ETVC

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME SIXTEEN, NUMBER 1, JULY – AUGUST, 1997

THE CHANNEL

The California Unity Conference

Queen Mary Hotel

by Joan Rowe

Who would have guessed when the mighty Queen Mary steamed into Long Beach California, docking near the convention center and soon to be surrounded by its private jetty, that it would host a transgender convention? Yet, that's exactly what happened on April 15-20 when the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) and the Powder Puffs of Orange County (PPOC) joined to produce a conference called California Unity. And ETVC was there.

On April 14, Erin Sousa and I met at San Mateo, drove down the central valley, and directly up to the ship's gang plank. We encountered accommodations that were charmingly funky. The staterooms were outfitted with the original fixtures, and the decor included antique custom wood paneling. The ship's staff was consistently courteous and cheerful.

Although the conference was billed as starting on the 15th, nothing happened that day, so we checked out the town of Long Beach, looking for stockings. The town was friendly. Long Beach has a gay pride parade of its own and a significant gay residential community. But shopping? No way. The best was a JC Penny's at the mall, and the sizes were small. But the good news was that, although I don't look much like my driver's license, I had no trouble charging my Hanes, and folks are pretty easy. Also, there happens to be a great wig store, which alone is worth a visit to town.

The conference events got rolling on the 16th. A session by Ann Smith about gender issues in the workplace turned out to be about job hunting for the transgendered. In her professional role, Ann Smith is a senior "headhunter," placing executives in the $200K annual salary range. Ann emphasized that TG folks can definitely command a top salary if they can discern how to make themselves valuable enough to their employer. TG's should not have a chip on their shoulders, and when being interviewed might find it helpful to bring up their TG history, especially because the prospective employer often knows anyway, rather than leave it awkwardly unspoken. Niela Miller offered a "feminine toolkit" that emphasized communicating to build relationships rather than to convey information. She also contrasted typical male and female ways of speaking and the use of gestures and facial expressions. Marietta Pathy Allen showed fascinating photographs documenting the emergence of the FTM community. In a medical vein, Dr. Sheila Kirk detailed feminizing hormones and health risks to the TG

Continued on Page 7

New Officers Elected, Awards Received At ETVC May Social

By Elizabeth Walters,
Channel Editor

On a cool May evening fresh with late spring's promise of a new beginning, ETVC elected its executive committee for 1997-1998, and also honored a select group of members for the special service they have provided to the organization.

There were few surprises in the election of executive committee members, as official opposition existed in only one ex-comm race. Re-elected for new one-year terms were President Erin Souza, Vice President Leslie Bailey, and Secretary Veronica Smith. Running unopposed was the organization's new treasurer, Lisa Ronald, who graciously agreed to take over the job after ETVC's former treasurer left abruptly last year.

The club's key committee slots were also filled with familiar faces: returning as co-chairs of ETVC's critical Outreach Committee were Sandra Brewer and Telzey Adams; Nancy Cupps and Juana Smith will continue to preside over the club's Education Committee and Darcy Leopard and Evette Roque Laurie return as co-chairs of ETVC's Social Committee.

ETVC's 1997-1998 Executive Committee: At rear are Lisa, Sandra, Telzey, Nancy, Juana, Darcy and Evette. At front are Veronica, Leslie and Erin (Photo by Telzey Adams)

The returning officers have their work cut out for them. ETVC's executive committee is launching a variety of new

Continued on Page 7

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

This edition of the ETVC Channel will be the last one you will receive unless you have renewed your membership!

THE CHANNEL

ETVC Inc., a non-profit corporation, is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about ETVC programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to: ETVC Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Minutes of all ETVC committee meetings are available to members on request.

OFFICERS

President	Erin Souza
Vice-President	Leslie Bailey
Secretary	Veronica Smith
Treasurer	Lisa Ronald
Education	Nancy Cupps, Juana Smith
Outreach	Telzey Adams, Sandra Brewer
Social	Darcy Leopard, Evette RoqueLaurie

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership (as of 4/30/97)	384
Total 1996 Membership	430
New Memberships this year	94

TREASURER'S REPORT

Account Balance as of 4/30/97	$3,992.30

The "Home for ETVC" fund is now $2017.50

ETVC is a non-profit corporation.

Donations to ETVC are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns Talk to your tax advisor for details.

Channel, the ETVC Newsletter, is published the last week of February, April, June, August, October and December. Submissions should arrive at ETVC by the 20th day of the previous month. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and the editor, and are not necessarily those of ETVC. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided ETVC is acknowledged. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission of ETVC.

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	Per issue	Per year
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Letter from Elizabeth

By Elizabeth Walters

Lots of serious food for thought in this issue of the Channel, girls and boys. We have a report from President Erin Souza on the May executive committee retreat in Asilomar, with a summary of the weighty issues that were mulled over there. We have the beginning of what will likely be a lively debate over whether ETVC should change its name (see Letters to the Editor, page 6) — and if so, what the new name should be.

We also have a comprehensive report on the IFGE convention in Long Beach as well as articles on what a TS can anticipate in making the transition to fully female status, how to face the trangendered world with good humor and a host of other subjects of interest to our varied membership. Finally, let us not forget our usual assortment of regular columns and special features.

Despite the meatiness of this issue, I realize that we are entering the serious vacation season, and poring over the Channel may take a back seat to enjoying the fine weather and many activities available this time of year. If you are planning to spend any of your vacation time in the Southland, here are a pair of suggestions:

First, treat yourself to a fine dinner at Trilogy at 2214 Stoner Avenue in West Los Angeles, an elegant supper club with low prices (the most expensive item on the menu goes for about $15!) and one of the finest reviews en femme you will see anywhere. Call (310) 477-2844 for information. At Trilogy, the special treat is that your waitress is also one of the performers in the floor show. Great fun!

Second, take in one of the shows at Victoria Paris's "Dragville," the delightful Tuesday night extravaganza at the Love Lounge, 657 N. Robertson (just off Melrose Ave.) in West Hollywood. For info, phone the "Dragline" at (310) 659-0471. This was actually the first place I enjoyed a performance by the beautiful and talented divas of Trilogy. Dragsville has two Tuesday evening shows each week, featuring such well-known Southland femme performers as adult movie "queens" Crystal Crawford and Chi Chi LaRue. Drinks are steep, but the cover is low, so nurse those cocktails, girls!

And while you are living it up this summer, don't forget the events and socials ETVC has coming up. As always, a complete club calendar and listing of events can be found on pages 4 and 5.

Have a great summer — and watch those bikini tan lines, ladies!

Don't be left out! Please renew today to avoid missing the next information-packed issue of ETVC's newsletter.

Da' Prez' Box

ETVC President Erin Souza

The Work Ahead

Approximately eighty members responded to ETVC's recent survey, the best response of any survey to date. Detailed statistics will appear in a future newsletter. The executive committee reviewed the surveys and took the information into account at its recent retreat. According to the surveys, this organization is very important to many of you, but it needs to be more accessible.

The newsletter and end-of-month socials are the prime sources of contact for members. We must maintain the quality of the former and improve the quality of the latter. Getting to socials should not be a hassle. The socials should also be fun so that those who get there will want to come back. Since leaving the Chez Mollet at the end of 1993, we have experimented with different venues. Social co-chair Darcy Leopard and her intrepid band of club crawlers have begun the search for a new venue that will hopefully satisfy some of the criteria the Chez once met. A convenient location with parking, comfortable atmosphere, good food, space for dancing and socializing, separate areas for smoking and non smoking are among the major points listed in what people wanted in a venue. Of course we ideally want the rent to be low, so that we can keep the costs of admission reasonable. If you know of such a place that may meet some of these criteria, contact Darcy at [redacted].

What happens at the socials is also important. People go to meet other people and socialize, not to listen to announcements. Not everyone likes the planned "theme" activities. We either make them better or get rid of them. New members feel put off by cliques. We're recruiting veteran members to act as hostesses to facilitate making new acquaintances. Those who have ideas for improving socials or specific social activities are welcome at social committee meetings the third Tuesday of each month.

We are also aware that Thursday nights are not right for everyone. Work schedules and distances away from San Francisco make Thursdays impossible for many. To that end we are adding more weekend activities during the year, including some specifically geared to newcomers. Some events will be paired in a Friday night/Saturday day or Saturday night/Sunday day format so that those planning visits from outside the Bay Area can get the most value for their voyage. We will also put out a long term calendar of events, so you can know months in advance when to set aside a weekend for ETVC.

Eventually, we would like our own space. Former president Jane Bolig (formerly Jane Bentley) began the "Home For ETVC" fund. That fund remains intact, but we need to aggressively raise more money if this dream hopes to become reality within the next decade. If you have fund raising and/or grant writing experience please contact other officers or myself at [redacted].

Accessibility also includes information. There was a time when the minutes of the executive committee meetings were included in the newsletter, as per the bylaws. We have strayed from that requirement in recent years, in part because those minutes take up so much space from more entertaining reading. The minutes will be available again as separate inserts that accompany the newsletter or as part of separate mailings with other club information. As always, all members are welcome at executive committee meetings.

Information will also be available in cyberspace. An ETVC web site is in the works. This web site will attract new members as well as be a resource for current members to obtain information and communicate with club officers. It can also be a vehicle for educating the general public about our issues.

We have begun investigating the possibility of a name change. Let us know your feelings about this by sending us your answers to the "What's Your Opinion" questionnaire in this newsletter. The membership should always have a role in the direction of this organization. Stay in touch with officers and committees; share your skills and insights. I hope when my term ends next May more than one of you will step forward to seek this office. Until then, thank you for your support and please keep wishing me luck. Though stressful at times, this continues to be a valuable experience for me, as I hope ETVC is for all of you. I look forward to seeing more of you at events.

ETVC Bowling Night Returns

The fun resumes — in a new location. Serra Bowl, 3301 Junipero Serra Boulevard, adjacent to the Colma BART station. The cost is $10.00 plus $2.00 shoe rental for two and a half hours of bowling, with disco music, black lights, and fog machines. All levels are welcome. We meet the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 PM. Contact Erin at [redacted].

AIDS Walk '97

There's still time to join ETVC's contingent for the AIDS Walk on Sunday, July 20 in Golden Gate Park. Last year ETVC raised over $1500.00 . For information on obtaining pledge forms and meeting the rest of the contingent, contact Erin at [redacted].

• • • • • Special Events • • • • •

Mid Month Socials

Wednesday, July 9th and Wednesday, August 13th
Following on the heels of a great time on our first "Venue Search" (see Darcy's "On the Town" article), we are re-visiting "The Lilo Lounge", a festive Tiki bar with a great Thai restaurant attached. It is located in the pleasant Potrero Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, at 18th and Connecticut Streets. Call Darcy, [redacted], for directions. 8 PM. Free!

Education Seminar:
You've Got (male) Attitude!

Featuring Wilhelmina Beins.
Thursday, July 17th
Please note that the length of this is two hours. Because of the length of this presentation, this seminar will begin at 7:30. New policy: SMOKING DOWNSTAIRS ONLY. You strut, you act coy, you look coquettish. But do you reflect male or female attitude? How do you know what female attitude is? Do you base your idea on Melrose Place or Bay Watch? Wilhelmina Beins, a Feminine Image consultant, will address the difference between male and female attitudes. She will offer valuable advice on how to reflect the person you want to be. As well as answering questions, Ms. Beins is introducing a new program which includes consultation with a psychologist. He will also be speaking on Thursday evening. Please join us for an informative evening. 7:30 PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Streets. SF $3

You Go Bingo Girl!

Thursday, July 31st
"Will you sign my Bingo Card?" Our popular, annual Bingo Social allows you to say hello to lots of your girlfriends and meet some new ones as you fill your bingo card with their signatures. The Bingo Mistress then calls out our names instead of numbers, and those with winning streaks get great prizes! 8 PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF. Members, $5, Guests, $7.

TS Seminar:
Dating and the New Woman,

Featuring Luanna Rodgers
Sunday, August 17th
Please note new policy: SMOKING DOWNSTAIRS ONLY. You're enjoying your life as a new woman. But you still haven't explored the world of dating. There are just too many questions! When do you tell the person you're dating you are a TS? Does he/she really need to know? What about sex? And STDs? How do you recognize old patterns of dating behavior? How do you modify them? The questions are endless. Luanna Rodgers is here to offer advice. Luanna, who has been a Channel contributor for the last five years, is a qualified therapist specializing in relationships. She is here to assist you by answering the questions that are uppermost on your mind. Please join us. 2PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Streets, SF. FREE

Dancing and Drinks in the Tropics

Thursday, August 28th
Forget the San Francisco Summer Fog and escape to a tropical vacation at Kimo's. The dance floor has the perfect backdrop, a mural of a sunny, sandy beach, to match your colorful summer dress! After dancing up a summer storm, retire to a cocktail garnished with an umbrella and pineapple slice. 8 PM. Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF. Members, $5, Guests, $7.

Imperial Star Empire of Alameda County Coronation

Saturday, August 30th
ETVC usually sends a contingent (at least one table of ten persons) to Hayward to help our friends in Alameda County celebrate their annual Imperial Court Coronation. This year is no exception! If you want to come along, please call Ginny at [redacted] (quickly, as the table fills up fast) for ticket prices and reservations.

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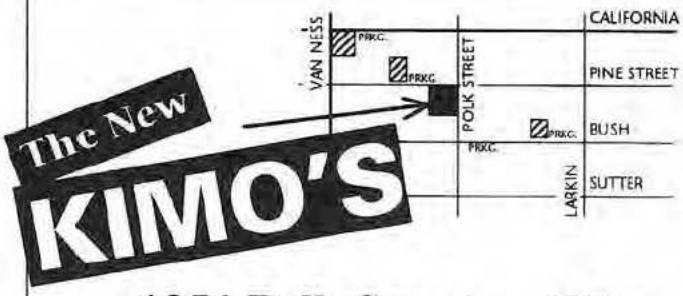

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TV/TS/TG GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

July					
3	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
4	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
4	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
7	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
7	**ETVC**	**TS/Education Committee**	**Meets 7:30-9 PM**	**Kimo's Mtg.Room**	**(415) 337-5409**
9	**ETVC**	**Mid-Month Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Lilo Lounge, SF**	**(415) 641-8169**
10	**ETVC**	**Significant Others**	**Meets 7:30-10 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
10	**ETVC**	**Newsletter Committee**	**Meets at 7PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
11	**ETVC**	**Poker Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
11	**ETVC**	**Lending Library Open**	**Hours 7-11 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
11	S.Bay	Gender Discussion Group	Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
11	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
12	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
12	**ETVC**	**Bowling**	**Starts at 8:30 PM**	**Colma**	**(415) 731-7032**
13	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415) 553-5987
15	**ETVC**	**Social Committee**	**Meets at 8 PM**	**The LineUp, SF**	**(415) 641-8169**
17	**ETVC**	**Outreach Committee**	**Meets at 7 PM**	**Berkeley**	**(510) 443-9938**
17	**ETVC**	**Wilhelmina Seminar**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Kimo's, Upstairs**	**(415) 337-5409**
17	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
18	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
18	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
19	**ETVC**	**Executive Committee**	**Meets at 6 PM**	**San Fraancisco**	**(415) 731-7032**
20	**ETVC**	**Aids Walk**	**Starts at 9 AM**	**Golden Gate Park**	**(415) 731-7032**
21	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
22	**ETVC**	**Library Committee**	**Meets at 1 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
25	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
26	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
31	**ETVC**	**Bingo Nite**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Kimo's, Upstairs**	**(415) 641-8169**
August					
1	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
1	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
4	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
7	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
8	**ETVC**	**Poker Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
8	**ETVC**	**Lending Library Open**	**Hours 7-11 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
8	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
8	S.Bay	Gender Discussion Group	Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
9	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
9	**ETVC**	**Bowling**	**Starts at 8:30 PM**	**Colma**	**(415) 731-7032**
10	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415) 553-5987
10	**ETVC**	**Executive Committee**	**Meets at 1 PM**	**Los Altos**	**(415) 731-7032**
13	**ETVC**	**Mid-Month Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Lilo Lounge, SF**	**(415) 641-8169**
14	**ETVC**	**Significant Others**	**Meets 7:30-10 PM**	**Palo Alto**	**(415) 664-1499**
15	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
15	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
17	**ETVC**	**Outreach Committee**	**Meets at 1 PM**	**Kimo's, Upstairs**	**(510) 443-9938**
17	**ETVC**	**TS Seminar - Dating**	**Starts at 2 PM**	**Kimo's, Upstairs**	**(415) 337-5409**
18	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
19	**ETVC**	**Social Committee**	**Meets at 8 PM**	**The LineUp, SF**	**(415) 641-8169**
19	**ETVC**	**Library Committee**	**Starts at 1 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
21	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
22	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
23	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
28	**ETVC**	**Dance at Kimo's**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Kimo's, Upstairs**	**(415) 641-8169**
29	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
30		Alameda Coronation	Starts at 7 PM	Hayward	(415) 664-1499

OTHER GROUPS

Pacific Center for Human Growth, a counseling oriented growth center, sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00 PM. 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call: (510) 841-6224. Rainbow Gender Association (RGA) meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00 PM at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Write: RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. Call: (408) 984-4044

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA) Blue Rose Chapter meets 8 PM the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write: PO Box 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456. Call: (916) 482-7SGA for meeting locations.

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG) Meets first and third Monday of every month, 8 PM at Just Rewards Nightclub, 2520 Camino Diablo in Walnut Creek. Write: DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885. Call: (510) 937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC) meets first and third Thursday of every month, 7 PM at Rainbow Community Center, 2637 Pleasant Hill Rd. at Taylor Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. For more info, call (510) 937-8432.

FTM, a support group for Female-to-Male crossdressers & transsexuals, holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write: FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission St., Suite 200, SF 94103 or call Voice Mail (415) 553-5987.

TGIF (TransGenderism Is Fun), a social group for transgenders, meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4 PM until early evening. For dates, location and reservations, call Diane or Anne a[redacted]

San Joaquin Gender Association, meets in Tri-Valley area. For dates and times, call Winifred at [redacted]

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA), a new transgender support group, meets at the Billy DeFrank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month from 7PM to 9PM. For more info, call (408) 293-2429.

Please Print

ETVC Membership Application

Mailing Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Name: _____ Family Member's Name: _____ (If Applicable)

Birth Date: Month _____ Day _____ New Member: _____ Renewal: _____

How did you learn about ETVC? _____

Full year membership June 1 - May 31 is $25.00 (Family - $35.00).

Part year membership from January 1 - May 31 is $13.00 (Family - $18.00) (New members only).

Please remit by check or money order to:

ETVC, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

Education Co-Chairs Address Surveys

By Nancy Cupps and Juana Smith

Recently Nancy and I had an opportunity to read through the surveys. The diversity of ETVC's membership was strongly reflected by the likes and dislikes of Education Seminar topics. While some members enjoyed make-up sessions, others wanted to know more about hormones. The surveys confirmed that we are on the right track in selecting topics for the seminars. In the past year, we have had speakers who addressed SRS, make-up, hormones, self-portraiture, the law, self-protection, voice surgery, and what to do if you're "read," to name a few topics.

As the 1997-1998 membership year begins, we hope to continue to provide ETVC members with information they want at a price that can't be beat. Our TS seminars are offered at no charge. We manage to break even on the expenses for the meeting space because of the donations we receive at our mid-week educational seminars. We have been fortunate that each of the professionals we invited to speak during the past year did so at no charge to ETVC.

The surveys also indicated some members would like the Education committee to host a one-day seminar. As a result, we are exploring the possibility of organizing a Saturday program that would include tips on make-up, hairstyles, wig maintenance, and visits to local gender-friendly merchants, capped by an evening on the town. We are currently targeting a weekend in January.

We want to thank all the respondents for their straight-forward answers and continued guidance in what we can provide.

LETTERS

On Re-naming ETVC...

Dear Editor: I read with interest that our officers were going to discuss a possible name change for our club at their May retreat. Though I'm a "new girl" to the ETVC ranks and far removed from the name's historical roots, I'd like to put my two cents in on this subject. Because one of the reasons (perhaps not the only one) I delayed so long in joining and becoming an active member was that awful . . . TV-word! (I can't even type it, let alone say it. And I certainly don't relate to it.)

Let's face it. The word may have started innocently enough back when it was coined in the early part of the century but meanings evolve with time. Who would call an African-American a "Negro" now, even though it was once perfectly acceptable to do so? As time has gone by, the TV-word has acquired a distinctly negative connotation in the popular press. It has been associated too many times with such unpleasant words as "pervert" and "prostitute." The image it evokes is not compatible with the gentleness and femininity I want to be associated with. The word has outlived its usefulness. Let's bury it.

Club old-timers have told me that some of them cling to the "TV" part of "ETVC" because it was originally conceived as a clever pun, and even though the joke has long since grown stale, everyone knows us by that name. I say it's time for a change, before we turn off more prospective members. I'm much more comfortable with "crossdresser," but it might leave out the transsexual segment of our membership (the TV-word has that same problem, too, I might add.) So, for me, the logical choice is "transgender," an open, modern, friendly word that includes everyone. And, as I understand it, inclusiveness has been a cornerstone of ETVC since its founding.

Please, ladies: out with TV, in with TG.
Sincerely, Janet Bowman

[*Editor's reply: Aside from the bureaucratic roadblocks involved in a club name change — amending articles of incorporation, filings with the state registry of charitable trusts, printing new letterhead, pamphlets, etc. — one of the primary hangups in renaming ETVC will be settling on a name that satisfies everybody. While it is true that many people in the transgendered community dislike the term "transvestite," that has more to do with the term's commonplace use as a put-down or epithet than with its actual definition, which, according to Webster is, "a person who derives sexual pleasure from dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex."*

The fact is, most of this organization's members are exactly that: self-identified heterosexual cross-dressers classically referred to by the TV-word. Perhaps our best response to the term's use as one of opprobrium would be to follow the lead of Gay columnist Dan Savage and simply take it back from our enemies. Speaking for myself, I don't find "transvestite" as offensive a term as, say, "faggot," which Savage is trying to recapture from rednecks and gay bashers.

In any event, with the publication of our sister Janet's letter, we can now consider the debate on this subject officially open. Please note outreach committee chairwoman Sandra Brewer's comments on this subject in this issue's "Sandra Reaches Out" column. Do we want to change ETVC's name? What should we change it to? And how do people feel about the term "transvestite?" The Channel will print members' comments on this subject in coming issues. Keep those cards and letters coming in, ladies and gentlemen!]

Remembering Barbara...

Dear Editor: I was saddened to hear of the recent death of Barbara Bowden. I feel honored to have had the opportunity to know her when we served together on the Executive Committee, and later when we worked together in the Alice in Genderland Cotillion show in 1995. The pictures that I have of her as the Mad Hatter in that show still bring back fond memories of a lady of infinite charm, grace, kindness, and geniality. I will miss her greatly, but know that she is safe in God's hands, and that she will be with us as long as we remember her in our hearts.

Reverend Lauren Rene Hotchkiss Miss ETVC, 1994

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Unity Conference

Continued from Page 1

community, and Dr. Douglas Ousterhout explained feminizing plastic surgery. The most moving talk in the conference was by our own Dr. Millie Brown. Her simple and unadorned account of the anguish in being a transsexual brought tears to many eyes.

Throughout the conference the interesting Hirschfeld Exhibit was on display, which presented early approaches research on gender identity and sexual orientation. Newsweek was around for a few days. A special article on the transgender community should appear shortly. One of the evenings featured a fantastic show organized by Jim Bridges, who was also one of the exhibitors selling beautiful dresses crafted to sizes we can especially appreciate. Also, many of us drove nearly an hour to visit the Queen Mary and Peanuts clubs, where we danced the night away.

The only yellow flag I noted was a tendency for segregation. One exhibitor encountered anti-gay sentiment, at least some FTM's felt too isolated from the main schedule, and the spouses of some TS's were treated unsympathetically by those of TV's. Guests at a wedding party occurring at the same time as the final night's award banquet demanded sole use of the women's rooms. Next year, CA Dreamin' is in San Francisco again. I hope we will show how to blend the many groups within the TG umbrella more seamlessly, and will offer activities more integrated into the city's life than was possible in LA.

On the 20th, after a fabulous morning brunch on the Queen Mary, Jamie Fenton and I strolled down the gang plank and drove back through the central valley to the Bay Area. All in all, conferences like these are wonderful. One meets many new friends, learns a lot, and has the chance to live full time en femme for a week, which including the drive each way, simply feels great.

Officers and Awards

Continued from Page 1

initiatives based on a survey of our members earlier this year and a retreat of club officers in Asilomar in May. Although the new directions will be a challenge, they also hold promise of strengthening this organization and helping it to grow.

In addition to electing new officers at the May 29th meeting, ETVC also singled out a group of members who have provided exceptional service to the organization and its mission. Receiving the Social Committee's award was Di Di Mau, our leggy and statuesque beauty best known to most members for the brevity of her apparel and for her assistance in putting on the organization's events and socials. The Outreach Committee recognized Diane and Anne Giles for their work in helping to build public recognition of the fact that transgendered people are just like everybody else.

Jamie Faye Fenton, ETVC's Member of the Year

ETVC Award Recipients. Rear: Anne, Diane, Di Di, Mina, Elizabeth. Front: Andrea, Jamie, Lulu.

The Education Committee honored Mina Schwartz for her help in focusing attention on family issues for transgendered people. Ginny Knuth and Carolayne Hughes were recognized for their help in taking care of the club's finances after the abrupt departure of former treasurer Jano Bogg. The Secretary's Award was conferred on yours truly for editing this newsletter (although the job has been so entertaining that any award is superfluous).

The Vice President's award was given to Lulu Blau, for the fabulous work she has done in staging some of our best events, including the Big Shew and this year's ETVC Cotillion. The President's Award was conferred on Andrea Drane for the energy and enthusiasm she has shown in so many different ways during the brief time she has been a member of our group. And the evening's top honor "the Ginny Knuth Member of the Year Award" went to Jamie Faye Fenton, who has assisted ETVC in everything from fund-raising efforts to providing technical support for the club's various computers.

To all the new officers and award recipients, a well-deserved round of applause is due. Good going, girls!

Vice President Leslie Bailey presents Lulu Blau with her Vice Presinent's Award momento, a tiny femme bell.

Face the Music — In Face!

Mark this date on your calendars: On July 20, a Sunday afternoon drag show fundraiser for the Rainbow Community Center in Pleasant Hill will be held at the 1220 Club, 1220 Pine Street in Walnut Creek.

The 90 minute show has been tentatively scheduled to begin at 6 p.m., in order to avoid a conflict with the 9 p.m. evening drag acts at nearby Just Rewards. At Channel press time, no list of confirmed performers was available, but promoters of the event promised a variety of acts and said patrons should find the program entertaining and enjoyable.

The entire proceeds of the show will be donated to the Rainbow Community Center at 2637 Pleasant Hill Road in Pleasant Hill. The Center provides a variety of services to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community in Contra Costa County, and is the headquarters for the Diablo Valley Girls Rap Group on the first and third Thursdays of each month.

Those planning to attend the July 20 benefit can obtain additional details by calling the 1220 Club at (510) 938-4550.

Announcing Two Important Conferences

Two important conferences in the gender community will be held in July and August of 1997:

The 2nd Annual Young, Loud and Proud Conference July 12-13, 1997, Everett Middle School, San Francisco

This Conference is specifically targeted toward youth 23 and under, although anyone under 25 may attend. The Conference is by youth, for youth and about youth. The main goal of Young, Loud and Proud is to empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth to become more active participants in their own lives.

This Conference is a sponsored project of L.Y.R.I.C. For more information, call (415) 703-6150.

The 3rd Annual FTM Conference of the Americas August 8-10, 1997, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA

Conference features workshops on legal issues, political activism, medical issues, spirituality, sexuality and non-operative F2Ms, along with workshops for partners and families. Keynote Speaker: James Green.

For more information, E-Mail: IFGE@worldnet.att.net or write to Information Attn: Mykael, Boston FTM Conference, PO Box 229, Waltham, MA 02254-0229

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Sandra Reaches Out

by Sandra Brewer

We're going online; watch for the announcement of our ETVC web site. This still needs some development and to be effective it will have to be kept current on a continuing basis, but this is a link we really need to maintain visibility in the world. Our speaker's bureau continues to be very active; I want to thank all who have participated for a job well done. Dale is doing an excellent job representing us as Miss ETVC at several events including all the functions connected with the recent Gay Coronation. At press time we were busily preparing to assist KQED in their June pledge drive, and once again we hope to make a strong showing at the Gay Freedom Parade.

We have recently increased our hotline staff; this is a fun way to meet new people interested in ETVC, and you can do it two nights a month without leaving your home. Let us know if you're interested. Also, if you want to address the public by participating on our speakers' bureau, make sure I have your name on the speaker list. The information form I promised earlier is taking longer than intended, but I expect to send it to all speakers and prospective speakers on the list in time for the fall semester.

The suggestion to change the name of our organization to better fit its support of the entire transgendered community was discussed at our recent retreat meetings. When discussing ETVC with college classes, hotline callers, the Pacific Center, or anywhere we meet the public, a question that invariably arises is 'what does TV stand for?' To the public the term 'transvestite' has negative connotations much like 'faggot' for the gay community. The more comprehensive term 'transgendered,' often abbreviated TG, more accurately describes our community, and usually without the negative elements. Consider a name like ETGS (Educational Transgendered Support) a possible choice that deviates only slightly from the original name. We realize the existing name has a tradition, and it's always painful to make such a change, but we are seeking your thoughts on this matter.

Although not exactly an outreach issue, I want to mention a problem we've encountered reaching some of our own members. First, whenever you move don't forget to let us know your new address; we can't reach you if we can't find you. Also, several members use a PO box to receive their ETVC mailing. This causes no problem unless the name you ask us to use in your mailing address is not also known by your post office. In this case the post office is very arbitrary in its delivery; sometimes you're lucky and mail is delivered to your PO box, but more often it's returned to us. This is doubly frustrating because you are deprived of your mail, and we have no way to let you know this is happening. It's all right to use an alternate name if you give both names to your post office; or ask if they will accept all mail addressed to your box; but please don't use a mailing name of Mary if your post office only knows you as Joe.

There are several exciting ETVC efforts to get involved in. Let our committee chairs know your areas of interest; I know they will be glad to hear from you. Please contact me at [redacted] or write to Sandra at the ETVC address about your interest in any ETVC outreach activities. I welcome your response; we need your help.

Thoughts and Advice on Transitioning

By Jennifer Alexander

On April 13, ETVC hosted a Big Sister panel discussion which included three male to female transsexuals. I was one of the panelists. The speakers included one girl who had been living full-time for quite a while, another that was about two years into her transition and myself, who had just finished her first year.

The purpose was to share information about our experiences and some of the things that other individuals in our situations may encounter — and hopefully to give advice about what someone entering transition can expect. The discussions centered on our transition into the work place and also blending into society as a woman. The other panelists gave excellent advice and had wonderful comments. Because I am terrible at repeating exactly what others say, I'll keep this focused on my own experiences. Here are some thoughts on the reality of what may confront you if you are considering this wonderful step in life. Transitioning is not easy. It takes a lot of work. It is kind of like a kid learning to walk. They fall down a lot. But after awhile, they learn to take a few steps and then, before you know it, they are running. That is kind of how I felt and how my life is going. There is a lot to learn.

I really wanted to just blend into society as a woman and had to learn a total package of new behaviors to help me in my transition: how to dress appropriately, feminine deportment, how to wear my hair, change my voice, and cope with facial surgery, hormone and other types of therapy, and many other little details.

For me, obtaining a job as a woman was my graduation and it really helped me to more smoothly transition into my new world. It contributed greatly to my self-esteem.

I personally interviewed and got hired as a woman. It was difficult but possible. I wanted to be known as Jennifer the woman, not Jennifer the transsexual. This took a lot of work. I did fall down a lot but now things are much easier. There are a couple of things I did that really helped.

First, I had several genetic female acquaintances who not only were my friends but also great coaches. They worked with me on what to wear, voice tips and just how to act as a woman. Their shared experience and help was and still is invaluable. Next, I had a lot of transsexual friends who had already walked the path I was going down. This provided me with a tremendous foundation of support, help and encouragement. Then, there was my own determination.

And guess what — it worked!

I now have blended so well into society as a woman it is just incredibly hard to believe. So, from my view, finding some genetic girl friends, having a close support group of others who have successfully transitioned and staying committed despite setbacks are what helped me to get to this point in my life. It was hard and I still make mistakes and fall down, but I get right back up and continue to walk into a world where I have never been happier in my life.

Hey! What's So Funny About A Guy In A Dress?

Veronica Smith

Erin Souza, Ralph Judd, Tiffany Woods and a small crowd showed up on Wednesday, March 19 at Kimo's for an Education Seminar on transgenderism and humor.

Ralph Judd started off the evening with a brief history of MTF theatrical transvestism. Since women originally were not allowed to act, young men played all comic and tragic females. When the prohibition against actresses was finally lifted, men continued to play women, but were usually restricted to comedy. However, from the 1870s to the 1930s, comedic drag performers ranged widely from the slapstick to the glamorous.

A disturbing addition took place since the 1940s: men in drag were increasingly sinister (e.g., Freebie and the Bean, Dressed to Kill, Silence of the Lambs). Only recently have there been films which portray non-villainous, non-comedic men who enjoy dressing up.

Responding to the question of the current opportunities for TG comics, Tiffany thought that, though there were some well-known drag performers like Dame Edna and RuPaul, opportunities were still somewhat limited. But she was confident that good comics would find their audience. And Erin commented that success in life and success on stage are analogous: present yourself well and you are accepted.

Ralph Judd commented that during various migrations into the United States, the previously established ethnic groups made fun of more recent immigrants. Eventually, the newer groups developed a specific humor about their situation as a coping mechanism to the bias against them. That the transgendered were beginning to appreciate their specific humor was healthy, said Dr. Judd, and a sign of growing freedom.

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What's Your Opinion?

As you have read in earlier columns of this issue of the Channel, one of the items discussed by the Executive Committee at our recent Retreat was whether or not we should change the name of our organization to something more definitive than ETVC which would more clearly identify us as a transgender organization.

The Executive Committee thought this would be a good idea for purposes of outreach and general identification and voted to present this to the membership via the newsletter, requesting your input on the subject.

Please drop us a note answering the following questions:

1. Do you favor a name change? Yes _____ No _____
2. If Yes, what new name would you suggest we use?

   New Name _____
3. If No, please explain briefly why not:

   _____

   _____

   _____

Thanks for participating. Please send your answers, suggestions and comments to: ETVC Opinion PO Box 426486 San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

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Your Walk Can Be More Feminine

by Sandra Brewer

On May 22nd, about two dozen of us convened at Kimo's to gain some valuable techniques for expressing our femininity while walking, bending, and sitting. Augusta Moore, our mentor for the evening, has performed in the San Francisco Ballet and as a runway model. She has been a judge at our Cotillions, and it doesn't seem possible it's been eight years since she gave some of us tips on walking at the 1989 IFGE Convention in San Francisco. Just watching her move is a lesson in femininity.

Our members Elaine, Paula, Nancy, Janet, Andrea, and Joan were the first to come forward when Augusta asked for volunteers to demonstrate their walking and gain some tips firsthand. Her first tip was to dress comfortably enough to allow yourself to breathe easily when you walk. An exercise to help you loosen up is to propel yourself by doing the twist with both feet while keeping your posterior extended and your torso upright; this can be exaggerated during practice then made more subtle once it becomes fluid.

Keeping your arms and accessories close to your body, and your knees close together maintains a feminine presence. To maintain stability, your weight should be transferred solidly from the heel to the ball of your foot on each step; pushing up on the heel to raise the hip adds a feminine style. Pulling back the shoulders while allowing the space under the ribs to soften creates a feminine vulnerability. Nearly all movements that reveal a vulnerability suggest femininity.

Carrying your purse at a comfortable height against your body with your hand resting loosely on top of it displays a very natural look. It is a good idea to keep a purse as light as possible, and to change it from side to side to spare your back over a long period of time.

There is no one right way to stoop to pick up an item; but to maintain a feminine appearance during this act you should avoid placing your feet too far apart. A graceful bending of the knees while extending your body and not just your arms is usually very elegant.

Elegant sitting is accomplished by gracefully lowering yourself into your seat, being careful not to let your panties become visible in the process, and gently leaning forward and stretching your torso before rising. Finally, when standing find a comfortable position with your hands close to your body, preferably not on the hips as this extends the elbows. Try different emotional feelings to express your most outward and elegant feminine self.

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Confessions of a Straight Girl

By Andrea Drane

Getting your driver's license in your chosen name which will reflect your true gender is just one of the many exciting and meaningful events in the transition process. It pretty much marks the start of the "real life test" for most of us, and the beginning of an interesting chain of events (but that's another story...) It is also often the first time that we deal with "officialdom" en femme, and that does tend to add its share of anxiety and challenge. With that in mind and on the advice of several of my "big sisters," I made my appointment at the San Francisco DMV. They had assured me that the personnel there "see this kind of thing all the time" and that I wouldn't have any unpleasant experiences. With my completed "standard" change of name form and signed DMV Form DL-328 (Name and Gender Change) in hand, I was ready ... or so I thought.

Friday morning, October 4th. Dressed in my best business woman's suit, I arrived at the DMV well before my scheduled appointment time and found a parking space after only a few circuits of the parking lot. Feeling that I was off to a good start, I made one last check of my appearance and all my paperwork, and proceeded to walk confidently inside and up to the "Appointments only" window. The DMV clerk there was nice enough, but she had apparently never seen a Form DL-328. After puzzling over it for a minute or so, she called the supervisor who looked at the form, looked at me, smiled, then initialed the form and instructed the clerk on how to proceed. The knot of anxiety that had been forming in my stomach slowly subsided as she started entering my information in the DMV computers. Suddenly, another puzzled look came over her face as the other DMV clerks began looking up from their screens, casting questing glances around at their co-workers. , and the supervisors began making their rounds. All the terminals were frozen - nothing was going through.

This is not an omen... This is not an omen... Disaster! Nothing like being thrown unceremoniously into the deep end your first time out. Still, I kept my composure - if I could survive this, then I could survive anything. After an hour of waiting, hoping and nervous glances at the clock, the head supervisor announced that the computers had crashed statewide, would be down for the rest of the day, and would we please all come back on Monday. I was so disappointed - and I had all these celebratory plans for the weekend. Sigh.

Monday morning, October 7th. Dressed in my second best business woman's suit, I arrived at the DMV shortly before the start of business and found a parking space after only a few circuits of the parking lot. Fighting off strong feelings of deja vu, I proceeded to walk inside and up to the "Appointments only" window, clutching my "go to the head of the line" pass from Friday. A different DMV clerk greeted me, and easily understood all of my paperwork - off to another good start. I began to relax as she started typing my information into the DMV computers, until a puzzled look came over her face as the other DMV clerks began looking up from their screens, casting questioning glances around at their co-workers, and the supervisors began making their rounds. All the terminals were frozen - again!

This is not an omen... This is not an omen... Having experienced Friday's debacle, I was more annoyed and dismayed than panicked, and more than a little indignant, too. Fortunately the crash was local and twenty minutes later the DMV computers were back up. Ten minutes after that I had my temporary license and my picture and thumbprint had been taken. I had finally arrived!

My story doesn't quite end there, though. December came along with no sign of my picture license, and my temporary license was about to expire. I inquired at the DMV, was told that my application was "still being processed", and was issued a 60-day extension to my temporary license. It was almost the end of January and six days until my extension was to expire when the coveted envelope from the DMV arrived in my mailbox. A mixture of gleeful anticipation and abject terror filled my mind as I opened the envelope and braced myself to look at my new "mug shot". There is a goddess after all — smiling back at me was truthfully the best picture I had ever taken! I immediately went over to the local Safeway just so I could pay for something - anything - by check. But wouldn't you know - they had installed new check reader machines at each register and no one needed or wanted to see my beautiful new picture license.

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The Uninvited Dilemma

A Question of Gender

by

Kim Elizabeth Stuart

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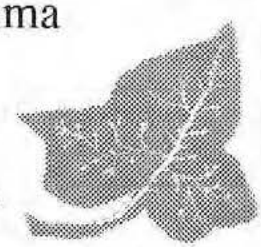

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OTHER VOICES

Other Voices is a newsletter within the ETVC newsletter by and for Significant Others. Send letters and articles to: Other Voices, c/o ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

A Significant Other on the Queen Mary

by Patty Bannon

I decided to go along with my partner to the combined California Dreamin'-California Unity IFGE Convention in Long Beach which took place on the Queen Mary from April 16 to April 20. This was the first national gender convention we had ever attended and I felt very lucky to be able to take part in the Wives and Couples Group meetings that were facilitated by Sandra Cole, PhD.

Dr. Cole has been a gender counselor in the Midwest for over fourteen years, and it was wonderful for me to have the opportunity to listen to her speak on wives and couples issues in the gender community.

Throughout the week my partner and I learned how important loving, respecting and being patient with each other was in a relationship with a cross dresser or for that matter in any relationship. Dr. Cole also emphasized the need for couples to listen to one another and to both hear and act on each other's needs. She was great and very inspiring. I would love to hear her speak again some day.

We also had a lot of fun on the beautiful Queen Mary. We were both happy we went to this Convention and hope we will have a chance to go again in the future.

Should We Go Along?

by Ginny

It was good to read that Patty and Jennifer had a fun and worthwhile excursion to Southern California at the California Unity Gender Convention in Long Beach. These national conventions have become very popular over the years, and for good reasons. First of all, it gives the cross dresser an opportunity to express his femininity by dressing as a woman for an extended period of time. He can put on his nail polish and actually leave it on for a few days, living the fantasy all day and night long. Secondly, there is an opportunity to meet so many other truly lovely people who are cross dressers and share his concerns and his needs to project his true self and help free him from the long years of guilt and repression. This enables him to put all the cards on the table, examine them and maybe even decide what direction he might travel to find his personal happiness.

These conventions really do so much to help get organizations and support groups for transgendered people networking. They are a forum for sharing information, making resource material available and building a stronger community. Best of all, these conventions can be a lot of fun. They often take him to another city where no one will recognize him even if they read him, so he can take advantage of the planned tours of the city, go shopping at one of the malls en femme, or just attend all the sessions in the hotel. It's his choice and all these activities are confidence builders.

These are just a few of many good reasons the cross dresser should consider attending gender conventions. Our question, however, is whether the Significant Other should go with him.

In my opinion, the answer can only be a resounding YES!! Why do I feel so strongly about this? One of the reasons is explained in Patty Bannon's article on this page. Patty found a helping professional at California Unity, Dr. Sandra Cole, who touched her emotionally and reached inwardly to her, enabling her to understand the true basics of any successful relationship — respect, patience, listening to one another and, of course, love. Dr. Cole was able to show Patty how to act on these basic needs in a crossdressing relationship, laying the foundation for this twosome for a positive future together. These are important reminders to help us deal with the realities of our lives. They "jump start" us to apply our new knowledge to the complex issues facing us every day.

Other reasons to go along — you meet incredibly special people and get to know them and their loving partners. You share your feelings openly and honestly in workshop seminars with your peers - other wives and SO's all at different levels in learning to cope with living the transgender lifestyle, all facilitated by gender counselors or wives who are leaders in our community. You discover you are not alone and that with a few adjustments and compromises with your partner, you can make it work.

They usually have tours of the city for those who don't wish to spend the whole time in the hotel. It can be a vacation away from the kids and a time for you to feel pretty and dress up, too. There is usually a benefit of some kind (casino, show, dancing, etc.) one night and a wonderful awards banquet on Saturday night. All lunches and dinners have genuinely interesting speakers and just the camaraderie of enjoying this experience with others and watching other couples interact is worth being there.

Most of all you've made your transgendered partner very proud to have you on his arm. He loves you and he wants to share his opportunity to express his femininity with you. When you go home you can now communicate with him about this

Significant Other Support Group invites all Significant Others to attend our meetings. Group members define Significant Others as wives, lovers, friends, children and others close to TV/TS persons who are themselves not TV/TS. We encourage you to ask the SO in your own life to attend, particularly if she or he needs support from peers in dealing with feelings about the TV/TS in her or his life. All meetings are kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL to help insure that a safe, supportive environment is created in which all attendees feel secure enough to freely share and talk about their feelings. We are frequently assisted by a helping professional with a specialty in our area of concern. Our next meetings will be on Thursday, July 10th in San Francisco and Thursday, August 14th in Palo Alto. You are welcome with open arms. Call (415) 664-1499 for more information.

adventure and discuss the people you have met and your feelings about them just as you do your neighbors or your friends at church. You now know what is going on at these conventions, what he is doing and who he is talking about because you were there. It creates a special bond, allowing a new flow of understanding and consideration between you.

If you can open up your heart wide enough to just try to accept this special part of him, the warmth of his sheer joy can engulf you and bring back the magic in your lives. This can only happen if you let it happen by breaking down the barriers built by the fear of this unknown "beast." A national convention, where everyone fully understands what your concerns and problems are, is a very good place to begin. I urge you to make it a plane reservation for two next time, have fun, and watch what happens!

Ginny's Tales From the Other Side

Just a quick note to once again "beg" for hostesses for our Significant Other Support Group meetings. We have been depending on three generous ladies, Julie, Wilhelmina and Elaine for a couple of years now and it would seem it might be time for someone else to step forward and offer some relief. It's not difficult to hold a meeting. It 's for one night every three months from 7:30 to 10:00 PM, with a couple of crackers, some cheese and a soft drink to share. The important work is to listen and care and try to help significant others who have just learned of their partner's transgenderism to know what it is about and ways they can deal with this in their relationship. You know what is needed — it was there for you — won't you be there for someone else? Please call me if you will help [redacted].

Also, a last minute reminder. A convention just for you and you alone (he can come along, but he can't cross dress.) Attend the SPICE convention in Southern California (Ontario) on July 16-20. See their ad (The Fifth Annual Spouse's & Partners' International Conference for Education) for information on this page. The ladies who organize this event are loving individuals who I'm sure can help you with your problems. Give it a try — you'll be glad you did.

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On the Road with Debra

by Debra Darling

Hi! ...Me again! I'm told this column is enjoyed by many, and I am glad of that. I hoped that by sharing my adventures *out* in the world, others will follow who in turn may encourage more to join us. They too, will meet many people out "there," reaching-out by doing in a never ending circle of outreach fun.

I've been writing about my travel experiences on the West Coast., and even though Seattle is home, I've met some wonderful people there in the last month so I decided to include them in my article.

I flew home from IFGE as Debra, wearing a tasteful, cream colored skirt suit from Nordstrom's. I met some wonderful people on each plane (I changed planes in Portland) and we talked all the way up the coast. Apparently I was noticed at the airport in. Portland, as a week later while out on the town, after the Prom, wearing a drop dead black strapless satin gown, a couple came up and asked me if it was me they had seen in Portland the Sunday before. It is great to be noticed, and then accepted.

I arrived at home long before dark to a neighborhood populated equally by children and yuppies. My wife was not taken by my choice of attire and had a few words. If this happens to you, remember, your activity is often seen as a threat to the nest! Anyway, she had a point, and we both decided I should seek a way to indulge myself without involving the neighbors. Thus began a wonderful adventure.

I began to explore options for an "in the city closet." I already used my boat on occasion, but living out of a suitcase permanently was not appealing. Then I found the ad – a suite of offices in an industrial building near downtown where the occupants did not need the extra space. I met them, introduced them to Debra, and arranged a rental. It is great. I have my own "office," and they keep an eye on things when I am not around. It has worked so well that another sister has rented the office across the hall.

The owner received a call just after I finished describing what I am and what I do. Asked if the place had a dress code, she answered that they do indeed – "a dress was certainly appropriate." I got to met another tenant, a private eye. His only comment, as he peered over my shoulder, past the towering blond hair, "Gee! You really have a lot of clothes." I told him it takes a lot of dresses to keep a girl happy.

The next day I was speaking at a local college. The owner wanted to meet Debra in that guise as well, so she and her staff were introduced to Misty, the drag queen. Misty's outfit started with fishnets and psychedelic neon blue platform heels with eight inch spikes, a ruffled black and white tuxedo body suit, white lace gloves, and towering pink hair from Hollywood Boulevard.

While in that outfit, I wandered outside to my car. An eighteen wheeler stopped beside me and the driver got out. "Here we go," I thought, but all he wanted was directions. He never batted an eye at me, although he did spend a lot of time staring at my legs.

Now I spend as much time as I can down at my new digs. Just me, the detective, a sister, the landlord and her staff, and thousands of longshoremen and truck drivers. Heaven indeed.

Wilhelmina M. Beins

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On the Town ...*with Darcy Leopard*

In Search of a Venue by Darcy Leopard

The desire for a new social venue has been something commonly expressed by our membership. In response to this, I have started "Venue Search Excursions," where a small group of us visit several potential venues in an evening. These are scheduled on Thursdays, our standard EOM social weeknight, in order to simulate what it would be like when our club would meet there. I am happy to report that our first search excursion was loads of fun, and yielded some promising possibilities.

The first place we visited is called "El Rio" It is located just south of Cesar Chavez Street at Mission. People have expressed hesitancy to me about meeting in the Mission district, but this section felt reasonably safe.

Bree, Brenda (aka Didi Mau), and myself entered the establishment around 8:30 PM. Walking past the bar on our left and the shuffleboard table on our right, we found our current VP Leslie, our reigning Miss ETVC Dale, Lulu and Social Co-Chair Everett-Evette. Leslie had been the first to arrive. She expressed to us how comfortable she felt there even when alone. She hadn't seen the entire facility yet, so I proceeded to give her a tour.

The back of the bar has a cozy section sporting two pool tables and a jukebox. Behind this area is a sunken, outdoor patio, furnished with benches and planter-boxes oriented to create several conversation areas, some of which are canopied by trees. Returning from the patio through another door, there is another separate room with its own small bar. Bands usually play in this space on weekends, but the room was vacant this evening.

Leslie and I returned to the bar to find our friends chatting with the regulars. Brenda, Dale and Bree were talking with a gentleman who was an off-duty bartender. He was going out of his way to welcome us, even buying us drinks! He gave us the name of the owner, and expressed that the back area was available for rental.

I ended up chatting with a friendly woman in a cowboy hat who was tipsy enough to be slurring her speech. She shared with me that she was a lesbian, and expressed frustration that there were not more lesbian venues in the city. I told her of our group's similar predicament, allowing us to relate on this topic.

After spending an hour or so at El Rio, we said good-bye and headed for the next stop on our itinerary, Cat's Grill. It is located at Eighth and Folsom Streets in the South of Market Area. This is a popular spot with the nightclub crowd, and very spacious. The main area has a long, ornate bar, a dimly lit seating area, and a small stage for performances. Behind this area is another room which houses a large dance floor, DJ Booth, another bar, and a raised seating area next to the dance floor.

We started with a drink in the classy front bar, and met the bartender who gave us the club owner's name. Later, we adjourned to the back area to listen to the exceptional sound system and do a little dancing. Looking around, I could easily envision having our meeting functions here in the earlier part of the evening, followed by dancing later on. After Cat's Grill, we cruised over to our final destination for the evening: a Tiki bar called The Lilo Lounge. This is an almost brand new establishment located in the Potrero Hill neighborhood, and it features an adjoining restaurant serving excellent Thai food.

We seated ourselves amongst a couple of tables, and were quickly attended to by a very friendly waitress. We noticed that this venue attracted a slightly dressed-up, cheerful crowd, with a notable percentage of attractive young females. After awhile, one of these females, a pretty young blonde, walked towards us tentatively and introduced herself.

"I've been trying to work up my courage to come over and speak with you ladies," she began. "You all look so nice. I just had to meet you!" Of course we welcomed her with broad smiles, and proceeded to chat with her about the usual girl-stuff, such as clothes and makeup.

After awhile, another young woman, this time an attractive brunette, came up to visit. She evidently was obsessed with Dale's wig, and ended up socializing with Dale, Leslie and Lulu for at least an hour.

Brenda, in the meantime, was hitting it off well with two couples seated next to us. Bree and I complimented her social graces for the evening, and then proceeded to tease her that the credit for this partly belonged to us. We had insisted at the onset of the evening that she button-up her blouse at least one notch above her usual choice of the solar plexus level. She had begrudgingly agreed after much badgering, concerned that this represented her decline into selling out.

Later on in the evening, a gorgeous gal wearing a snuggly-looking leopard vest arrived and seated herself in the middle of the room. Of course I had to go up to her and compliment her fashion statement! I proceeded to convince Brenda to create a Mr. Magic style paper rose that I could give her as a present. Then I walked over and presented the rose wrapped in one of my massage business cards, pointing out that her vest, my blouse, and the last name on my card all had something in common. Although this brought a big smile to her face, she still hasn't called about a massage. Oh well, a girl can dream, can't she?

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Love is enfolding, let us waltz to its rhyme.
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By Andrea Drane, Winter 1997

March 1997, "Mad Hatter's Social." Valerie, Toni, Lulu, Dale, and Suzie.

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