transvestite without following it up with a Marv Albert "Yes!" immediately after—which is another reason why the people in charge of these weighty matters eschew the word. When it comes to things like this, we seem to have no sense of humor.

Lighten Up

The *Northwest Passages* newsletter of the NWGA group in Portland, Oregon, carried an article by a member named Karen B. titled "No Man's Land." From the tone of her essay, it seems that Karen is struggling with

her transgenderism.

She talks about the emotional problems inherent in wanting to be a woman, against the physical impossibilities of attaining that goal. These problems are caused by existing in the "No Man's Land" to which her title refers, i.e. not being able to pass as a woman, yet not being happy as a full time male. The real problem is that she can't seem to reconcile those two halves within her one mind and body.

She writes, "From point A to point Z there is a progression where it gets easier to crossdress each time, and more disappointing and frustrating to go back to being a male. Yet [what] makes a lot of TVs happy is the very thing that can cost them their job, their family, their friends, and their life."

Karen seems overly concerned about the dangers of trying to live outside the gender lines society has defined. She writes, "the fear and the stories I have read of the tragic endings of many people who found themselves in that gray area [the "No Man's Land"] has kept me from doing much physically as Karen." Her concern over the mental aspect of crossdressing is apparent in this passage: "I look at the ladies who pass perfectly and ask myself have they been doing all the endless things it takes emotionally, mentally, physically... or can they really keep their male and female lives so separate that they don't have severe emotional problems?"

Finally, she wonders, "if a person can't go all the way and live as a woman and pass as a woman and function emotionally, mentally, and spiritually [as a woman] maybe they should just be friends and protective of those in the TV world." In other words, Karen is saying that if you can't have the whole loaf, don't even bother taking a slice or two.

Karen's essay is an example of the over thinking engaged in by some crossdressers and would-be transsexuals. They ponder every issue and nuance of crossdressing until they lose the joy of doing it under a cloud of worry. One needn't be passable, nor live full time, nor minutely flowchart the path of your transition, to enjoy crossdressing or

expressing your transgenderism. Those who get into that rut of over-analysis often-times wind up paralyzed into inactivity, afraid of making the wrong move, of betraying their convoluted self-view.

Lighten up and just do it.

It Are My Fayvrit Newletters

The Erie Sisters Club in Erie, Pennsylvania, publishes a monthly newsletter called *Mirror Images*. It's a nice little group newsletter with the singular distinction (?) of being the world's worst in the disciplines of spelling and grammar.

I've poked fun at their torturous usage in the past and the time has come to tweak them once again. The August issue is a product of a desktop publishing program so it is all the more unfathomable how they've managed to warp the language inside. Forget SpellCheck, we're talking illiteracy here.

A few minor—but annoying—punctuation errors marred member Lisa Kelly's essay about male competitiveness lurking beneath the feminine finery. In her article, Lisa uses commas in place of periods to end sentences. But not always, which indicates she knows better but simply doesn't take the time to edit her own work. And this is a newsletter where a writer needs to edit her own work because, Lord knows, you aren't going to get any help from the staff.

The leader of the Erie Sisters is Diane L. and she seems to be the worst offender. Some examples from her newsletter column are as follows: "Then again everyone dose like to look good before gone out, no one dose an better job." "Pam was ask if we put our add in the newspaper as yet. Pam will be looking for an a new out let for our add." But Diane at least is humble about her writing talents and even includes this apology in her column, "I may not be a world class speller or writer and some of you may wounded if English is my second language." It is ironically appropriate that she misused "wounded" for "wondered" in her apologia. That last sentence was written in ref-

erence to the Erie Sisters' web page <www.geocities.com/Wellesley/1614> and I "wounded" if their Internet site is as English-challenged as their newsletter.

The Volunteer Army

The cover story of last month's *News & Views* was a call for more volunteerism from our founder JoAnn Roberts. She began her article with several paragraphs pulled directly from a similar article written 10 years ago.

When I joined Renaissance eight years ago, the core group of founding members was still intact and assisted by a strong supporting staff who joined right after the birth of the group. It was a remarkably talented group of individuals with a vision for the group which stood us in good stead for the first ten years. However, some of those original stars have moved on, and although a second wave of leaders came along to manage the group in the interim, we seem to be missing the same high quality of personnel with which the enterprise was begun.

I think part of the reason for this is that the newer members simply assume that everything is running smoothly without the need for assistance. In a young organization, members tend to pull together to keep the ship upright. Once a track record is forged complacency sets in, and the future of the group is taken for granted.

It seems ironic even to me that in our tenth year of existence we have run into a financial crunch, and now the board has deemed it necessary to openly seek volunteer assistance to maintain our strength. This should be a wake up call for everyone in our group to get involved through donations of time, or money, to ensure our future. And not simply an existence, but a real future as a dynamic group, in the fashion that made Renaissance one of the premier TG groups in the world. Our tradition deserves no less, and our future depends upon it.

Haute Couture, My Ass

I am amazed and saddened by modern culture's fascination with the

most meaningless diversions. There is no better example of this madness than the disproportionate attention given to the fashion world.

The major sports and entertainment industries involve millions of the populace in their enjoyment and participation. Though we may watch the parade of supermodels, does any of what we see involve us as consumers, much less participants? Of course not. In fact, it has long been a spectacle leaving us to wonder, "Who really wears this stuff?" So why all the attention?

Recently, I was thumbing through some fashion magazines looking for material. Although I have done this before, I never really read the accompanying copy, nor the prices of the fashions.

The issue that happened to catch my attention was the August *Bazaar*. They had a section about Fall suits from many of the leading design houses. The suits were nice... but were they remarkably different from what suits have been for decades? Not terribly, at least not to this untutored eye. The latest Chanel wool tweed jacket was inspired by this quote from Karl Lagerfeld, head of the House of Chanel: "Coco Chanel used to wear sports jackets from the Duke of Westminster, all a little too big but still very feminine." The nubby wool tweed jacket pictured was indeed reminiscent of old English tweed jackets favored by the gentry. The price for this throwback look? \$2,100. Which is a helluva lot more than even the Duke of Westminster ever paid for his tweeds, I'll wager. In fact, of the half dozen suit jackets pictured in the section, none was listed at less than \$990, and the Versace went up to \$2,280. And that's just the jacket. The rest of the outfits would set you back an equal amount for the skirts, slacks and blouses.

Elsewhere in the same *Bazaar* was a pictorial of Prada's new lingerie collection. Was there anything remotely innovative therein? Again, not to this untrained eye. But the prices were

continued on page 15



Gender Reflections

by *Barbara F. Anderson*
M.S.W., PhD.

Exiting the Closet

Coming out is a complex procedure beginning long before the actual moment of emergence, occurring again and again as each contact is made, and having consequences lasting long after.

Sometimes a crossdresser's exit is a well-prepared event, sometimes an impulse, and other times an involuntary act. The way it occurs sets the stage for what is to follow and can make the experience an empowering or a devastating one.

To the extent that this event is thought out and rehearsed, a person has the opportunity to anticipate vari-

ous consequences and to shape the process. Or preparation may give rise to anxiety or a stilted expression lacking spontaneity and sincerity. Know yourself. Do you present yourself best in a structured situation or do you prefer to "strike while the iron is hot?" Coming out is so important; make sure you do it in a manner that is authentic and true to yourself.

Sometimes an individual is robbed of the opportunity to consider the above options. On occasion someone else "outs" him. Such acts may be malicious, insensitive or innocent in nature. But they almost always are

experienced as disempowering by the crossdresser. They deprive him of the opportunity to interpret himself and his behavior to others and makes a potentially intimate communication a shallow report by a third party.

Or he may be discovered. Again, the crossdresser has lost the opportunity to pick his time and place as well as the chance to take the initiative. Rather, he is caught off-guard and finds himself in a defensive posture opposite an angry, frightened or ridiculing person.

If disclosure is on your agenda, think about the response you'd like to elicit from those who you want to know. Then consider what approach would be most effective on your part. Do not risk exposure by a third party or discovery by a loved one unless you are into shocking, frightening or entertaining others. Nobody can explain you, your needs and feelings like you can!



Winslow Street...

supporters, and even staff, felt they had little or no input. In an era during which we eagerly swamped the Internet, finally to begin to know each other and air our issues, IFGE all but ignored that far-reaching development.

IFGE simply fell behind. Other organizations filled the vacuum, and support waned.

IFGE does three main things. Their publication, now called Transgender Tapestry, is one of these. The others are an annual convention and a bookstore. All three were planned to be at least self-sustaining, which, when you think about it, they should be.

If you ask what other services IFGE offers, representatives inevitably begin describing the hundreds of telephone calls they receive and the referrals they give. Valuable,

yes, but hundreds of "hot-lines" all over the country perform a similar but much larger service in the aggregate using volunteer help. There's not too much else, although the organization does continue to perform a few other fairly inexpensive services.

It's hard to figure out what the full-time paid staff actually does. The magazine comes out on an irregular schedule, and subscribership is down. E-mail is routinely ignored, the web page is rarely updated, and books that are ordered don't get shipped. As of this writing, the top of IFGE's home page contains a slick, glossy promotion for the IFGE convention which happened last April in Long Beach.

One has to ask whether or not IFGE should continue to be allowed to drain the community's resources. The organization is deeply in debt and in arrears to many of its service providers. Money is owed to IFGE, but much of it appears to be uncollectable.

IFGE has been chronically broke and living beyond its means for years. Not having a deep pocket to look to this year, IFGE has turned its sights toward the Winslow Street Fund to bail itself out. Will IFGE turn the corner next year, balance its budget, and pay off its obligation to the Winslow Street Fund? The promise of solvency is made annually, but history says no. Or will it once again suffer a deficit and siphon off gobs of community money that instead could be applied in dribs and drabs to lift worthy projects off the ground? Or, worst of all, will IFGE be found lurking on Winslow Street once more, hoping to rape again?

Comments, including critical ones, are most welcome. Please e-mail your thoughts to me at <heyjude@eskimo.com>.



“Theft” Of Funds Earmarked For TG Community

by Kerri Reeder

The following letter was sent to Linda Buten, Chairperson of IFGE and Abby Saypen the Chairperson of Winslow Street Fund on November 3. To date, there has not been a reply from Linda or Abby.

Linda Buten, Chairperson IFGE Board of Directors IFGE Waltham, Mass.

November 5, 1997

Dear Linda,

As a member of IFGE and a Trustee of Winslow Street Fund I must address an issue which regretfully could disseminate contributions to both IFGE and WSF.

I was informed, by Abby Saypen, that monies were needed to keep IFGE afloat and that Winslow Street Fund was going to provide a, Loan . The essence of the conversation covered several elements; the funds in WSF were IFGE's assets and IFGE could do with them as they pleased, the funds were not separated from IFGE's financial statement and thus could be drained if a creditor should challenge IFGE, and approval had been given by the Chairperson of WSF that the funds would be available to IFGE. I was left with little choice but to place stipulations on the method and agreement which would allow funds to be transferred to IFGE from Winslow Street.

I asked and was assured by both Abby Saypen and Laura Caldwell that a formal, "Letter of Loan", would be written and signed prior to any funds

being transferred. I was assured that you, and Alison Laing would sign this note prior to November 1, 1997 or if after November 1, 1997 that you and Nancy Nangeroni would sign as legal representatives and authority for IFGE. The copy of this Letter was to be forwarded to me for approval prior to any transfer of funds, my right as a Trustee of WSF prior to my voting approval or disapproval.

Today, is November 5, 1997 and I have seen nothing of this Letter . I have been advised by Laura Caldwell that funds have been transferred to IFGE at Nancy Nangeroni's demand and request. A phone call to Laura Caldwell on Sunday Oct. 26, 1997 assured me that this letter was in process and would be transmitted shortly. It may be a fate-a-complete but it is important to all of us that this transaction be legitimate and correct.

As a Trustee of Winslow Street Fund I must hold you, Abby Saypen, and Laura Caldwell responsible for the repayment of the funds transfered to IFGE because this was not a "gift", but is a financial obligation of IFGE. The agreements to provide a, "Letter of Loan", has not been fulfilled and further pillaging of this fund is very likely.

May I quote from two IFGE newsletters about the WSF; Fall 1995 "Winslow Street is a fund set up solely for the benefit of the Transgendered Community. Its job is to provide financial assistance to worthwhile projects. It is the only endowment of its kind, anywhere, to the best of our knowledge", and Summer

1996, " Though supported by IFGE, Winslow Street is independent from IFGE." WSF is not IFGE's cash-cow but a fund developed from the beginning to foster growth in the community, not bail out IFGE.

Since Abby, Laura, and Nancy have acted without the full consent of the Trustees, have not acted on verbal agreements to have a, Letter of Loan, drawn up prior to distribution of funds, and have jeopardized the ability of WSF to, in full faith, request contributions may I suggest that the Board of Directors be fully informed and made aware of these actions and the damages to both IFGE and WSF that may occur.

I might even suggest that you as Chairperson for IFGE poll all contributors to WSF to see if their understanding of their gifts were to serve IFGE or the community. I certainly am polling those I know who contributed to get their input and to date all are vowing to eliminate IFGE from their contribution lists.

The problems at IFGE have been ongoing for a long time, living by guilt donation, will not solve this problem, nor will the change in Trustees of WSF keep these funds safe unless the Board of Directors acts to set these funds aside and demand that the WSF is a sacred account as originally intended. I request your immediate attention and response.



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Hot Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody."

— Bill Cosby

Well, kids, I've just returned from the **1997 Fall Harvest** event in Omaha, Nebraska over Halloween weekend. I know, I know, Omaha? Yes, and we had a blast. Let me tell you, those Heartland Girls know how to throw a party! **Stef Matthews, Joni Joyce,** and especially **Barbara Love** did a fabulous job co-hosting. Ms. Love did yeoman (yo-woman?) service as Mistress of Ceremonies and she even performed on Saturday night. Speaking of which, y'all could take some lessons from them Omaha girls on how to bridge the transgender and gay/les communities. **The Imperial Court of Nebraska (ICON)** was in attendance at Saturday night's festivities with the reigning Emperor and Empress and last year's Empress and Emperor (I thought he was really cute and he reminded me of Dilbert, a little).

Just across the river from Omaha is Council Bluffs, Iowa, which is also host to three casinos. We paid a visit to **Harveys** on Halloween evening. I was surprised that almost none of the gamblers were in costume. Anyway, I got to shoot craps in drag, but they took me to the cleaners. I was lucky to get out with my lingerie intact. No one at the crap table gave me any problems and I spoke with several of my compadres and the table crew. In a casino,

what matters is the color of your money.

Next year's **Fall Harvest** will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota, hosted by the **City of Lakes Crossgender Community (CLCC)**. Fall Harvest is a regional convention, much like the **Be All**, that rotates through several midwest cities. The overall framework for Fall Harvest is the **Mid-America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE)**. MAGGIE was the brainchild of **Jennifer Richards**, a St. Louis, Mo., transgender activist who passed away two years ago. I spoke with several people in Omaha who are afraid that MAGGIE may fall apart from apathy. That would really be a shame. In a short time, MAGGIE has become very important to the midwest and Fall Harvest is an important event for the country. It is an opportunity for people to come out who might not get another chance. I hope MAGGIE and Fall Harvest will continue in the tradition Jennifer started.

Also attending Fall Harvest was **Phyllis Frye**, the Executive Director of the **International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP)**. We hadn't seen each other face to face since the lobby days in October of 1995. Both Phyllis and I had been invited to Fall Harvest to give luncheon talks about the future of the transgender community. Our messages were very similar: don't sit on the sidelines waiting for someone else to do the work so you can reap the benefits—go get involved. Sometimes it's just not that easy figuring out how to get involved. Along those lines, watch for an important joint announcement by two of the major national organizations that will give more people a chance to get involved in the future of our community. But, you can always start by donating time/money to your local organization.

President Clinton made an historic address to the **Human Rights Campaign (HRC)** at a \$500 a couple dinner on November 8. It is the first time a sitting president has addressed a gay/lesbian organization. Elizabeth

Birch, Executive Director of HRC, introduced the president, and although I did not hear her introduction in toto, I am told that she mentioned transgendered people at least twice. Mr. Clinton, did not mention us, nor did he mention bisexual people. His remarks were confined to gays and lesbians. Mr. Clinton specifically endorsed passage of the **Employment Non Discrimination Act (ENDA)** saying that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is "... wrong and should be illegal." If ENDA passes this Congress, transgendered people will not be covered and HRC does not endorse amending the current bill.

Ding, Dong the Study's Dead! Yes, even as I tried to explain the merger-study thing to you last issue, it all came apart mid-month. Actually, the unraveling started almost from the beginning. While the AEGIS and Renaissance boards immediately agreed to participate in the study last July, many IFGE board members expressed their opposition to the idea. Over the summer months, Renaissance sent several requests to Linda Buten, chair of IFGE's board, requesting an official status of the study proposal and the appointment of two study team members. Those requests were ignored and went unanswered until it was discovered Buten had set up a meeting with AEGIS during the Southern Comfort Conference without Renaissance participation. Confronted with this meeting, Buten replied with an IFGE Executive Committee position statement: "They seen (sic) no advantage in speaking with anyone from Renaissance because they felt the group has nothing IFGE wants or needs." Regardless, AEGIS and Renaissance resolved to start the study and include IFGE anyway, but the entire month of October went by with no progress. The straw that broke the camel's back was a report from an IFGE board member that Buten has written an editorial for the IFGE Newsletter stating the reasons why IFGE does not need to merge with another organization. Having wasted four months and receiving repeated statements

Hot Buzz

that IFGE is not interested in talking with Renaissance, the Renaissance board decided to officially withdraw from the study. A teleconference for November 16 was cancelled and the study is now officially dead. Now, it may seem I am laying blame for the cancellation on IFGE, but that is only partly true. A major change in attitude by Renaissance came about because of the tremendous job Diane Dale and her Strategic Development Team have done in preparing a 5 year plan for growing Renaissance into the next century. Expanding the board beyond regional boundaries and creating alliances, rather than mergers, seemed the best route. A Press Release, elsewhere in this edition, describes the group's 1998 plans.

Enough light-heartedness, let's get to the serious stuff... This could start a run on beauty counters. **Phillip B.** was touting his **Botanical Cucumber** and **Lotus Breast Enhancing Cream** while visiting one of the many fashion mags. He let it drop that he uses it himself to pump up his pecs. "I put it on and in five minutes I feel like the Incredible Hulk. I look in the mirror and I can't believe they're mine." Sounds like I need to add this cream to my little bag of tricks for creating believable cleavage.

Here's a charity most tg support groups could get behind with little trouble. **Dress For Success** is a non-profit organization that solicits dress suits in size 18 and larger for women entering the work force but who have little money or are a hard to fit size. The New York organization can be reached at 212-545-DSNY.

With the holidays approaching, everyone needs a "little black dress" for that special occasion. **Vogue** pattern 9808 fills the bill. It's semifitted and slightly tapered so it will look good on just about anybody (that's a pun). But what really caught my eye was this... if you are daunted by the thought of threading a sewing machine or think that a dart is something you throw at a cork target in a bar, then perhaps the **Professional Association of Custom Clothiers** (541-772-4119) can help you find a tailor. If you absolutely insist on buying a dress, here are some suggestions: Polyester and spandex

knock-off of a **Dolce & Gabbana** by **Frances Colon** for \$98... Another polyester and spandex one shoulder dress by **Also Known** for \$82...A below the knee stretch dress by **LOTTA** \$99...Velvet sleeveless shift by **GAP**, \$58... beaded halter neck dress for **Bisou Bisou** by **Michael Bohbot** \$88.

Hemlines are all over the map this season. Long straight skirts create a lean line that is flattering and slimming. Add a back slit for a little bit of sexy leg show... A knee-length skirt is more adult and appropriate for a mature woman (say, post-35). A back slit makes for easy movement and a wrap style assures a good fit... The mini seems here to stay so prepare for it with hosiery that matches the color and a good pair of knee-high boots, or at least a higher heel.

Last month I talked about **Kevin Aucoin's Making Faces** and mentioned eyebrow sealer to block out and redraw eyebrows. Well, girls, I went to our local **Sally's Beauty Supply** store and found at least two brands of eyebrow sealer and right next to them were eyebrow stencils so you can't make a mistake. The stencils come in rounded and arch styles and cost less than \$3.

Espy Lopez at **Classic Curves** sent me info on the latest addition to her product line — **Hot Lashes**. This is a heated eyelash curler that will help your lashes stay curled for up to 18 hours. The complete package includes the curler, heater, eyelash night oil and quick-dry mascara, all for under \$50. Zip on over to her web site for more info <www.clerv.com>. She also sent me a test unit but I haven't had a chance to try it out yet. While at Fall Harvest I met two really great folks from Colorado, **Kelly and Darla Murphy** of **Avante Masterpiece Cosmetics**. Their cosmetic line is extensive and of the highest quality. You can visit their web site at <www.apos.com>. Also Kelly and Darla will be writing a monthly How-To column online for *Transgender Forum*. Also, look for a special "starter" kit they'll be putting together. It will have everything you need.

I've been meaning to mention another community vendor, **Transformations**. No, not the Transformations exposed-genitals ragazine. This is **Transformations Make-up and Hair** out of

Austin, Texas. **Jon Davis** (aka Beth Boyé) and **Lauren Carlisle** make up the team behind the company. I had a booth next to Jon's on the Queen Mary in Long Beach last April and I saw Jon again at the recent Southern Comfort. Jon did my hair in Long Beach and I really liked the way he styled it, plus I admire his painting technique (that's DQSpeak for makeup application). So, if you see Jon at an event (he's real popular at the Texas 'T' Party), stop and look over his services as they're very reasonably priced.

I gotta love this guy because he knows how to get your attention. **Wolfgang Joop** got really po'd about an article on Gianni Versace's murder that referred to the fashion world as a "decadent and perverted world of high class homos." In retaliation, Joop pulled nearly 1 million dollars worth of advertising from the offending publication and two sister magazines. This guy's got style!

Wall Street doesn't care about your sexual orientation; they care about your financial orientation. So, the Street hasn't been exactly nice to some big fashion names. They took **Gucci** to the market with a nearly 20 percent drop in a single day while investors took profits even though the company showed solid performance in the second quarter. **Donna Karan** has had a rough ride on the Street as well and some were smart enough to dump her stock before it slid. Everyone in the fashion world is still trying for the **Ralph Lauren** pot-of-gold and **Gianfranco Ferre** is the most recently announced initial public offering (IPO) sometime in 1999.

By the time this hits your mailbox, John Berendt's *Midnight In The Garden of Good and Evil* will have opened in the theaters. You should go see this film because of the transgendered character **Lady Chablis** who is being played by the real Lady Chablis. Director **Clint Eastwood** is to be commended for choosing the real Chablis over an actor/actress.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think failure is good for building character. Comments? Write me care of this publication or send to <CyberQueen@cdspub.com>. © 1997 by Creative Design Services.



Renew...

grass roots lobbying and organizing.

In other areas of education, Drs. Etscovitz and Cobb-Nettleton join William R. Stayton, Th.D. (current president of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists and a member of the Renaissance board) to develop a certificate program in Transgender Issues for counselors and therapists. The program will run over several months and probably carry Continuing Education Credits. Dr. Cobb-Nettleton will also run a Significant Other Support group locally.

Two other programs to be implemented are a Transgender Youth

Education Program, co-sponsored by Unity, a local charitable organization, and the Hispanic Translation Program in which Renaissance Background Papers, Outreach Bulletins, and other publications will be translated into Spanish. Also new for 1998 will be a Renaissance Unity Day (not connected, in this case, with the charitable organization) to be held on April 4. A full day of programs and seminars will be held at the Renaissance National Office, followed by a Spring Ball at the Park Ridge Hotel in King of Prussia. Everyone is invited to attend both functions to help support Renaissance as an organization and to enjoy and benefit from its offerings.

Overseeing the implementation of these and other Renaissance projects will be Angela Gardner, Executive

Director, and Ms. Diane Dale, who is also leading the development of a 5-year Strategic Plan. For more information on these and other projects, please contact Angela Gardner.

The Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc. is a non-profit 501[c][3] educational organization with 4 Chapters and 11 Affiliates in 9 states. Renaissance is supported by member dues, newsletter subscriptions and contributions. If you would like to support a Renaissance project, please send a contribution (\$5 to \$5000) to Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 719, Wayne, Pa 19087; 610-975-9119; email: <angela@ren.org>; URL: <www.ren.org>.



What Have I Gotten Myself Into?

By Jessica Brandon

For those of you who ignore the minutia on page 2, Creative Design Services has, after ten years, relinquished the job of layout and design on the newsletter to Treetop Press, which is the title I use to make myself sound more important than I really am. To celebrate the occasion, I'd like to say one thing:

HELP!

But seriously, folks, I was really honored that JoAnn Roberts thought so much of my skills that she asked me to take over the layout work on *News & Views*. Not bad for an inner city girl who taught herself how to

become proficient at desktop publishing. Or at least learn just enough to be dangerous.

Other than slight cosmetic changes, the overall look of N & V will remain the same. Considering I'm hardly a pro at this sort of thing, I'm not about to make any serious alterations. After all, as the old saying goes, "Don't fix it if it ain't broke!"

Between Lee Etscovitz (the new Managing Editor) and myself, we'll work hard to maintain the high standards JoAnn and Angela Gardner set for this newsletter.



CLASSIFIEDS

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

ALTERATIONS: Get that dress to fit the way it should, buy the size for proper fit in the shoulders and I'll take in the waist and hips to fit your figure the way it was meant to fit. 10% discount to Renaissance members. Call Lisa at 610-838-7485.

LEGAL NAME CHANGE for under \$200! Why pay an attorney up to \$1000 when you can represent yourself and save hundreds? I'll supply all the necessary forms, ready to file, and instructions for \$50.00. Renaissance members pay only \$35.00. Call Lisa at 610-838-7485.

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Vis A Vis...

noteworthy. A cotton bra and thong panty combo will set you back about \$180. An underwire bra and bikini bottom lists at \$190. Miuccia Prada, the woman behind the collection, was quoted as saying, "I was always crazy for lingerie. That's why I always had my own specially made, and why I very much like designing a collection." Well, you'd *have* to be crazy for lingerie alright to pay \$190 for a bra and panty set, and it certainly explains why Ms. Prada enjoys designing a collection where the gross profit margin must be close to 95%.

It's too easy to criticize the fashion industry for their pretentious declarations about their either outlandish or derivative offerings. The two questions that I puzzle over are: why do we as a civilization give them such standing in our society, and how do you grow balls big enough to hang an \$80 price tag on a pair of panties?



A Grand Night At The Auction

The first ever Renaissance National Benefit Auction, held during last month's meeting of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter was a success with \$1500 having been raised.

The list of items bid on was eclectic, and not all of it related to cross-dressing. As mentioned in previous issues of *News & Views*, some of the items that found new homes included a gorgeous red model Ferrari, a GRID laptop computer complete with a carrying case, a radio controlled Corvette, a Macintosh iisi computer sans monitor, a theatre card from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, a *Glen or Glenda* video, and a score of movie posters from hit flicks like *Top Gun*, *Trading Places* and, of course, *Tootsie*.

Recent items added to the auction list that were snapped up featured the Special Edition *Star Wars* trilogy, a boxed set of Motown's Number One Hits from 1959 to 1971 on cassette, half a dozen faux fur coats, and sever-

al bundles of transgender magazines, such as *Tapestry* and *International Transcript*. But the big ticket items that night were a copy of Frank Marino's autobiography plus one of his wigs and an autographed photo of John Leguizamo, Wesley Snipes and Patrick Swayze from *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar*.

However, the auction would not have succeeded without all the hard work put in by Lisa Cross, Angela Gardner, Beth Marshall, JoAnn Roberts, Joanne White, Billie our auctioneer, and everyone else who came early and stayed late to set up and take down everything that had been displayed that night. Also helping out were the two daughters of the late Suzanne LeBec. They brought a substantial amount of clothing, shoes, wigs and jewelry made available in a separate sale.

Plans will soon be made for a possible second auction in 1998.



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Ms. Lynda

Harry Benjamin Board News

For the first time in its history, two members of the transgender community have been elected to the Board of Directors of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. Sheila Kirk, M.D. and Jude Patton, CMHC, CMFT were elected to four-year board terms in September at the HBIGDA conference held in Vancouver, B.C. .

This is a historical and important event that brings the Transgendered and professional communities closer together. Their appointments allow the Transgendered Community to have a positive, strong voice in establishing standards of care and policies that will greatly benefit all members of the Trans-community.

Dr. Kirk and Mr. Patton have been asked by incoming president, Richard Green, MD, JD to establish a committee to address consumer concerns. This committee is being formed to give the trans-community a voice in HBIGDA's activities, to support consumer advocacy for current and future proposed Standards of Care revisions, and to provide empirical data and research data supporting consumer concerns.

It is their hope that members from the T-community will serve on this committee with them. Since HBIGDA is a professional organization and has specific membership requirements to become a voting member. HBIGDA's bylaws limit any committee membership to voting members.

Persons who qualify for voting membership and who wish to serve on the community are encouraged to contact Dr. Kirk or Mr. Patton immediately. HBIGDA members who choose not to participate on the committee at least will have a chance to vote for various items and specifically for changes in the Standards of Care.

To obtain information and an application for membership, you may leave a voice-mail message for HBIGDA at (612) 624-8078, or send e-mail to: <robin009@gold.tc.umn.edu>. **YOUR VOICE IS IMPORTANT!** Any suggestions for changes in the proposed Standards of Care need to get directly to the committee working on them, or can be sent to Sheila Kirk or Jude Patton to present to the committee and the HBIGDA Board of Directors.

Time is of the essence, for the final draft is said to be in its final stages. Dr. Kirk and Mr. Patton suggest that those who do not qualify for HBIGDA membership could form an Ad Hoc consumer concerns committee, and could funnel their suggestions and ideas through them. The goal is for every voice to be heard.

Both Dr. Kirk and Mr. Patton strongly urge world-wide community input and are striving to reach out to all community members in all countries. "We want to reach out to everyone, not only those who identify as "trans" but also those who have other self-definitions for their gender and sexual identities," said Patton, "We

should not be USA-centric in our considerations for improving consumer welfare."

Any help you can provide in announcing that Dr. Kirk and Mr. Patton welcome any suggestions which will enhance community consumer welfare would be greatly appreciated. Your help in getting this information out to the general trans-community and to other trans-organizations by e-mail, in newsletters, and on websites is encouraged.

"For the first time we have a unified opportunity to be heard by the professionals who administer our care and set the standards upon which our care is given," said Dr. Kirk, "As a transgendered physician who in private practice specializes in caring for our community, I am gratified for this opportunity to work together with Jude to make a positive impact through this first step in improving our community's welfare."

Those with comments or questions can send them via mail to: Sheila Kirk, M.D., P.O. Box 38114, Blawnox, PA. USA 15238. Jude Patton, 1812 East Madison, Suite 102, Seattle, WA USA 98122. You may also reach Dr. Kirk via phone at (412) 781-1092 (Tues/Thurs 10AM-5PM EST); 24 hour fax (412) 781-1096 or e-mail, <SheilaKirk@aol.com>. Mr. Patton can be reached at (425) 787-5094, e-mail: <JUDEPATTON@aol.com>.





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More Viewpoints on HBIGDA Conference

This review of the 15th Symposium of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association (HBIGDA) on September 10-13, 1997 was written by Tracie O'Keefe, a transsexual and clinical therapist in London, England. Ms. O'Keefe is also co-author with Katrina Fox of Trans-x-ual: The Naked Difference.

After having travelled several thousand miles from London to Vancouver, my partner and associate, Katrina Fox, found the Canadians a charming and polite people in one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Since I am in private practice and not skimming off the profits of my government's health system or on the expense account of a teaching hospital, we stayed at the YWCA hotel.

The conference, however, was held at a downtown five star hotel called The Sutton Place, more suitable for a convention on pyramid selling than an academic meeting of minds. With jet lag we made it to the welcoming cocktail party to find that the board members were absent and unwelcoming. In fact, they were all having a silver service dinner in a private dining room and much too busy filling their faces to mingle with the rest of the association. The cocktail nibbles left for the rest of us would have been sent back to the kitchen in the very seediest of diners.

Alice Webb told me with confidence that the organisation would be

more democratic in the future, as she had just been voted president elect. Also, two transpeople, Jude Patton and Sheila Kirk, had now been voted onto the board, which I was assured would make a difference. There were hopes, too, that Richard Green, the new president, would help recapture the spirit of Harry Benjamin during his presidency.

The conference was a fine collection of many of the world's most talented and adventurous professionals involved in helping people find their own sex and gender identities. From the biologists came the latest discoveries about the differentials in the inner brain in males, females, gays, and the rest of us. Apparently the distribution of certain neurological compositions in the brains are different when an individual is subject to certain hormones. However, they were unable to conclude whether this was due to nature in humans or indeed the result of the biological manifestation of nurture. Neither could it be determined if this supposed biological phenomenon had its causes in prenatal or post-natal development.

Just when the sociologists had reminded us that Harry Benjamin was happy to adopt the psychosocial-biological model of human sex and gender identity, the proceedings were brought to a dead stop by the arrival of demonstrators. Apparently some of Vancouver's less affluent gender and sex adventurers felt they were being

deprived of knowledge because they could not pay hundreds of dollars to get in. To be fair to the organisers, the conference was for professionals dealing in the field, and not open to the general public. Most of us were in private practice and put our hands deep in our pockets to be there, as well as carrying out a great deal of pro-bono (free) work during our working year.

However, the disturbance did open up the "us and them" debate between the HBIGDA and the client group and about how many people in the world felt that their needs were not being listened to. Whether those issues sank in with the board members will only be seen in a historical context. The calls from the protesters to do away with categories met with profound logical reasons to keep them. In short, if there is to be no diagnosis then there will be no funds for treatment, because a clinician cannot claim for treating nothing. There are many other dimensions of sex, gender and sexuality that need to be considered as part of the human experience covered by the HBIGDA and its policies.

By far one of the most important announcements was that the HBIGDA was to publish a journal on the internet, making information available for the whole world to access free of charge. This would include

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To all Chapters and Affiliates:

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Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

Making Sense of It All

A Letter to My Younger Self

Dear Younger Self,

Many years have gone by, but I have never really forgotten you. I just never knew how to talk to you or what to say. I also think I wanted to forget the pain and turmoil of your situation. To tell the truth, it has taken me all these years to figure some things out and to gain perspective on it all. Maybe now I can offer some words of comfort and advice.

I realize now, more than ever, just how difficult a time you had growing up. I suppose everyone has growing pains, as they say, but you certainly had your own share of difficulties. I wish I could have been with you at so many of the times when you were frightened, lonely, desperate, and even in actual physical pain. I guess loneliness was one of your biggest sufferings. So many times you found yourself outside of things, feeling abandoned, and not knowing what to do to allay the terrible, stomach-wrenching pain and deep sadness within.

If I had been with you during any of those truly difficult moments, I would have given you a big, unhurried hug. And then you might have been able to cry openly and perhaps tell me what you were feeling deep down inside. Afterwards we might have gone to the corner drugstore, like the ones they had in those days, and sat down at the marble counter top and had a vanilla milkshake together. That would have been fun and reassuring after such trying moments.

When I think of the pain—the invisible yet ever so present pain—that you felt for so many years, I can only admire your courage in the face of it. Somehow, even without me around,

you managed to go to school, learn music, run and swim on school teams, overcome polio, become a teacher, then a salesperson, and do a host of other things as well. And yet throughout it all you suffered privately, so privately, in fact, that no one, not even your family and friends, ever knew what was going on. Only my poems, my articles, and letters like this one, begin to tell the truth.

The following poem is one I wrote not too long ago when I was remembering, and beginning to accept, some of the struggle we have both been through. It is called, "Every Time I Swat a Fly:"

Every time I swat a fly

I cry.

Oh not for smears
of black and red
that buzz into view
to be suddenly dead.

Instead,

I cry for crashes,
inside and out,
the dust and ashes
of stolen years.

Yes,

every time I swat a fly
and wipe away
the smeared remains

I hear

a silent scream
and shed
an inward tear.

Maybe the truth had to stay hidden all those years, if only so you and I could finally see it as truth and not as sickness. Perhaps it was the act of hiding and not what we were hiding which made us feel like we were somehow sick. Facts are facts, like your gender confusion. That was a scary fact, wasn't it? I mean, your body said one thing and your mind

said something else. I just want you to know that I finally did something about that confusion. At last I recognized it and accepted it, though I am still in the process of reintegrating my life in terms of the gender transition that I have finally made for us. I'm sure you know what I mean when I say that the whole transitional process has not been easy, but to continue to keep it all hidden is a poor alternative, that's for sure.

I want you to know that you are always with me, that everything I do is for both of us, and that from this time forth I will always be with you, to hold your hand and to comfort you, especially in times of stress. I will also help you to meet other people who care about you, who will be your friends. Such people do exist, you know. I really want us to have some fun in life. We deserve it. Speaking of fun, I have made a lot of progress as a writer, so that I can tell our story better. I think some people are listening to us at last. And I have improved a lot on the trumpet, so that you and I can share the sad sounds as well as the happy sounds that we have both come to know. And I know you will be glad to hear that I have dedicated myself to helping people make sense of their lives, especially people who are struggling with gender confusion.

I hope you are pleased with what I have accomplished, none of which would have been possible without you. You see, you yourself never gave up, even though you felt like it at times. You hung in there, through school, through life. It's okay with me if you want me to be with you throughout the rest of our lives together. In fact, I would feel hon-

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Dining With Carol & Babs

The Silver Swan & A Golden Surprise

pling was good and somehow reminded both of us of "matzoh ball" soup!

The entrees we sampled were excellent, and our own conclusions were confirmed by a group of "sisters" who also happened to be eating there. The Swedish Meatballs were served with a caper sauce with mashed potatoes and vegetables. The Kassler Rippelon, a center cut pork loin served with mashed potatoes and sauerkraut, was recommended.

Carol's Hungarian Goulash with spaetzle and a slightly sweet red cabbage was tender and tasty. The most popular dish was the Holstein Sch-nitzel, a lightly breaded and tender veal cutlet topped with a fried egg, anchovies and capers and complemented with creamed spinach and roasted vegetables. We substituted spaetzle for the potatoes which, although slightly over-cooked, blended well with the spinach and complemented the veal. Filling, yet not heavy.

The Silver Swan, not surprisingly, has an extensive selection of specialty imported beers. It being the early fall, we ordered the "Oktoberfest Special," a medium dark, well-bodied lager, its edge of bitterness softened by a touch of sweetness and an excellent complement to the meal. We sampled the house white wines. The Pinot Grigio was pleasant, however the Chardonnay seemed more like a white zinfandel in appearance and taste and was cheerfully replaced by our waitress.

Desserts were also very good. We sampled and enjoyed a classic apple

strudel and creamy cheesecake. The Black Forest Cake was strongly recommended by the adjoining table. The full selection of flavored and herbal teas included some of Babs favorites.

On Saturday nights at 11 PM the rear dining area undergoes a transformation—tables are moved around, a modest music sound system is connected, and the dance area is opened. The bar begins to fill up with transgendered girls and with men and women who seek to meet them. Suddenly the Silver Swan becomes the latest incarnation of "Karalyns Oasis," the popular "friendly" transgendered club that has moved all over Manhattan. For those who have had the pleasure of dinner at the Silver Swan, Karalyns' \$5.00 cover charge is waived. Consider it a little extra bonus for having dinner there.

The Silver Swan advantage? It's not unusual to find "T" sisters dining there on a Saturday evening. We were told that the owner, Renata, has always been friendly to the transgender community. We certainly felt welcome!

SILVER SWAN

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Recently I stopped by one of my favorite German restaurants for dinner, was surprised to see another "sister" there, and stayed for the party afterwards..... serendipity! Almost lost among the storefronts and scaffolding on E. 20th St. between Park Ave So. and Broadway, the Silver Swan serves traditional German and American food in a comfortable and subdued setting. It was a welcome change from our usual Italian or trendy Continental fare.

The Silver Swan features a complete "Queen-sized" dinner reasonably priced from \$17 to \$26 as well as an extensive a la carte menu. Appetizers include a traditional salad, herring in cream sauce, and smoked peppered mackerel. Our favorite, however, was a light and smooth duck pate with truffles with a touch of Port wine. When spread on the thinly sliced coarse whole grain bread, we had an absolutely delightful sensation of taste combined with a contrast of consistencies—a culinary experience! The chicken consomme with dum-

Greater Philadelphia Chapter Leadership Change

At the November meeting of the Greater Philadelphia chapter of Renaissance, elections were held for chapter positions in 1998.

After two years as Chapter Leader, Jessica Brandon stepped down and was replaced by Vivian Shaw. Ms. Brandon, the only consecutive two term Chapter Leader in the history of

Greater Philadelphia leaves office on an upbeat note, saying her service was both "rewarding and satisfying, having been able to do what I could for Renaissance's largest chapter."

Ms. Brandon, though retiring from active leadership duties, will remain onboard in an advisory capacity to help Ms. Shaw and the new team set-

tle in when they begin work in January 1998.

Election results for other positions, such as Secretary, Meetings & Programs, Outreach, and Board Assistance will be announced in next month's issue.



Albert And A TV?

From *The Advocate*,
October 28, 1997

Was a male transvestite the reason sportscaster Marv Albert copped a plea September 25 in his sexual assault case?

According to the *New York Post*, it may have been. The *Post* quoted unidentified law-enforcement sources as saying that Albert, who had been accused of forcing a woman to per-

form oral sex and biting her, had a 15-year-old relationship with a "raven-haired" male transvestite. Prosecutors were reportedly alerted to the unidentified man, a retired Broadway dancer, by an anonymous letter, and New York City detectives tracked him down and confirmed the allegation.

Albert may have pleaded guilty to an assault charge to prevent the information from coming out in court.

even though the transvestite disappeared after he was subpoenaed. "He was a normal civilian person who would be outed in a sense if this story ever came out," an associate of the transvestite told *the Post*. "The relationship he had with Marv Albert—there was no violence, no rudeness, no inappropriateness. It was just straight transvestite sex."



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Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Greetings, girlfriends! I trust you enjoyed Thanksgiving with your loved ones, and that you didn't stuff yourself at the dinner table. I tried not to, believe me I did, but that never works. However I fully made up for my sins of appetite with several days of intense exercising afterwards. Oh, the things I do to keep my girlish figure!

Some time ago when I first took over this column, I talked about the perils of shopping for the taller cross-dresser, meaning faux girls over six feet in height like I am. Well, I read a most interesting article in the November issue of *Glamour* addressing this very topic. (I look forward to *Glamour* and *Cosmo* more than I do *Sports Illustrated!* Scary, huh?) The article, titled, "Tall Tales," dealt with *Glamour's* editors asking readers taller than 5'9" to write to the magazine about problems they have finding clothes that fit properly. Well, tall women responded with their comments, including places where they shop. This was easily one of the best pieces I've ever read in this mag since I became a subscriber, because it addressed what is still a need of mine.

From the mail order end, there's AKA Eddie Bauer (1-800-327-8852) which has blouses cut 1 1/4" longer in the sleeves and 1-2" longer in the body. Pant inseams are up to 3" longer. Eddie Bauer (1-800-426-8020) has casual clothes with slightly longer sleeves and pant inseams up to 3" longer. Land's End (1-800-356-4444) has trousers, blazers and blous-

es in sizes 8 to 20 with pants hemmed to the customers' specs. Newport News (1-800-688-2830) has one piece long torso swimsuits in sizes 8 to 20 and shoe sizes up to 11 (Which does me no good as I'm 13 wide). Talbots (1-800-825-2687) has pants, jeans, jackets, skirts in longer length, and many pants styles can be hemmed. Tall Girl (1-314-519-9526) also has pants and jeans with inseams up to 36" and sportswear in sizes 8-20.

To this list, I add Sears (1-800-783-7577) which has a fine selection of pants, jeans, skirts and suits. Lastly, there's no way I can rap about places to shop for tall girls without mentioning my favorite resource, J.C. Penney's (1-800-222-6161) which has just about everything we need to look our best, and more since their sizes cover heights up to 6'2"!

Some of the women interviewed for this article also mention the GAP as a resource, as this store has jeans with inseams up to 34". A couple even endorse men's shirts and jeans from the GAP as well, although one woman complained that even though she special ordered men's slim fit jeans, they were still too big for her 26" waist. Not to sound catty, but, damn, we ALL should have that nagging problem!

The article goes on to talk about finding specific clothes for tall, and here's a sampling. Dress pants: Ann Taylor (enough hem to let down); Jones New York, Liz Claiborne, Nordstrom (private label pants, unhemmed), Talbots. Jeans: cK Jeans,

Chic Jeans (tall), Docker's Khakis, Lee Women's jeans, Liz Claiborne (in tall), Levi's 501's, 551's, Victoria's Secret "London" jeans, Wrangler Western Jeans.

Updated/younger styles that run in longer lengths include: American Eagle Outfitters, I.N.C. International Concepts and Macy's, Anne Klein II (dresses), Ann Taylor, BCBG Max Azira, bebe, Dana Buchman, Express, Kenar, Laura Ashley (dresses), The Limited, Liz Claiborne, Ralph Lauren and Victoria's Secret. Lastly, one piece swimsuits in tall by Athena, Eddie Bauer, J. Crew, Land's End and Tyr.

And, if that isn't enough, the article also lists places to buy shoes in sizes up to 12. They include: Cole Haan woven leather loafers, Eddie Bauer boots, loafers, oxfords, sneakers and moccasins, Nordstroms with their large selection of pumps, sandals, slingbacks, evening pumps, loafers and boots up to 13, Statuesque which I mentioned in September, and Stuart Weitzman pumps, sandals, slingbacks and boots.

One particular thing I noticed right away about this article was that they included photos of 10 girls, ranging in heights from 5'9" to 6'0", and with only a few exceptions, virtually all of them were wearing heels, one of them in four inchers. This told me that these women were not afraid to accentuate their height, that they enjoy standing out in a crowd. Ladies, if they can do it and feel comfortable, then so can we!

In other news, it's not often that Revlon's number one booster, namely moi, gets scooped when it comes to bringing you the latest info on their excellent ColorStay lineup of cosmetics. But, on this occasion, I must give a tip of the wig to JoAnn Roberts who beat me to the punch with news of the last, and most logical component, of the popular product line that's recently hit the market: ColorStay

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Shopping...

face powder.

A perfect complement to the ColorStay foundation, the CS powder, sold in compact form comes in 9 shades. I wore the Mocha foundation with the Cappuccino powder for my little soiree at the Henri David Halloween Ball, and both products worked exceptionally well together. Oh, and let's not forget the ColorStay Makeup remover which is also a winner, removing the Revlon products with a minimum of effort.

Well, girls, it's time to call it quits for 1997. Wow! Where did the time go? As always, my electronic mailbox is open for your comments at <treetop@voicenet.com>.

Until next year, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year, Sisters!



Library Discussion Group News

The Renaissance Library Discussion Group will be meeting the first Wednesday of every month from now on. The next meeting, therefore, will be on Wednesday, December 3, 1997 from 8 PM to 9:30 PM at the Woods where the Renaissance National Office is located and where the Greater Philadelphia Chapter has its monthly meeting.

Everyone and anyone is invited to attend. The discussion is facilitated by Dr. Lee Etscovitz, the Renaissance National Librarian. Various topics are covered, depending upon the interests of those present. No preparation

is necessary, participants can attend in whatever mode of dress they prefer, and there is no fee. The Renaissance Library Discussion Group affords participants the opportunity to be heard. This is a service of Renaissance.

The last discussion was held on Wednesday, November 5, 1997. Six people were present, and a lively discussion took place concerning the effectiveness of Renaissance as an organization in meeting the needs of members as well as in advancing the cause of transgender rights in the larger society.



Making Sense...

ored to be your companion, your friend, the big sister you never had. So let's see if we can get some good things done and even have some good times together. Besides, I need you, because you are very special. Without you I would not be the person I am

today. You are like an unsung hero, but in this letter I am singing your song. Anyway, thank you for simply being you and for not giving up. Let's stay in touch.

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Viewpoint...

abstracts presented at conferences and articles written by experts in the field presenting state-of-the-art research and treatment.

This was now beginning to turn into one of the best conferences for professional helpers I had ever been to and far better than I had expected. There were a lot of transpeople who were also professionals in the field at the conference, moving the atmosphere towards facilitating the needs of the client group. Amongst them was Rosalyn Bloomenstein from New York, who works with members of the gender community who are on the streets, working in the sex industry, or HIV positive; Petra Klene, from Holland, who runs the trans-identity section of the Humanitas social welfare organisation; the writer and campaigner James Green from the Bay area of San Francisco; Dallas Denny, writer and international organiser of transinformation; Marsha Botzer, the American therapist and social

researcher; Sandra Framboise, executive director of the High Risk Project in Vancouver, and myself. To top that, many were presenting, too.

The reports on metoidioplasty were that it seems to be a very successful technique. An adjustment in cosmetic foreskin design was exhibited by J Joris Hage. The presentations on phalloplasty were profoundly different, consisting of lower arm, leg and midriff donor sites. One local young man spoke of the fear and trepidation he had in researching surgeons and their methods while trying to sort out the information from the misinformation circling around the transmen community.

There was a further presentation on the enlargement and styling of the neoscrotum involving the use of tissue expanders to give it more length and volume. The surgeon rightly pointed out that the effects were much more realistic when the testicular prostheses were put in, since the majority of men have low-hanging scrotums.

An American surgeon reported on

his progress and success in operating on people who were HIV positive. He also believed that it is the responsibility of the surgeon to know if a client is HIV positive, because then the appropriate treatment can be particularly devised to assist the patient's recovery. He further went on to say that being HIV positive is no reason not to operate on a patient; after all, anyone could have had a serum conversion days before the surgery, and the surgeon would be none the wiser. It is also the duty of doctors to do the very best they can for a patient. It was also a surprising revelation that so many surgeons did not test for Hepatitis B or C pre-operatively.

Another presentation talked of colonoplasty as the first process of vaginoplasty, indicating that depth of vagina was very important. He further went on to say that this left more penile skin for design of the labia minora, allowing the cosmetic results to look more authentic. Some surgeons disagreed saying that colonoplasty was too complicated an operation to use as a first choice and should only be used as a salvage process or if minimal penile skin is available.

It was further pointed out that penile inversion did generally produce the desired vaginal lengths for clients have managed to have a very satisfactory sex life. One woman pointed out that in the older transsexual intercourse was less important and often not required, as they were seeking a purely cosmetic solution to their conundrum. Ultimately it must be up to the individual client to choose, because in the case of minimal penile tissue, colonoplasty as a primary option may be the only choice.

The conference had changed its attitude to being more concerned with the treatment of gender dysphoria and less concerned with the perpetual search for the derivation of the condition. Indeed it was accepted that much could be done to completely dispel the gender dysphoria in the majority of the cases through hor-

continued on next page

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Resources

Background Papers

Background Papers are \$1.25 each:

1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
4. The Matter of Children
5. Annotated Bibliography
6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
7. Understanding Transsexualism

All of the Background Papers and Community Outreach Bulletins are available for free at the Renaissance web site <www.ren.org>

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Viewpoint...

mones, surgery and psychotherapy. The debate once again opened up as to who was dysphoric and who was not, as many patients felt they knew exactly what they needed, and sometimes that did work. There are, of course, the kind of patients for whom treatment only partially dispels the dysphoria. For them that diagnosis still needs to be used to help them become more whole.

At the end of the conference Dr. Sheila Kirk and Dallas Denny made a plea for the transgendered group of

clients to be included under the protection of the Harry Benjamin criteria. James Green further pointed out that those who are crossdressers and take minimal amounts of hormones, perhaps dressing part-time, should also be included, and someone else added that transvestites should also be included. A psychiatrist commented that the general public would probably have a hard time dealing with these concerns.

Is this not the same argument that led Harry Benjamin to forming the association in the first place - to move towards treating and helping transsexuals? Is giving transsexualism an elite

status simply replacing one type of stereotypical prejudice with another?

As I said earlier, only time will tell if the lessons of this conference will be integrated into the HBIGDA criteria and guidelines. If they are not, then I believe one of the most innovative and generative conferences I have ever been to will have been partly wasted. However, as I left I heard that Jude Patton and Sheila Kirk had been appointed to set up a sub-committee to look into what the client requirements might be.



Dr. Etscovitz On The Merger

November 12, 1997

Dear Gianna:

I received your email concerning the teleconference set for Sunday, November 16, 1997 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm Eastern Standard Time or what would now (for me here in Philadelphia) be 3:00pm to 5:00pm Daylight Saving Time (if you yourself are still going by Eastern Standard Time). However, the matter of time is not a crucial factor in our case (ie, Renaissance), for we will not be participating in this particular call or, for that matter, in any further merger discussions.

This whole merger possibility and the decision not to pursue it are not something we at Renaissance take lightly. Not at all. In fact, our National Board has spent considerable time examining the whole matter, even appointing a special commit-

tee to explore our own future possibilities as we enter our second decade of organizational development. Out of our exploration has come a unanimous board decision to continue to forge our future as an organization under our own banner, even though we still face various challenges, such as membership and finances. But we feel that we owe it to ourselves at this point in time to continue to evolve along the lines on which we were founded ten years ago. We do not yet want to abandon, or at best modify, what we see as our mission.

All of this independence, however, does not mean we do not want to work with other organizations to further the cause of transgender education, service, and rights. On the contrary, we cherish our relationship with other members of the transgender community. We simply want to work with all of you on an interdependent

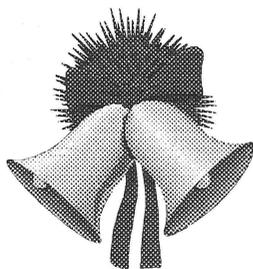
basis rather than through a change of our own organizational identity. If, in the future, we find that we are not able to accomplish our goals independently, then we may very well be again talking about joining forces with one or more transgender organizations.

In the meantime, as I have said, we want to work with, not against, everyone. We do not want to burn any bridges. Rather, we want to construct bridges. If two or more of the other transgender organizations do, in fact, merge, then we at Renaissance would be honored to work with the newly emerged entity in what is really a shared concern for the transgendered everywhere.

Sincerely,

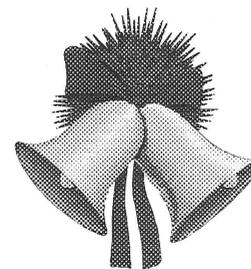
Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

Renaissance Merger Committee Representative



Season's Greetings

and a Happy New Year from the Staff of News & Views.



November 18, 1997

Dear Renaissance News reader,

This letter is included with this edition of the newsletter because my response to the article printed in this issue about the Winslow Street fund came after the paper went to print. My sincerest thanks to Renaissance for allowing inclusion of this response to allegations of improper use of Winslow Street funds.

I am a contributor to Winslow Street, and I am a solid believer in that fund and its purpose.

Yes, a loan (about \$15K) was made to IFGE. According to a Winslow Street trustee, the WSF was used to guarantee the loan, and the action was taken with the agreement of all the WSF trustees. Two of the trustees are IFGE board members, so there is cooperation between the IFGE board and the WSF trustees.

A primary argument in deciding to take the loan was advice that if IFGE goes bankrupt, Winslow Street would be considered an asset and used accordingly. Hence, it is essential to WSF's continuance to keep IFGE healthy. Is there risk? Surely. But there would be more risk if IFGE fell into deeper debt during the vulnerable time of transition between administrations. The path taken was, I believe, that of least risk.

The loan was used to print another issue of TRANSGENDER magazine, which was waiting at the printer. Transgender magazine brings money into IFGE, and helps offset the weekly payroll drain. Every day that the magazine sat at the printer, payroll was chewing up the income that would be generated by its printing.

Be assured that it is my intention, and I will do everything in my power to assure, that making the loan to IFGE should cost Winslow Street NOTHING, that IFGE will be responsible for providing whatever monies are required to avoid causing any drain on the WSF and its ability to support grassroots TG efforts. Also, it is my intention that IFGE will pay back the entire amount of the loan, with whatever interest is required.

I can only succeed in turning the situation at IFGE around if I have your support and active assistance. In this case, I need your help in allaying fears about our intentions. The loan occurred before I started on the job, and I asked for it -- after hearing that it was being considered -- to keep IFGE out of more serious trouble before I could get started. If there were improper procedure among the Winslow Street trustees, I would agree that someone should answer for it. If a WSF trustee were voicing his disagreement with a properly arrived at decision through inciting inflammatory stories in the community, that trustee should also be held accountable for their actions. It would help if the publishers in our community showed more restraint by avoiding printing potentially damaging stories without at least undertaking serious, thorough research. Such stories hurt us all, by diminishing our ability to work together constructively in confronting the serious challenges facing us.

As always, I support the highest degree of integrity and accountability. Though the situation at IFGE is far from ideal, I implore you to remember that EVERY DAY we provide much needed comfort and assistance to people from all over this country and others, who have nowhere else to turn. Every day the magazine reaches people who have no other contact with the transgender community. Every day we provide support services and referrals for the many groups across the country and around the world.

Please remember that IFGE is here to carry on the good work of those who worked for our benefit before we were so able, in hopes that those who follow will not suffer as did we. There's no question that IFGE could be run more efficiently, and it is my intention to make it so. However, I cannot do so if I have to watch my back at every moment. I need the support of good people like you to help me be as effective as I can be in making IFGE a vibrant, effective organization that can be of help to us all.

Most Sincerely,



Nancy Nangeroni
Executive Director



Membership Renewal for 1998

National Membership/Subscription Only: \$36.00
Chapter Membership (Includes subscription): \$44.00

- National Membership/Subscription: \$36 per calendar year.
- Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: \$44 per calendar year.
- Renaissance Lower Susquehanna Valley: \$44 per calendar year.
- Renaissance Delaware: \$44 per calendar year.
- Renaissance Lehigh Valley: \$44 per calendar year.

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Membership fees are based on a calendar year and are valid thru December 31st of 1998.
Membership begins January 1st of 1998

Send this completed form to:

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**987 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 719
Wayne, PA 19087**



Come party with Mona and Santa at the 1997

Greater Philadelphia Chapter Christmas Party



Put on your best dress and join us at The Woods on Saturday December 20th for the first Christmas party held at the Greater Philly meeting site ever! There'll be food, a raffle for prizes, the official election of GPC officers for 1998, a special edition of "Liberty Belles" and holiday entertainment with "Jingle All The Way" starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sinbad! The menu will include:

Shrimp Platter



International Cheese Platter



Grand Entertainer Platter with cooked ham, top round roast beef, gourmet turkey breast, domestic Swiss cheese, American cheese, potato salad, cole slaw, macaroni salad



Dessert & soft drinks

Far and away your best bet for the dollar at \$15.00 per person with \$5.00 going to Renaissance National. Please fill out the form below and make your reservation by December 12th. No tickets will be issued, your name will be on a list at the door on the night of the party. Join us then!

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I WILL: _____ **I WILL NOT:** _____ **BRING A GUEST** **HOW MANY:** _____