



# The Femme Forum



JANUARY, 1971

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT

Guess what Santa brought to your frozen secretary-editor this year! It was something nylon, warm, straps, snaps, zippers down the sides and up the middle and a cute little pocket on the right breast. Give up? Well dears, if you guessed a snowmobile suit you were correct. It was a ladies snowmobile suit. Actually, what happened is that my sweet little GG bought me this outfit not knowing it was a ladies suit. Well, I didn't know it either, but when it was too small I had to exchange it for a large. When the large turned out to be far too small also, I began to get a bit disgusted and "panicky". (I must have eaten far too many goodies over the holiday season) Well....back again to the store for the only thing left, an extra-large suit. So after much huffing and puffing at the store trying on suits, I asked to see the manager and he cleared everything up. It seems that the suit my GG bought was a ladies medium and the one I bought was a ladies large, but not knowing that both were ladies suits. (The sub-femme mind must have been working in both cases.) But my poor femme-ego couldn't take much more. The store clerk didn't know the difference either. (The ladies suits have the pocket on the right breast, not the left, and of course, the hips and shoulders are cut much differently.) So.. after all this fuss, I ended up with a smaller size in a darn old men's suit, but a good fit. Once I found out that I had a ladies suit all that time, in fact two of them, I was cussing at giving them up, but at least I could wear the last one. I hope Santa was good to you too and that your girl-presents didn't all have to be exchanged two times and end up with men's things.

### MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Fran asked me to contribute a word or two to the Forum to help start off 1971. It was in Volume 13, dated February, 1961 that I made the first announcement of the formation of Phi Pi Epsilon, so that these words appear on approximately the tenth anniversary of the formation of this organization.

Much water has passed under the bridge or over the dam since those days; some events were very pleasant and some were very unfortunate, nerve wracking and unhappy, but that is the way life is. But here we are, ten years later, still going and going stronger than ever. Though many of the early members have dropped by the wayside

others rise to take their place. It has and is serving its original purpose of providing a sense of companionship, sisterhood and belonging to a group of people, most of whom have endured many years of isolation and loneliness. If some have fulfilled those needs and, being satisfied, have dropped away, we can only be glad that the organization has helped them to a more steady, peaceful and relaxed position within themselves. The rest carry the work forward, helping newcomers and growing in understanding and of peace within themselves.

I feel that I have the right to be proud of originating the concept, implementing the incorporation of the parent organization, the Foundation for Personality Expression, and of starting Phi Pi Epsilon in its work. I will take the credit that is due me, but only that much, because I also want to give it where it is due. FPE would not have made the progress, or the organization have been of as much help and service as it has been to lonely FP's all over, if it had not been for the dedication of one person. Many of you are new and don't know that in the early days of FPE and the early years of TVia there were those around who sought to put me down, to discredit me and to generally seek to undermine my efforts and my goals. One of the attacks leveled at me was that I was exploiting the members of FPE by diverting its funds to my own personal use. It wasn't true--I have never taken a dime from FPE that was not approved of and known by those whom I originally asked to be councillors and advisors to the organization, but the accusation was made. Nevertheless, the fact that FPE money and Chevalier money both came to me made it look like I was mingling them and using both. Proof that FPE had its own separate bank account was not enough to satisfy these accusers. So to remove myself from the financial side of FPE entirely, I asked Fran if she would take over as Secretary Treasurer of the organization. She agreed and I sent the whole treasury back to her so that it was out of my hands and out of the state.

About a year later I asked her if she would also take over the general management of FPE as the Executive Secretary. She agreed to do so and it has been Fran's dedicated interest and long hours of effort that have brought us to where we are today. This publication, for example, was her idea and her baby. Every one of you owe the greater part of your appreciation for membership in FPE to her. It may seem to some of you that there isn't much involved--just collect dues, print and mail out the Forum, etc. I'm sure all of you would appreciate your organization much more if you realized the detail required to accomplish all that Fran has done to build FPE. And at this point, it is certainly appropriate to give some loving and thankful acknowledgement to a wonderful wife and helpmate. Not only has she accepted and given moral support to Fran and to the movement, but she has pitched in and been a functional part of FPE as well. Without her help, particularly in getting out the Forum, Fran couldn't have made FPE what it is. I think a word should also be said about their two little daughters. When Forum time comes around, they become part of the assembly line too, gathering the sheets and helping assemble the publication. So, I think we all owe a big vote of appreciation to this family for their dedication and help to us all.

So here we are at the beginning of a new year, one that is fraught with many grave problems in our whole society. But it is also a society that is much more permissive and tolerant than it was ten years ago when we started. Women didn't wear pantsuits and men didn't wear long hair and beads, nor do and wear many other things that are commonplace today. As the song says, "The times they are a-changing" and though it is gradual, it is real and perhaps in our own small way and by our various efforts at enlightenment we have contributed to this wider understanding on the part of the world. At least we know that we have each contributed something to each other and gained something for ourselves in the process. My life is fuller and I hope yours is too as I sign off with my very best wishes for a really great 1971.

Virginia

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

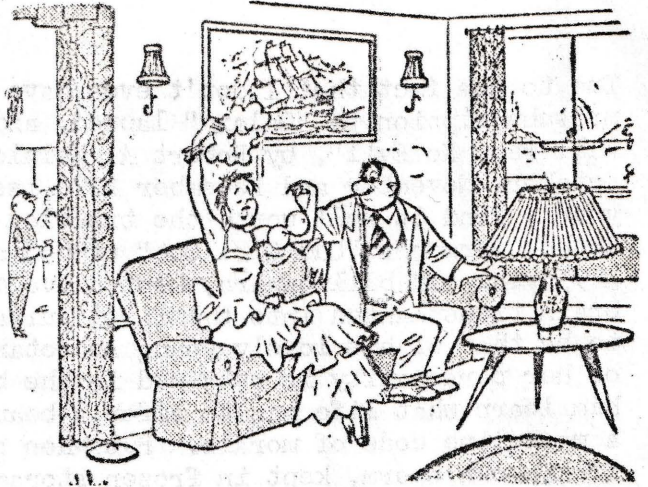
FPE has grown by the addition of several new ladies who have qualified for membership in recent weeks. It is a pleasure to welcome:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Area</u>
60	Jennifer	21 N-2	016
190	Susie	38 K-6	190
210	Joyce	20 W-1	207
210	Jeanette	46 F-2	232
210	Susan	46 A-1	232
210	Linda	20 T-1	212
330	Sue	9 H-2	326
440	Elizabeth	35 B-7	454
480	Pat	22 K-2	480
550	Ruth	23 B-7	562
600	Mary Ann	13 B-9	606
600	Jeanne	13 W-6	602
*600	Bonnie	13 M-9	601
630	Helen	25 R-1	631
770	Vicki	43 K-1	770
770	Susan	43 T-1	770
770	Sharon	43 H-5	775
800	Cecilia	6 C-2	802
800	Cathy	6 L-3	800
*800	Barbara	6 B-1	802
835	Beebe	44 E-1	840
900	Nancie Ann	5 M-18	915
900	Veronica	5 N-12	931
900	Jeanne Marie	5 W-23	917
900	Jean	5 B-35	927
Canada	Diana	54 W-2	B.C.
Canada	Sheila	55 P-4	Toronto
Canada	Norma	55 E-1	Toronto
Canada	Diane	55 W-1	Toronto

\*Reinstated

those cats are mighty pretty) as that such a gathering could be held openly in a city not previously noted for its tolerance, and that the reporter was at least partly sympathetic despite a couple of snide puns. Anybody want to consider trying the same for FPs only, and help keep America beautiful?

Not very relevant, but a nice story: a couple phoned a neighbor to extend birthday greetings, and as soon as she answered, sang the "Happy Birthday" tune. A strange but friendly voice replied "you must have the wrong number, but don't let it bother you. You folks need all the practice you can get!"



"Happy New Year!"

SHEILA IN MIRROR-LAND

Dear Transisters: It didn't make most of the papers, but there were TWO Miss America Pageants this Fall. The first, from which all reporters were excluded to protect government worker's job security, was held in the Washington, D.C. Civic Center. The only account printed seems to have been that in the December "Washingtonian Magazine", which is not as widely known as the "New Yorker" but trying hard. Their reporter was specially invited, then refused admittance, and finally given an interview by one of the organizers. As far as I know, FPE was not represented, the contestants being mostly professional, gay or both. The winner, Miss Alaska, was awarded an all-expense paid trip to the other pageant at Atlantic City. The point is not so much that we should get in there and win (and I'm not so sure we could- some of

Due to the fact that I don't even have time to read what I write myself these days, my subscription to "Galaxy" lapsed, and I got only the last third of a serial "I Will Fear No Evil", by Robert A. Heinlein. If you can beg, borrow or steal the October, November and December 1970 issues of this leading science-fiction magazine, you'll find it well worth the trouble. The author combines the best features of Arthur Farmer's "Odd Girl Out" (1963) and a short I did for TVia a few years ago. A 95 year old billionaire, kept alive mostly by machinery, arranges to have his brain transplanted into the first suitable warm body available - which turns out to be that of his lovely young secretary, killed in an accident. Surprisingly, some of her personality is retained in the body, so she is there as a "sister" to help him learn what life has to offer a beautiful young woman with plenty of money and a masculine code of morals. But when she induces him to become pregnant with some of his own sperm, kept in frozen storage for posterity, things get rather over-complicated for me!

And now for the news from around TV lands.....

Ohio - Delta Diary is back in business once again and should provide a link between Delta's spread-out members. They welcomed new member Susan and GG at their November meeting and laid plans for future meetings. Their Christmas party was in Mansfield, Ohio on December 12th, featuring a gift exchange, elegant food and the fellowship which is such an important part of all FPE gatherings. January's meeting is partially planned and is to be something new and quite different. More about it next time. Meanwhile, the Delta girls wish everyone else in FPE a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Denver - Maureen, our faithful Sigma reporter, writes from Denver that they had their usual pleasant evening of conversation, relaxation and refreshments in Nov. and on Dec. 11th their Christmas party, made special by a new member Cathy, 6 L-3, who brings their number to four.

Minnesota - Tau Gatherness continues with useful information and news of all the members. Their Christmas party was at Carla's on December 12th with a gift exchange and members and GGs having a wonderful time. Their membership is spread out, but they do seem to be able to get together regularly.



"What kind of an operation?"

Baltimore - At a gathering of Rho members in late November, it was decided that the Vice-Pres., Mary, should assume the duties of President. Plans were made for a Christmas party on Dec. 12th in Baltimore. (It is rather nice to think of all the various FPE groups who were having parties on Dec. 12th this year!)

Georgia - Ann, 10 M-2 informed us of a planned gala get-together in Atlanta in January. (Your editor missed connections with this group during a brief stay in that city in December) Ann also reports another successful trip to Mexico where she visited with members there and had a chance to meet Patricia who is in the process of joining. The members in Mexico are in the process of translating the membership application into Spanish.

England - Our dear friends in the Beaumont Society continue to enjoy good progress. Sylvia reports that they now have a Regional Councillor system similar to ours. They are called Representatives. We should have a report on Sylvia's trip to Copenhagen soon and more info on the planned Centre in London for TV's.

Chicago - Barbara Lee reports a most successful Christmas Party held on Jan 2nd. The biggest turn out ever, numbering 30 members and almost that many GGs celebrated Christmas and New Years with a formal affair. Your editor Fran 49 C-1 was in attendance and she can bear witness to the fact that there were more lovely ladies at this party than she has seen in a very long time. Delicious food and a gift for everyone highlighted this outstanding social event. Barbara Lee and her GG put in a lot of work to make this event one to remember. Nice going, girls!

Australia, New Zealand, etc. - Another report in the form of the newsletter TVANZ arrived and this group with a real distance problem continues to develop. Reprints of Introduction to TVism and Virginia's article in *Sexology* from several years ago are being distributed in at least two countries. A recent meeting held in Sydney and Melbourne brought good results. Virginias lectures in this part of the world during her recent visit really stirred this up. Susan FA-B-1 is doing a fine job as editor of the newsletter which is already up to Number 5.

Pacific Northwest - A copy of the latest newsletter, Lambda News arrived in December announcing the formation of a formal chapter with elections to be held at the Christmas party. The group will move to Portland, Oregon for a February 13th meeting to give the southern members a chance to attend. The Halloween party was a real big success with the Merle Norman cosmetic people in attendance to talk on make-up and share beauty secrets with the members. Also a professional photographer was invited to take a group picture which we should be seeing in TVia soon. Marilyn 46 I-1 entertained with her song and dance routine, so a most eventful evening was had by all.

Texas - Sally informed us of a New Year's Eve party to last until the wee hours. We will look for a more detailed report of this party soon. Iota has been blessed with many new members these past months and is growing at an amazing rate. Remember when you were all alone, Sally and didn't think another FP existed in the Lone Star State? Now there is nearly one on every corner and that makes for loads of fun.

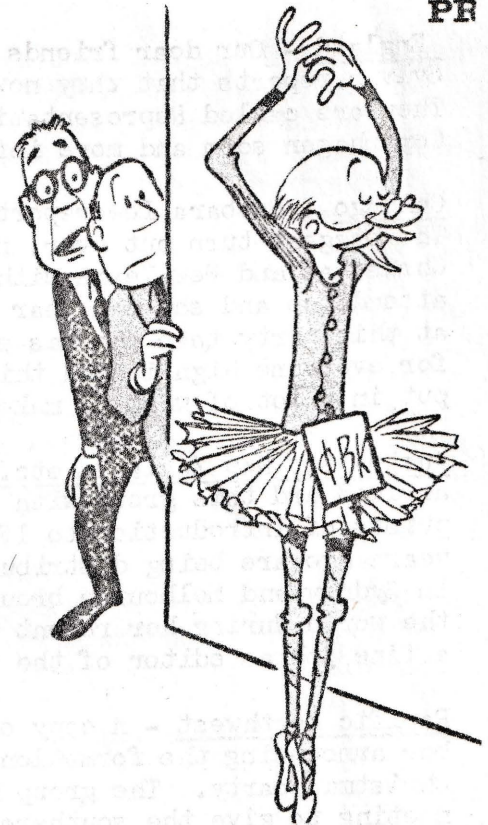
Toronto - This group of ladies are now officially named Alpha Tau Chapter and are growing in leaps and bounds. A Halloween party was held on the 31st with excellent attendance, including Marie Therese from Ottawa, Canada. I understand that's a bit of a distance away. Lots of luck, girls with your new chapter and your new members.



"Next New Year's Eve you can be the girl, Frank!"

Kansas--Eta Chapter had full attendance for their last party on Halloween night. The ladies later attended a "dress-up" contest at a local lounge and each went on stage to participate in the contest and were awarded a bottle of champagne. It was a highlight for the evening which was topped off with a breakfast party a bit later on.

Tennessee - A new chapter was recently formed and this is the first official announcement of Beta Gamma. This chapter will center in Tennessee and hopefully draw members from Kentucky, Mississippi and Arkansas. The charter evening was held at the home Priscilla 42 A-1. Lynnette 1 W-1, Cathy 17 A-1 and two most welcome GG's attended. Beta Gamma is interested in reaching all members within driving distance of Memphis or Nashville and hope to spread "girlship" in their area. Anyone interested can write to Priscilla via Contact or through Fran 49 C-1. Good luck, gals.



That's all the chapter news we have received this month, so I will leave you with one last thought. It has been said before, but I guess not loud enough - since one chapter newsletter advocated finding "other TVs" through Cathy Slavik's Empathy Club - that those who fish in sewers

"It gets a little worse each year."

deserve what they catch. Slavik has absolutely no standards as to who or what you will find yourself "empathizing" with; it might be a relatively decent homosexual, or conceivably another FPE member who likes to live dangerously. On the other hand, it could be any of several varieties of prostitute, a blackmailer, a "free-lance reporter" or an over-zealous cop out to reform the world. So, before you start, please take these simple precautions:

1. Inform your attorney as to exactly what you plan to do and file copies of all letters with him.
2. Get a double-blind address (a P.O. box in NOT enough).
3. Put the addresses of the rest of us either in a bank vault or the attorney's safe, with NO copies in your house, car, office or pocket.

The rest of us will sleep more sweetly if we don't have an uneasy feeling that someone is smoking in the powder room! (And so will our wives).

That's 30 for now,

Sheila 30 B-2

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NEW INTERVIEWER ANNOUNCED

We are pleased to announce that Dorothy 21 D-1 has agreed to help handle interviews in the New England states. Dorothy has contributed a great deal to FPE and to Gamma in the past and we appreciate her taking this additional task of some much needed help in her region.

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DUES NOTICE IS ENCLOSED!!!

FB

IN MEMORIUM

News has reached us of the passing of four of our long-time members and sisters. On December 2nd, Deanna 20 Q-1 passed away. Deanna was a founder of the Rho Chapter and was its President. She was a frequent contributor to FPE in numerous ways. Deanna will be greatly missed by all of her friends. We also have received word that Mary 3 H-3 died in Phoenix, Arizona. Mary was a member since 1966 and was part of the Phoenix group. Alice 49 R-2 a recent member, was killed in November of 1970. Alice lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From far away Norway we have heard that our old friend Lilly FN-T-1 has died. I don't believe that Lilly ever met another FP because she was rather poor and couldn't travel. She was a member since 1962.

DEAR FRAN

"I am Karen's 16 year-old daughter, Debbie. I am writing for Daddy who has recently become paralyzed in his right arm and hand due to a blood clot; therefore, he is unable to write to you. The doctor says it will be a long time before Karen can use the arm or hand. Enclosed please find a money order in the amount of \$12 for Karen's 1971 dues. Karen realizes that she's early, but feels it best to send it while she can. Karen says to expect an application from a new member in our city in the very near future. She has been working on her for some time.

(Editor's Note: This is one of the sweetest letters we have ever received and is a tribute to both Karen and her daughter Debbie. We are most distressed to hear of Karen's misfortune and illness, but share with her a warm appreciation for being the parent of a sweet little GG like Debbie. Our best wishes to both of you gals.)

Sincerely yours,

Debbie for Karen 14 H-2

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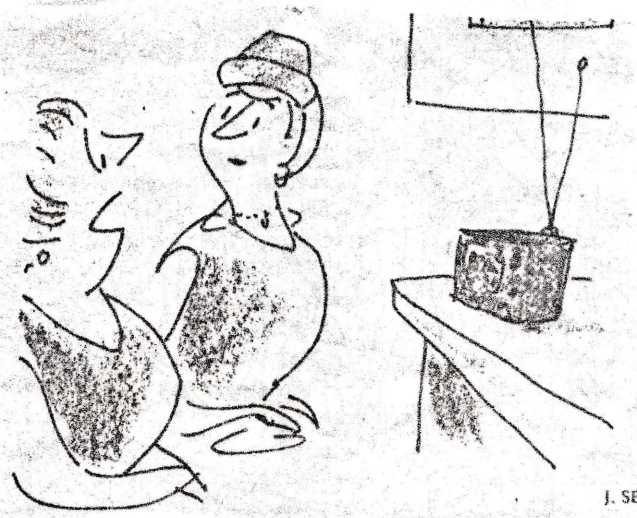
Dear Fran,

Thank you again for the fine job you are doing. I know there is a lot of work involved with producing the Femme Forum and I want you to know that I appreciate it. FPE has done a great deal for my wife and I. We have made many friends - good friends, with who we socialize now. I am indeed grateful to all of you who have made this possible.

Vickie 47 G-2

(Editor's Note: You are also very nice for writing, Vicki!)

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J. SE

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

I remember the early days when I was so unsure of myself and always expected the Heavens to come crashing down upon my shoulders...and how very important certain kind, understanding friends were to listen to an outpouring of frustrations, and lend a shoulder to cry upon. And what a difference it made! You know, it's the personal touch that makes FPE work... not the tracts and publications. To KNOW that you've friends who care and understand and who'll help you grow into a decent lady....that is what matters. Well, those shakey-scared days are over.

"I hate petite TV's!"

I have changed a lot--for the better, I think. Though experience has made me a bit more cynical perhaps, and my optimism about better days has dimmed a little, on the whole, it has all been a most worthwhile, heart-warming experience, full of rich experiences and meaningful person-to-person communication. It used to bother me greatly in trying to puzzle out where I fit into the scheme of things...I still don't know, but I am content to live life as it comes, trying to be of some use to others, and doing what I can, in my own way, to make things just a little better.

It is a little disappointing that FPE hasn't grown by leaps and bounds, and that in the chapters I am best acquainted with, things are moving slowly, with apathy at every hand. Instead of the hoped-for situation where an FP gal would be hard pressed to decide upon which of a long, full calendar of events she should attend, it's one of finding anything at all to go to. There are still a nucleus of dedicated, hard-working girls, and a majority of complaining do-nothing types. One hopeful sign is that we are getting a few more of the younger set, who're not so inhibited, and for the most part have some level of understanding on the part of their GG's. Yet, it's quite puzzling at how little effort most members take to at least try to get to meetings, socials and parties. It doesn't seem to be so much 'guilt' or dominating inhibitions.....than just plain old inertia.

From my own experiences, I am sure that each of us has as her goal the deep-seated desire to progress to the point where she is quite passable in public and has a strong enough feminine image to be accepted as one. I do not see how poise and self-confidence can be learned without social contact with others--where one has to put to practice whatever she has learned. It's rather fundamental that the better one is, the less the chance of some untoward 'accident' upsetting her apple-cart. And one has to wholly accept one's feminine component to be really comfortable in the role. One must perfect a good degree of feminine character and presence to be a femme success.

I suppose that thinking about "the good old days" is one sign of approaching old age. Still, they were very good times and the camaraderie we enjoyed then was something very special. I wish to goodness that there were something like it for us now.

Despite all of the ups and downs, the worries, concerns and frustrations, I have found being an FP has been wonderously good for me. I've learned much about human nature and have found that one must look outside of themselves for real happiness ...that the things we want for ourselves are not half so important as what others want--that there is room for the femininely ooriented in this world. There is always room for kind, gentle people who care!"



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"Now no one will take you for a man, Albert!"



