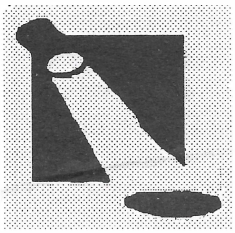
IFGE NEWSLETTER
International Foundation for Gender Education
Winter 1995, Volume 1, Number 4



SPOTLIGHT
Things are Getting Better With Your Help!

Alison Laing

These are exciting times to be a member of the TG community. We are building bridges with other minority groups and, better yet, among ourselves. What started out to be velvet revolutions in some organizations, have resulted in more individuals taking ownership, and thereby responsibility, of the missions and goals of making this a better world for all people. What started out as a polite but provocative action against a gay, lesbian and bisexual politically-based organization led to a wonderful marriage, making us part of an even greater community.

Yes, we know we are "different from them," but we have far more in common. Yes, each of our own organizations may have a different agenda, but again, we have the common goal of working toward acceptance of everyone, no matter what their gender or affectional orientation. The community is coming together.

But, you may ask, what can I do, as an individual, to help this vision become a reality? This is a good time to ask. The beginning of a New Year is a perfect time for undertaking new responsibilities and attitudes. Let me give you some ideas for your 1996 resolutions.

1. Be Proud. Forget the past. Shed your anger, your guilt and your shame; we are not only different, we are unique and special. So if you are a TV, a TS, or whatever, be the best one you can.

2. Join and support your local group. Encourage and help the leadership in whatever ways you can. Even if you do not feel you can be a leader, volunteer to do some of the myriad tasks it takes to keep a local group viable: greet newcomers, stuff envelopes, bring refreshments, pay your dues on time, attend the meetings, whatever. Remember, now that you have begun to feel good about yourself and feel safe in places other than the meeting place, there will always be others that you can help only by being there. Participate in outreach efforts and programs. Local support groups are where the rubber hits the pavement and you have lots of opportunity for face-to-face education and support.

3. Do outreach. Whenever and wherever you can, greet and be openly friendly with non-gender-gifted people. Reach out also to community members, especially those in need who may still be struggling with self-acceptance, dealing with a problem in the work place or with the family. Do not overwhelm them. Give them a chance to relate and ask questions. Show them respect and that you care. And listen to them, too!

4. Build bridges. Reach out in friendship to other minorities. I know the agony of coming to grips with my own homophobia and fear of AIDS. But, we as a community have won the support of the GLB community and many of their groups are now adding the "T"! Get to know the educators in your community. Educate them about the TG phenomenon. And we should never miss a chance to "tell our story" to an audience.

5. Have Zero Tolerance For Intolerance! Speak out against prejudice to any minority. Whether you are open and out or closeted, speak out against bigotry, prejudice and injustice whether it is racially based, against women, gays, ethnic minorities, handicapped, or any one that is "different." If you make this a part of your character, you can speak out for the transgendered without fear of raising questions about your own identity. It will simply be considered normal for you.

6. Join and Support a National Group. There are several to choose from, including some with special interests. Naturally, I would

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IFGE *Newsletter*

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The **IFGE** *Newsletter* is published quarterly by the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE), P.O.Box 229,
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IFGE Membership

Basic Membership:
$25.00 per year.
Membership newsletter, IFGE ID, voting privileges, and 10% discount on IFGE products.

Supporting Membership:
$100.00 per **year.**
Basic membership, 15% discount on IFGE products, and 10% discount on IFGE sponsored events.

Benefactor Membership
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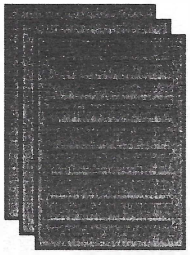

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Linda Buten

We are quickly approaching the tenth IFGE Coming Together Convention this spring in Minneapolis. Over these years the Gender Community has made some radical changes, and IFGE has always been the front runner when adapting to those changes becomes necessary.

Today not only do we see many more groups and services available to the gender-conflicted person, but the support groups themselves have evolved so dramatically. They all started with a handful of scared individuals looking to each other for support. Those of us who ran the groups were not much better off than those who were showing up for the first time. You might say the blind were leading the blind.

When Merissa envisioned IFGE, her goal was to bring the best and brightest individuals together to work for the good of a very young community. After conception, IFGE was looked up to for guidance by every group leader in the country. The groups and their leaders felt a commitment and a personal debt of gratitude to IFGE. My own group for years collected donations and periodically gave back to IFGE a kind of thank you for being there.

As generations pass, new leaders are stepping into the comfortable shoes of experienced individuals, and their support is now usually directed to their group. After all, they feel obligated to the individuals that helped them most, not to an organization in Waltham. They want to do their own thing on a local level, and most do not realize the importance and benefits of IFGE. Unfortunately, local groups only really service their surrounding area. The small group with limited resources, and the individuals out in rural America, still see IFGE as a very valuable tool.

Unlike previous years, today's gender pioneers are not searching for acceptance. They are proud of who they are, and demand equality. The calls for action in the past are now resurfacing as reality.

Many transgendered people no longer need support, yet they still want to keep in touch with the Community. For them, gender weekends are really more entertainment and a chance to renew old friendships than a learning experience.

Our decision to change *Tapestry* into *Transgender* reflects the changing transperson. The responses we received from you on the questionnaire last year told us who you are and what you expect. Our ultimate goal is to put *Transgender* on the magazine rack of every major bookstore chain.

You realize that membership in IFGE is really a gift from you to the community, and you certainly do not need a lecture. But we, the members of the Board of Directors, always need your input. We would hope you first take time out to return your ballots to elect the new directors. I also want to hear your comments regarding *Transgender*.

Finally, consider attending our Convention this year. We always get more accomplished when we work and play one-on-one, and it's you we really need to see there.

SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY
JOIN THE IFGE NOW!!

IFGE ENTERS CYBERSPACE

1995 was a red letter year for IFGE. *It saw our entry into cyberspace with our own web site and e-mail address.* Both have put us in quicker and closer touch with IFGE members—and all members of the TG community—world-wide.

Now anyone with a computer can e-mail us questions, information, complaints, observations, or kudos. All they have to do is log on and send their missives to us at **IFGE@WORLD.STD.COM**. And our electronic correspondents keep us very busy. We download as many as 25 letters per day. That's some 600+ every month!

Our website is equally busy. Thousands of people visit us at:

http://www.transgender.org/tg/ifge/index.html

every month. There they find a virtual cornucopia of informative delights: our exclusive Directory of Organizations, listing support groups and helping professionals around the country—and around the world; a catalogue of publications and video tapes we distribute; the latest medical information from Dr. Sheila Kirk; special previews of future ***Transgender*** *Tapestry* covers; highlights of previous issues; and a great deal more. But that's not all. Watch for more exciting developments in the future.

All this is part of our committment to serving members—and the entire TG community—even more effectively in the coming years.

A CALL FOR HELP

Sheila Kirk, M.D., has been conducting several on-going projects for the Transgendered community and the medical professionals that provide transgendered services. To assure their success and to maximize their effectiveness, she needs your continued support and help in the following areas:

Health-Care Professional Referral List

Dr. Kirk compiles and maintains a referral list used to direct individuals to responsible and responsive health-care professionals all over the United States. One of the very important ways that Dr. Kirk uses to continue this work is to ask that members of the community who have located health-care professionals (i.e., physicians, psychologists and psychiatrists) who they feel are competent and knowledgeable be made known to her. Please forward names, addresses, phone numbers and their specialties so that she can include them in her lists.

Post-Operative M-F & F-M Transsexual In-Depth Survey

Post-Operative M-F and F-M individuals are needed to be a part of the survey which asks in-depth questions about transition, medical care and the surgical experience.

Dr. Kirk is interested in knowing about post-surgical medical care and the situations that post-op individuals currently experience in the workplace, etc.

Taking part in this survey will not put you in any measure of insecurity. Your privacy will be strictly enforced. No mention of your name will be used, only the data that you supply, in the survey, will be used.

To participate, send a letter to Dr. Kirk stating your willingness to take part, your name and address.

Teenage Crossdressing Study

This very important longitudinal study has been in progress for 2 1/2 years and will be conducted for a considerable length of time.

Male youngsters in the 12-19-year old age group are needed to take part in this study, examining their social lifestyles and educational accomplishments. Initial surveys and subsequent surveys will be conducted to determine their level of adjustment in those areas.

It would be greatly appreciated if members of the community would be alert to these youngsters and then refer them to Dr Kirk for inquiry and continuing evaluation. Their parents of health care providers are encouraged to contact her as well. Their insight would prove invaluable.

The confidentiality of all participants and their families is strictly adhered to.

If you are interested in participating in any of these projects of seek further information, write to;

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e-Mail IFGE@WORLD.STD.COM

Visit Our Web Site:
http://www.transgender.org/tg/ifge/index.html

10TH ANNUAL IFGE CONVENTION — BEST

Things are shaping up for IFGE's 10th Annual Convention in the MINI-APPLE (Minneapolis), March 26-31, 1996. Come and enjoy the pleasure and freedom of the only state that has equal rights for trans-gendered individuals. First timers can take advantage of a special discount and bring your mate, partner or friend.

Our convention is being held in the exquisite Marriott Hotel and they have provided us a very special rate of $89, single or double. This provides you with the ability to park at the hotel, with in and out privileges, and shop in a variety of stores. If this isn't enough, you have access to 52 other city blocks through the skyway system without needing a coat or an umbrella.

Northwest Airlines has over 85% of the flights that serve the Twin Cities and has been designated as our official airline. Discounts of 5-10% are provided for reservations Mar. 23 through Apr. 3. Certain restrictions apply. Contact your travel agent or NWA Meeting Services at 1-800-328-1111 M-F, 7:30 AM to 7:30 PM CT and refer to Ticket Designator NCUGE.

Minneapolis is within a day's drive of many cities and you can share driving and expenses.

Among the convention highlights: Wednesday evening is the Official Reception party hosted by the Mid-America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE); Thursday evening features a wine and cheese tasting provided by the Winslow Street Fund; Friday evening, dine and be energized by the inspiring Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues,* then let your hair down and dance the night away to the driving beat of our own Transband and/or sit back, relax and be entertained by the music of other Trans-artists. Saturday evening we honor recipients of the Virginia Prince Award, the Trinity Awards and our new Partnership in Transgender Diversity Award to Government and Businesses.

Visit the MALL OF AMERICA,
the second most popular tourist attraction in the USA!

Program highlights include:

* HIV Prevention Program for Transgender Persons, developed at the U of MN.
* Panel of mainstream religious leaders.
* Program for helping professionals by Dr. Sandra Cole and Walter Bockting.
* Workshop on legal issues of transgender conducted by Phyllis Frye, J. D.
* Panel program on TG parents and children presented with assistance of PFLAG.
* Program of local gay, lesbian and bi-activists.
* How you can effect political change in your political domain, by Jessica Xavier.
* Internet help from Dawn Wilson.
* Nancy Shavlik discusses hair removal.
* Professional hair care, makeup, jewelry, shoes, clothing, breast forms, publications, and glamour shots.
* Dr. Sheila Kirk's latest information on hormones.
* Find out about surgery from Dr. Eugene Schrang.
* Jean Nicolaus Trefter outlines the history of GLBT.
* Panel for spouses and SOs.

See you in Minneapolis in '96!

Jane Fee

Partners in Diversity Award Established.

IFGE has instituted a new award. It will be given in recognition of the strides that some companies and institutions are making toward helping transgendered and other social minorities achieve a higher quality of life. The first of these awards will be presented at the March 1996 Coming Together-Working Together Convention in Minneapolis. At that time, by IFGE Board of Directors resolution, two special awards will be made recognizing American Airlines and the State of Minnesota for their initiative and great progress in support of transgender interests.

Future Partners in Diversity awards will be made from nominations of worthy businesses and other institutions. The IFGE Awards committee will establish the procedures for final selection. The criteria for these awards will be presented in a future newsletters. Nominations will be solicited at that time.

IFGE
Convention Session to Memorialize Jennifer Richards.

Jennifer Richards, one of the founders of Mid-America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE), and a gender activist of national note died in late December, 1995 after a long bout with AIDS. Jennifer supported the IFGE as the Mistress of Ceremonies at the Awards Banquet for several years, was a Trinity Award recipient, and was a major supporter of the Congress of Transgender Organizations. A special recognition in her memory will be included as part of the session on the HIV Prevention Program for Transgendered Persons on Saturday, March 30, 1996 at the upcoming IFGE National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is appropriate that the Transgender community recognize Jennifer's many contributions with a fitting memorial.

Virginia Prince & Trinity Award Recipients Named

The 1996 Virginia Prince Award, honoring lifetime service to the TG community will be presented to Sheila Kirk, M.D., IFGE Director of Medical Research and Liaison at the IFGE office in Waltham Mass.

Three Trinity Awards for outstanding service to the community will the conferred on Joan Sheldon, from the San Jose area; Dr. Sandra Cole, University of Michigan, and Jane Fee, the 1996 IFGE Convention Director from Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Congratulations to each of this year's winners!

IFGE PHONE LINES RINGING OFF HOOK

Our Waltham headquarters received a total of 441 phone calls during a three week inter-office survey conducted by Sheila Kirk. That works out to about 40 calls per eight hour day, one call every 12 minutes, or 600+ calls per month. Assuming an average of ten minutes per call, and many outreach and business calls last much longer, a minimum of 400 minutes (or 6 1/2 hours) are spent on the phone each week day.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE NEARS 800

All of us here at IFGE want to take this opportunity to thank YOU for your wide-ranging support in our inaugural membership year. Since we launched the membership campaign at last year's Convention in mid-March, our first fiscal year will be completed at the Minneapolis Convention this year. However, it is clear at this point that the following membership totals have vastly exceeded our expectations. Here are the results through January, 6th, 1996:

MEMBERSHIP FIGURES

BASIC	630
SUPPORTING	133
BENEFACTOR	17
LIFE	1
TOTAL	781

We are acutely aware of the challenge that this *support* implies for all of us at IFGE. Our organization will have to excel in delivering the benefits of membership and thereby justify the confidence and support you have demonstrated in 1995. These benefits will come about in two broad areas:

- Community - Continually providing a knowledge base in furnishing outreach work to the medical and academic sectors by participating at the American Psychiatric Association Convention, at the National Association of Social Workers Convention and at IFGE's own Convention.
- Individual - In offering a medical liaison with the health community, through referral services for medical and legal aid, our telephone crisis line (hotline) and our library and reference material. By offering a newsletter and publication/convention discounts and planned membership receptions.

Ultimately, IFGE has to answer the following question any member or prospect may ask: "What has IFGE done for me?" That question will be our continual challenge!

At one of our membership planning meetings in late 1994, we reached a point of convergence when the final outline of the membership concept took shape. At this point of decision, someone asked the rhetorical and pointed question: "If we enact this plan, will the Community support us and respond?" As we close our first fiscal membership year, it is very gratifying to report that you have heard our call and responded, to such an extent. All of us here at IFGE thank you for your generous support!

IFGE AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED PEOPLES.

Sheila Kirk, M.D.

The 8th Annual National Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual and Transgendered Convention held recently at the Westin Hotel in Detroit, Michigan was notable and inspiring. No convention, no conference, no gathering has ever affected me in such a way. I was welcomed into the most powerful of meetings to take place in my entire existence, and I witnessed a powerful coming together of minds, hearts, and spirits.

I listened with amazement as over 2000 gay and lesbian individuals reached out to each other. I watched as those same gay men and lesbian women reached out as well to the sisters and brothers of the bisexual and transgendered communities. They did it with warmth, energy, and kinship. It was overwhelming.

The themes, topics, and discussions were knockout. While the events were startling to me, yet at the same time they were comforting. I was presented with concepts and emotions that I knew existed within me but had not come into proper focus to that point, and now they were here, and now I was here as well.

There were over 200 workshops, conferences, round tables, and plenaries. Just before the actual convention began, there were three all-day institutes that took place exploring ways of finding common ground, looking closely at youth organization, and planning for the building and maintaining of community. Openly gay and lesbian politicians were there to speak, and the evening entertainments were stellar. Again, the messages that came to me were countless, and every evening in my review of the day's events and experiences, I made a very long list of what I had heard and learned.

In a convention wherein the gay/lesbian/bisexual/and transgendered (GLBT) communities come together, one would, of course, expect a great emphasis placed on sexuality and sexual orientation, This was not the case. These subjects came into discussion, certainly, but not often, and always they were dealt with in good taste and with reserve. Instead, topics ranged from political issues, medical concerns, legal matters, and insurance, to funding tactics and ways of building financial stability within various organizations, to name only a few. Conferences exploring feminism in the gay male, to the experiences of women attending the recent Beijing conferences in China were notable. There were worthwhile workshops that dealt with speakers' bureau organizations, writing grants, lobbying state legislatures, and strategies to thrive and survive.

What really fascinated me the most seemed to come in large doses and in several forms. There were discussions regarding class, color, and gender issues. In a world where division is so notable, where difference is so emphasized, and where diversity is not honored but rather degraded, I heard in these lectures and discussions things that I knew, yet didn't know, at least from these viewpoints. For instance, what was it like to be a woman and of color, and then add to it—a lesbian. I learned to take these concepts apart, to analyze deeply, and then to reassemble them again, but in a different and beautiful way. In fact, in an important way, a way that the world around us should be doing in order to find fulfillment and peace in life.

I heard the strong message dealing with how gay men view women, whether they be lesbian or straight. I listened to them declare their concepts of how women think, process, function, whether they be in the workplace or in some other endeavor in society. What they thought was not always to their credit and when it was explained to them, how they could change and adapt, while some tried hard, others did not often get more than a D grade.

It became evident, however, that the GLBT communities are moving to tear down the barriers of difference and bias that exist in our world. They have come together in these meetings, actually ignoring difference, and when important, bringing differences together in a gorgeous composite. It reminded me of a spiritual concept I have believed for a long time. I have thought that the god-force has put us all together in a world of differences, differences in color, class, language, customs, and intelligence and now watches and observes our ability and success in overcoming these differences and in coming together. In this convention, I saw this concept in motion. Think of it! People of diversity so disliked and feared by society actually hold the secret to what life is all about and they implement it when coming together in a conference such as this.

There was one lesson that I felt was quite striking. Often it would seem that it is not always evident to the gay or lesbian person, but there is a distinct gender identity shift so evident in their behavior and spirit. This is something that members of the transgendered community can truly teach the gay/lesbian individual. We can show them how it makes them kin to us, and how important it is for both of us to recognize this. It's unfortunate that most in our own community don't know this as well. It is an area that must be explored and must be a part of our outreach to our gay and lesbian sisters and brothers,

Sadly I heard stories of hatred and violence against the GLBT com-

Continued on page 7

IFGE Expands Book, Video and Periodical Sales

On January 2, 1996 IFGE expanded its outreach efforts, within the local area at the main office in Waltham Massachusetts. On that day, the IFGE Book Store for direct walk-in customer sales of books, videos and periodicals at the headquarters opened and an "on the road" or "traveling" version of the book store for organizations in the vicinity was initiated.

This is part of an effort to improve the book sales program, providing better service for mail order (both wholesale and retail), as well as walk in sales. The manager/operator of this redefined task is Vanessa Murray, who has been working part time as a volunteer for IFGE over the last nine months.

In addition to the in-house book store, Vanessa will develop a program encouraging the wholesale distribution of IFGE publications to Transgender groups nation-wide. Vanessa will also serve as a receptionist to visitors to the IFGE office, briefing them on the role and services of IFGE and answering general questions, providing back up service in answering "help line" calls and serving as a reference aid to visitors using the IFGE archives and library.

Vanessa will work under the supervision of Alison Laing, Executive Director of IFGE. She will receive direction and training in operations from Yvonne Cook-Riley, IFGE Director of Operations, and in human relation skills from Sheila Kirk, M.D., Medical Liaison and Research.

Alison Lang - cont from page 1

like you to consider IFGE if you are not yet a member. I could use this whole column telling you about the many projects and tasks we are undertaking and why you should be a member.

7. Finally, be a Good Person. In the words of Rena Swifthawk, a Transsexual Native American Shaman who came into this community for a short time, "Just be a good person. Do things in a good way. Live in Balance and take care of our Mother Earth. You are special and you can make a difference."

We have a challenge, not so much for ourselves, but for all transgendered people and people of diverse sexual and affectional orientation who are still suffering from self-rejection and social repression, and for those yet to come. We have a world to change! Working together we will change the world!

GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDERED

Continued from Page 6.

munities. There were stories of corporate America and the Christian right attacking viciously. There were stories of situations wherein justice was denied and civil rights were trampled only because an individual was found to be a member of the GLBT communities. I heard examples of homophobia that terrified and distressed me. I heard stories wherein even gay men living "on the right" are reeking havoc and hate on their own, a kind of rot from within, trying to divide and confuse in order to keep class, race, and gender issues alive. Their activities are promoting ugly issues for our joined communities to fear and to fight.

I heard the word "movement." The GLBT movement is proper language and a very appropriate concept. I understood while at that convention, and even more now, the need for the transgendered community to reach out particularly at the grassroots level and to join with the gay/lesbian/bisexual communities in their projects, their political endeavors, and their celebrations. There should be no denial. We must be united to them and with them. We share with them diversity and uniqueness. Sexual orientation is not the focus. The common focus that we do share is justice and acceptance.

This meeting was a national convention, and all the participants embraced those of us who were there, giving us education and support. The leaders and the participants of this great conference showed in countless ways their desire to join with us. Once again, sexual orientation is not the focus, not in any way—it's the concept of brotherhood and sisterhood in our joint existence and in our bid for all that is just.

MEET: VANESSA MURRAY

MANAGER, IFGE BOOK SALES

Vanessa Murray is a Summa Cum Laude graduate of Johnson and Wales University, with a strong background in retail management. She describes herself as "a crossdresser since childhood." But adds that she has been "living TG 90% of the time for the last two years." Her hobbies include camping, travel, cooking, and gardening.

Vanessa first learned about the TG community two years ago from a close personal friend. She heard about the IFGE and the Tiffany Club of New England at the same time. However, due to a disability, she was unable to become involved with the community until last year, when she joined the staff here on a volunteer basis and quickly made herself indispensable through effect operation of our mailroom and fulfillment department.

PROFILE

IFGE's OFFICE OF MEDICAL LIAISON AND RESEARCH: "A TASK THAT GRATIFIES IS EASY TO DO"

That is a statement that Sheila Kirk, M.D. makes to anyone who asks her about her work at the International Foundation for Gender Education headquarters in Waltham. "I enjoy what I do because I can help not only the professional and the patient/client in the professional's care, but I can bring a wonderful sense of accomplishment and satisfaction to myself as well."

Since coming to the Boston area three years ago to work with IFGE, Sheila has established a professional health-care provider referral list that is composed of over 850 therapists, counselors, medical physicians and surgeons. she "complains" that she needs more but she is able to direct transgendered individuals contacting her to a professional who will help them in their medical needs with knowledge and responsiveness in every state in the country. She states, however, that until she can find professionals for this under-served population in every city of every state, her list will be incomplete. Evidence of this lies in the fact that in a week's time, she will direct 35-40 people (2000 per year) to a health-care giver and may give direction to the medical literature and exchange information about health-care with 20-30 physicians or psychologists in the same time period (1250 per year).

Dr. Kirk functions also as medical editor and columnist for IFGE's *Transgender* magazine; for *Chrysalis*, a publication of AEGIS; and for the Tri-Ess magazine *Femme Mirror*. She is a consultant for a national information service called Clinical Communications, Inc., located in Shady, New York, and is also a consultant to the gender team at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She writes and gives speeches to groups and organizations all over the United States. The First International Congress for Crossdressing, Sex and Gender which was held in Los Angeles early in 1995 and the National Conference for Electrologists held in Washington, DC in the same year are notable examples. She travels to clubs in different parts of the country to give seminars and lectures dealing with various topics in transgender medical health and has attended professional conferences in this past year, notably the American Psychiatric Association meetings and the Creating Change conferences sponsored by the National Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Coalition.

Currently, Dr. Kirk is conducting two on-going studies, the first dealing with crossdressing teenage youth, and the second an in-depth survey gathering information from postoperative male-to-female individuals. Both studies will be continued for some time to come, but reporting to both the medical and the transgendered community literature could begin about mid-1996. "The latter study will provide very valuable information about a wide variety of concerns and experiences in the life of the male-to-female transsexual before and after surgery."

> ***I ... bring a wonderful sense of accomplishment and satisfaction to myself as well.***

Sheila Kirk has just co-authored, with Martine Aliana Rothblatt, a new book entitled *Medical, Legal and Workplace Issues for the Transsexual, M-F and F-M.* She is near to completing the fourth revision of the popular monographs, *Hormones for the M-F* and *Hormones for the F-M.* In addition, she is the secretary to the Board of Directors of the IFGE, and is a member of both the Executive Committee and the Budget/Finance Committee.

She has a list of studies that she wants to put into motion all dealing with various aspects of the cardiovascular health of the transgendered person no matter where they may be on the spectrum. In her words, "Contragender hormonal regimens affect every part of the individual's physiology as well as their anatomy. We don't know enough about their influences and we must learn more.

Sheila Kirk is quick to answer all who ask why she has left an active medical practice to work in transgendered medicine. "I'm in such a unique place in my life as a physician and a transgendered person. I can talk to and advise both the health-care professional and the members of the community they care for. I couldn't be in a better situation."

SUBSCRIBE to TRANSGENDER TAPESTRY TODAY