

Renaissance News



Volume 6, No. 8

Vision - Integrity - Quality

August, 1992

IFGE selects Center City site for 1993 'Coming Together' confab

The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) has announced that the final negotiations have been completed with the Hilton Hotel and Towers (formerly the Philadelphia Hershey) at Broad and Locust in Center City as the site the 1993 IFGE "Coming Together" annual convention. The entire Renaissance organization is the host for the convention.

According to Alison Laing, IFGE host organization coordinator, the convention is scheduled for the week of March 14, 1993, with the major programs beginning on Wednesday, March 17, and continu-

ing until Sunday, March 21.

This convention attracts members of the transgendered community as well as professionals in the field from all over North America. The attendance is expected to approach 250. Programs are presented in different "tracks" for crossdressers, male-to-female transsexuals, female-to-male transsexuals, spouses of crossdressers, and professionals. Prominent personalities in the community and in related areas are featured as luncheon and session speakers.

As the host organization, the Renaissance chapters as well as the

national organization, will be called upon to assist in many ways. One of the major tasks is assuring an interesting and pleasant program of social events. A committee is already in place and working on this. The members include Emily Sheldon, JoAnn White, Susan Crane, Maryann and Evelyn Kirkland, JoAnn Roberts, and Alison Laing.

If you want to become involved in the planning of this ambitious project, contact any of the committee members or call the Renaissance office at (215) 630-1437.

After pleading guilty

DeVeareaux sentenced to life in prison

Shawn DeVeareaux, a well-known local female impersonator, has been sentenced to life in prison for the January hammer slaying of his Center City roommate Frank Griffin.

Following a hearing on June 29, during which DeVeareaux, 25, pleaded guilty to a general charge of murder, Common Pleas Court Judge Carolyn Termin sentenced him to a mandatory life term. Assistant District Attorney Evan Silverstein said that Pennsylvania does not allow the parole for murderers, but that DeVeareaux could apply to have his sentence commuted in 15 to 20 years, although it would be unlikely that the request would be granted.

When DeVeareaux, whose real name is Jonathan Brown, was arrested for Griffin's murder, he told

police he killed Griffin with 16 hammer blows to the head because the 42-year-old man had ordered him to move out of the apartment they shared on the 1200 block of Walnut

Street. But at the hearing, DeVeareaux testified that Griffin had kept him locked in the apartment and demanded sex. He said he killed

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Signing services needed

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter is seeking someone who will provide sign interpretation of its programs for hearing impaired members. The chapter has one member who attends regularly and who reads lips well on a one-to-one basis. But, she misses a lot during program presentations, especially when discussions take place.

This member believes that if a signer was available, many more

hearing impaired members of the community would cherish the opportunity to hear the programs. This service would be unique in this area.

If you know of anyone who might be able to assist in this important area, please contact Michelle Lynn, the Greater Philadelphia Chapter Leader, or call the Renaissance office at (215) 630-1437.

Announcements...

Background Papers...

are available for \$1 each plus \$.25 postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-*Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing*, 2-*Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing*, 3-*PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others*, 4-*The Matter of Children*, 5-*An Annotated Bibliography*, 6-*Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View*, 7-*Understanding Transsexualism*, and 8-*AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics*.

Pen Pal Project

If you are willing to write letters to pen pals, please inform Maryann Kirkland or write to the main office, c/o Dept. PP.

Prisoner Project

A gift of only \$8 gives a transgendered inmate 12 issues of the *Renaissance News*. Please help provide this needed support to our sisters in prison.

Our chapters...

Greater Philadelphia

Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, Pa. Meetings start at 8:00 p.m. year round. For information, call (215) 630-1437, or write Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Michelle Lynn, chapter leader.

Lower Susquehanna Valley

Meets the first Saturday of the month at The Greens at Westgate in York. Call (717) 780-1LSV for latest information, or write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Brenda Davidson, chapter leader.

South Jersey

Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc., 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 641-3782, or write Renaissance SJ, c/o Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Kara Foreward, chapter leader.

Our affiliates...

Groups wishing to become a Renaissance affiliate must pay a small annual fee for services normally afforded to chapters for free. Affiliates have no legal connection to Renaissance and remain autonomous. Services include unlimited access to reference publications and newsletter copy.

Write for details to Alison Laing, Co-Director of Outreach, Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

Our affiliated organizations are:

- **Monmouth/Ocean Group**, Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701
- **AEGIS**, Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033 (404) 939-0244

Events to note...

August

1st South Jersey Chapter meeting:
Electrolysis with Barbara Susinno, R.N., C.P.E.

1st Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting in York at The Greens at Westgate. Bring a videotape for deportment advice.

15th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting: vendors' night

September

5th South Jersey Chapter meeting:
Group rap on relationships led by Frances Bilker (rescheduled)

5th Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting in York at The Greens at Westgate

19th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting: Diane Berger — Developing Feminine Style

October

3rd South Jersey Chapter meeting

3rd Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting in York at The Greens at Westgate

17th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting: Universal Spirit

Renaissance News

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the gender community and the general public.

U.S. Supreme Court OKs hate speech; ruling may affect hate-crime laws

by Paul Hanson

June may prove to have been a good month for those who would commit hate crimes against minorities. On the 22nd of that month, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a St. Paul, Minn. ordinance that prohibited hate messages. One day later, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned that state's hate-crime law. The law required stiffer penalties for people convicted of crimes motivated by hatred of the victims' sexual orientation, disability, race, national origin, or religion.

The rulings cast doubt on the future of hate-crime legislation now in effect in several states or pending before several more state legislatures, raising the question that a proposed amendment to the Pennsylvania statute protecting sexual minorities may be rendered moot.

"The hate crimes statute violates the First Amendment directly by punishing what the Legislature has deemed to be offensive thought, and violates the First Amendment indirectly by chilling free speech," the Wisconsin high court said in a 5-2 decision. The court rejected the argument that the law punished only conduct — the selection of crime victims for racial or other reasons.

However, the St. Paul ordinance was directed solely at the display of hateful symbols, objects, or writings designed to "arouse anger, alarm, or resentment in others on the basis of race, color, creed, or gender." But all U.S. Supreme Court justices said that the law was unconstitutional because it silenced speech based on content in violation of the First Amendment.

But the court split 5-4 on whether such a prohibition could be written into law. Five justices said that hate-speech laws would always violate the First Amendment; four justices said the St. Paul ordinance was flawed because it was excessively

broad.

Legal observers drew divergent opinions from the Supreme Court ruling. Some, such as Loren Seigel of the American Civil Liberties Union in New York, said the ruling threatens hate-crime legislation across the nation.

"It is going to take a lot of litigation in order to sort things out," she said. Any of the laws being passed by state legislatures that treat crimes motivated by racial, ethnic, religious, or gender bias in a special way are now vulnerable to constitutional attack because of this decision."

However, others disagree. These include Steven Freeman, legal director of the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, which has helped draft many hate-crime laws.

"The Anti-Defamation League does not read this case as invalidating all hate-crime laws nationwide," he said. The St. Paul ordinance was drafted in a very precise way and almost everyone agreed it was flawed."

So what of House Bill 1353, the amendment proposed to the Pennsylvania hate-crime law that would protect those who become crime victims because of their "actual or perceived sexual orientation?"

"I think that's its unlikely that any hate-crime law like Pennsylvania's will be found unconstitutional," the amendment's sponsor, State Rep. Babbette Josephs (D-Phila.), told the *Renaissance News*. "I don't see the U.S. Supreme Court or the state supreme court following the Wisconsin decision" and striking down laws that address activity that is already criminal such as assaults.

"The only time our law mentions speech is when the speech is used to establish intent," she said.

"My bill is necessary because our

current law allows people to be beaten, battered, or harassed based on their sexual orientation, or their perceived orientation," she said. "We cannot continue to have laws on the books that say most hate crimes are punishable but hate crimes carried out because someone is homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual are acceptable."

"If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered and you are assaulted because of this, you are covered," Josephs added.

The amendment has passed the House Judiciary Committee. Josephs said the last-minute "budget frenzy" kept it from going to the House floor for a vote before the session recessed on June 30.

What is the prognosis for passage after the House reconvenes the middle of next month? "That's hard for me to say because the advocates have been doing the vote counting," Josephs said. "I hope that it will pass, but it is very difficult to get anything progressive passed in Pennsylvania."

The weeks before the House reconvenes are "absolutely, vitally important" for lobbying in support of the amendment, Josephs said. Lawmakers are in their home districts, campaigning for reelection, and are listening to their constituents.

She said the amendment may not come to the floor until after the Nov. 3 general election so that skittish lawmakers won't have to worry about backlash from conservative constituents if they vote for the bill. This two month period affords supporters a lot of time to write or call their lawmakers. She also said that now is not too soon to start lobbying state senators.

To participate in organized lobbying efforts, call Josephs' office either in Philadelphia (215) 977-7732 or in Harrisburg (717) 787-8529.

'Earns' her wings

Secret settlement returns transsexual pilot to cockpit

Jessica R. Stearns' two-year battle with Continental Airlines has ended. A secret settlement between the transsexual pilot and the airline will return Stearns to the cockpit as a first officer, the job she held before she had her sex-change surgery, sources said.

When John R. Stearns, a former Air Force pilot who flew 381 missions in Vietnam and received 13 bronze stars and a dozen other medals, told Continental Airline officials that he planned to undergo sexual reassignment surgery, the airline replied that "this elective surgery is incompatible with continued maximum cockpit and flight safety, and the professional and safe image Continental must present to

our customers." The airline also said that Stearns' "underlying psychological problem" was "inconsistent with Continental Airline's obligation to provide safe air travel to the public." Accordingly, Stearns was fired in July of 1990.

However, Continental's view was not shared by others in the aviation field. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) knew of Stearns' plans and approved, as did several psychiatrists. Furthermore, at the time of Stearns' surgery, the FAA Aeromedical Institute had approved 28 post-op transsexuals as pilots, but not all of them had commercial licenses.

This information — along with affidavits from two transsexual

American Airlines pilots who said their company did not consider firing them — was presented on Stearns' behalf to the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights which in March, 1991 ruled that Stearns' discrimination complaint against the airline could go forward.

The agreement between Stearns and Continental is secret and neither side would comment on it. However, sources said that it included reinstatement as a first officer. The source did not disclose any other terms.

Stearns, 51, resides in Princeton Township, N.J. Her former wife and 22-year-old daughter were supportive of her gender reassignment.

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THE **NEWSQUEEN**TM *Paul Hanson*

In the NewsQueen's fast-paced world, news stories often outrace our monthly publication schedule. So it is necessary to update our loyal readers on previously reported items. (Hey, even the *Weekly World News* tells you where Elvis was last seen.)

Remember the scare over silicone gel breast implants? One of the health hazards that prompted the federal Food and Drug Administration to remove them from the market was the fear that women with breast implants had a higher incidence of breast cancer, possibly because the implants made early detection of the cancer more difficult. Now from Canada comes news that women with breast implants may actually have a *reduced* risk of breast cancer.

Researchers working for the Alberta Cancer Board did not claim that the silicone implants protected women from breast cancer, but they reported that among nearly 12,000 women studied who had received implants, only 41 later developed breast cancer. The researchers had expected 86 cancer cases among the women.

Regardless, the FDA ban on silicone gel implants remains in effect except for reconstructive surgery.



Another update from the medical front...

For those of you who may want to astound your friends and amaze your co-workers, here are details on how Filipino Edwin Bayron so convincingly faked the pregnancy that garnered him headlines around the world.

Dr. Clarita Paggao said that Bayron used his knowledge as a nurse and a lot of practice to fool doctors and the Philippine health minister. For one, she said, Bayron invented his medical history; he is not a hermaphrodite. Secondly, he skewed the urine test by substitut-

ing a pregnant women's urine from his own. Thirdly, Paggao said, hormone injections and muscle control may explain how Bayron faked the movements of a fetus inside his enlarged belly. But Paggao was unable to explain the ultrasound test that she administered and which she said confirmed that Bayron's "baby" was a boy.

After the hoax was exposed, Bayron disappeared and has not been heard of since.



Griselda Simba Serengeti isn't likely to fade from the scene after her moment of notoriety — she was named the new Miss Gay Universe in a contest for Filipino female impersonators in San Francisco.

This was a drag show with a difference. Unlike shows in other ethnic communities, the Filipino contests often involve the contestants' families and sometimes the entire community. Observers say that this is partly because drag shows are family entertainment, much like American burlesque theater in the 1920s. Drag is also closely associated with being gay in Filipino culture, so much so that gay men who don't crossdress are prone to be the subject of gossip, and viewed with suspicion because they violate the stereotype.



Here's an update with a happy ending. Sarah Luiz is now a woman. The transsexual who began her transition with the help of Blue Cross, but who seriously contemplated suicide after the health insurance company told her it would not pay for the operation, has had her surgery in Trinidad, Colo.

After Sarah went public with her story in 1989, an anonymous New York businessman offered to pay for her sex change at Mount San Rafael Hospital.

"He said he had seen me on 'Larry King Live' and he couldn't put my

suffering out of his mind," Sarah said. "There were no strings attached. All he wanted was my promise he would stay totally anonymous."



Earlier, we reported on the miniscandal surrounding Lady Colin Campbell, the supposedly transsexual biographer of embattled Princess Diana. The Princess Di story continues to take on transgendered overtones.

NBC has purchased the rights to another Diana biography, and recently *People* magazine proposed the following casting ideas:

- Dame Edna Everage as the Queen Mother.
- Marilyn Qualye as Prince Charles.
- Hockey star Wayne Gretzky as Princess Di.

Sound far-fetched? Just take a look at photos of the proposed players.



Now for some new celebrity dish...

Teen heart throb Luke Perry from the television show *Beverly Hills 90210* reports that the reason he is so desired by women is that he is in touch with his "feminine side." Sounds nice, but we hear Luke hasn't told the entire story. How did he get in touch with his feminine side? He used to live with a drag queen in Los Angeles before he made it big.

Three years ago, while filming a low-budget movie, Perry roomed with a queen who performs in L.A. clubs under the name Eva Destruction. His real name is Alexis Arquette, brother of Roseanna Arquette and grandson of Cliff Arquette (a.k.a. Charlie Weaver).

Alexis is reportedly thinking of suing *The Globe*, the supermarket tabloid that broke the story because it implied that he is laboring in obscurity while his former roommate has made it big. Alexis wants

THE *Paul Hanson*
NEWSQUEEN™

it known that he played a drag queen in the film *Last Exit From Brooklyn* and has a role in an upcoming Fox film *Jumping In the Boneyard*.

♣ ♣ ♣

The Globe may soon learn that hell hath no fury like a drag queen crossed. Officials in Birmingham, Ala. may soon learn the same lesson.

Vice cops in Birmingham are threatening to arrest female impersonators who perform at local bars without a license. An old law requires that "adult entertainers" — strippers, male and female impersonators, and the like — obtain a license from the city. Officer John Mohns said that no arrests have been made so far, but as police department manpower permits, cops will be visiting bars checking out the girls' paperwork.

As word of the threatened enforcement spread through the bars' dressing rooms, the license issuing office at City Hall was thronged with drag queens, catching the bureaucrats by surprise and angering the performers.

"I got the impression that the women there looked down on me," said Birmingham impersonator Libertee Belle. "I've seen more professional attitudes from youngsters at a drive-thru."

♣ ♣ ♣

And speaking of angry, how do you think Marla Maples, Donald Trump's on-again, off-again main squeeze, felt when she discovered that more than 100 pairs of high heeled shoes had disappeared from the closet of her Trump Parc apartment and that her long-time publicist, Chuck Jones, was the culprit?

After she had trouble finding just the right shoes to wear for a night out with "The Donald," Maples installed a hidden video camera outside her bedroom closet. The tape showed Jones sneaking out with pair after pair of heels.

Maples took the tape to police, and when they visited Jones' office to arrest him they found 30 pairs of her shoes along with pornographic magazines, including one called *Spike*.

Police said Jones had "what do you call it, a fetish."

♣ ♣ ♣

Police in Damascus, Md., a Washington, D.C. suburb, did not have to search for a word to describe the man who dressed as a woman several months ago for a quick stop at a local bank. They called him a robber.

The man, who was not apprehended, was waiting as employees entered the Citizens Savings Bank to begin their shifts. He threatened the employees with a semi-automatic pistol and collected an undisclosed amount of cash before escaping.

The employees, all women, said the robber was wearing a dress with a scarf tied around his head and sunglasses covering his eyes. While he had no distinct masculine characteristics, they said they were certain he was a man.

This was not the first cross-dressed bank robbery in Maryland's Montgomery County. In April, a woman, dressed as a man with a moustache drawn in with pencil, held up a bank. She was arrested.

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She may fare better than Michael J. McMahon, a convicted armed robber from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

McMahon was sentenced to a 5 to 30 year term in a state prison for a 1990 robbery. A pre-op female-to-male transsexual, McMahon says that being sent to a male prison would be "unthinkable," and being sent to a woman's prison would be "unbearable." The compromise he proposes? Serving the time in a prison medical center where gender would not be an issue and where he could continue his transition.

♣ ♣ ♣

We have saved what is perhaps the best for last. With all the gloom and doom often surrounding transgendered persons' relation with society, it is indeed refreshing to hear of a positive program where society makes an earnest effort to help transgendered people. Minneapolis has such a program.

The University of Minnesota has received a nearly \$70,000 grant from the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR) to reduce the risk of AIDS infection among Twin Cities transsexuals and transvestites.

Thought to be the first program of its kind in the nation, the program will provide direct educational services to the target audience as well as work with transgendered organizations.

Walter O. Bockting, coordinator of the Gender Dysphoria Program of the university's human sexuality department, said the AmFAR grant was important because transsexuals and transvestites have largely been ignored by other AIDS-risk reduction programs. "This is an invisible and marginalized group," he said. "It's an oppressed group even within the gay community."

Bockting said transsexuals face a higher risk of AIDS because they may turn to prostitution to pay for sex reassignment surgery. Transvestites, he said, face high risk because they often use prostitutes or meet sexual partners through personal ads or computer bulletin boards.

For more information about this AIDS prevention program, call the university's Program in Human Sexuality at (612) 625-1500.

♣ ♣ ♣

The NewsQueen's honor roll this month includes Dee Smith of Phoenix, Md. and Jennifer Ann Michaels of Hanover, Pa. Others wishing to achieve this exalted state need only send timely clippings on transgendered issues to the Renaissance office. Please note the name and date of publication.

The *For Ideas*
FORUM

Use your power; join in the dance

by Mariette Pathy Allen

⇒ *With her camera as well as with her acute sociological observations, Ms. Allen is a noted chronicler of the transgendered community. In this essay — excerpted from her remarks at the June "Be-All" convention in Detroit — she shares some of her experiences over the past three years following the publication of her landmark book Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them. "My struggles, success, and failures are closely connected to yours," she told her audience. "I'd like us to examine the larger picture of where we stand and how we can change our respective visions for the '90s and beyond."*

— PH

It becomes clearer to me all the time that my purpose in working with you is to enlarge the image of the gender community. The culture we live in — which is reflected by the media — wants to minimize the contribution made by those who question gender roles in their hearts and in their lives. Society would prefer to ignore the traps that lie in living as stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. They'd rather see you as sick, immoral, or simply entertaining. You are still objects of fear and hatred to more people than we can imagine.

This brings me to the Geraldo show, my most recent tryst with the media. The Geraldo show is a great example of our culture's pervasive attempts to turn what's potentially challenging into something merely entertaining.

It all started when Merissa Sherrill Lynn and I gave a talk at a psychology class at Pace University in New York. Bill Lancaster, a producer for Geraldo, was also a guest. He liked my slide show and accompanying comments, and asked me to go on the show, show pictures,

talk about the book, and provide some couples. Bill promised me we'd be encountering a kinder, gentler Geraldo, the Geraldo of high-minded social conscience. Although cynicism regarding Geraldo's touted reform prevailed among those I asked, Cynthia and Linda Phillips agreed to come to New York one more time as a favor to me. They even persuaded a young couple — total media virgins — to accompany them from Texas. Bill wanted one more couple. He said that Mary, his sensitive, intelligent assistant had found a local couple. I asked for their names, sure that somebody I knew, if not I, were likely to know them. Somehow, Bill could never come up with their names.

Western cultural traditions are undergoing radical changes. The gender community is in the middle of this seismic change, searching for the essence of masculinity and femininity...

On the morning of the show, I caught sight of a couple decked out in full fantasy drag, larger than life in platform shoes, painted tattoos, black lace, satin tap shorts, glitter, and a crewcut — theatrical night creatures. "Please don't let this be couple number three," I prayed. Then I prayed that couples number one and two wouldn't see them. These were not reasonable prayers. We we got to the dressing room we were introduced to Fuchsia and Martin X.

Thus began a series of negotiations more intricate than anything attempted by the UN. To simplify, but still to give you a little of the flavor of that morning: the Phillips would not appear on the same stage as Fuchsia and Martin. The young

couple from Texas, in wide-eyed shock, were ready to take the next plane home. I asked Bill what he thought they were doing, combining apples and oranges like this. Mary, his assistant, was furious at us. "Shouldn't you all be tolerant of each other?" she snapped. Finally, a compromise was reached. Fuchsia and Martin were interviewed from the front row in the audience. No chairs were broken.

I later learned that Fuchsia and Martin X work at Limelight, one of the livelier discos in New York. Geraldo's people had met them there. Obviously, Bill and Mary knew exactly what they were doing. To me, Fuchsia and Martin X are interesting and colorful characters, but would be more appropriate on a show that presented the variety of people in the gender spectrum.

Obviously, we continue to be fodder for the media, especially television, which has become king in our culture now. However, instead of trying to persuade television to change its skim-the-surface superficiality, we attempt to re-make ourselves to fit into its sound and light bites. Could Washington or Lincoln become president now? We must make the media safe for thinkers.

I think its absolutely imperative for the gender community and those who understand its importance to keep this larger perspective in mind whenever we appear in public. The inability to take this movement seriously invites contempt, and ultimately, self-hatred.

"But," you ask, "what about the newcomer, or the fetishist?" They're not crusaders."

Actually, fetishism is the doorway to initiation, the ritual of self-discovery that opens up the world of gender questioning. That's the beginning. But do you want to stay in

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The *For Ideas*
FORUM

Renaissance is YOU!

A message from the Managing Director

by Angela Gardner

Renaissance is you. Sure, this is a cliché, but so often in this life we find that clichés have some truth. In this case the truth is this: if you are reading this newsletter, then you have an interest in the transgendered community. At one time you called or wrote Renaissance for information about the community. You received a three-month trial subscription, and then, perhaps, you signed up for a year's membership. In that way, you connected with the community and became part of it. This newsletter was your link.

Renaissance is a national organization with a national board of di-

rectors as well as a group of local groups, each with their own leadership. The national organization's primary mission is to guide the entire organization along a course true to the founding precepts of Renaissance. But our principal product is this newsletter, your initial — and perhaps only — link to the transgendered community.

Many good and talented people volunteer their time, ability, and in some cases money every month to put these pages into your hands. No one is paid to write articles, sell ads, edit the pages, deliver the pages to the printer, pick up the hundreds of copies, stuff them into envelopes, print mailing labels, and deliver the

bags of mail to the post office. It's all done by volunteers; people who found Renaissance while in search of their true selves; people who want to give something to those who are still searching.

Of course, the national organization engages in other activities as well. We are building a library and archives of transvestite and transsexual books and information. This costs money. We regularly provide speakers to many local colleges and universities. Some pay expenses, but most do not. Our speakers donate their time and money to make these educational expeditions and we try to provide reimbursement

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The For Ideas
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In praise of Texas hospitality

To the Editor:

In JoAnn Roberts' "Iconoclast" column (RN, May, '92), I was quoted as calling the hospitality suite at the Texas "T" Party the "hostility suite." the context of this quote was a criticism of the "T" Party's past and future rules and regulations. I feel I must clarify my original statement because of the implication that I felt hostility emanating from the "T" Party committee.

I felt no such hostility.

I used the term "hostility suite" because Linda Phillips used the term throughout the event, and I thought it was cute and humorous. My report of the "T" Party (a first-person, "vanity press" selective account, including what I wore there) contained the following summation of the "T" Party:

"Actually, everyone I met was special, and I don't have a negative thing to say about anyone or any of the 'segments' of the "T" Party. Except for not introducing Miss ETVC at Saturday's banquet — it was a fun social."

"A fun social." In other words, I had a good time. The "complaint" that I was not introduced was a tongue in cheek reference to the lack of recognition of my self-importance by other people. I wonder if anyone heard me laughing over that bit of sardonic irony?

I appreciated the difficult task of dealing with 350 people, as Linda and the rest of the staff had to do. And I appreciate Linda's sense of humor which seems to get "lost" at times, not only at the "T" Party but also in her other endeavors. Linda

and Cynthia are both special people with a long and visible involvement in "Genderland." This means they will occasionally take a hit from time to time, but not from me as regards hostility.

I believe the issue of limiting attendance at the "T" Party has more to do with the logistics of what to do with and for more than 300 "gender explorers." Just registering that many people requires a staff level beyond most other group's resources. Add to that the daily questions and the desire to present programming appropriate to the attendees, and all of a sudden you are in over your head. Since the "T" does attract a large contingent of couples, and the staff is limited in what they can do, it's not hard to imagine the logic of

(continued on page 12)

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The *For Ideas*
FORUM

Help Wanted:

Established groups called on to aid global outreach efforts

by Phaedra Kelly

Several transgendered groups around have in the past provided useful information that the International Gender Transient Affinity (IGTA) has used in its global outreach program. We need this help from...

IFGE...

An impressively large stack of the listings was sent by Executive Director Merissa Sheryl Lynn some time ago, and we were most appreciative. But I've asked four times for a restock of the current issue and our old stock is almost gone. I've now done five different missions abroad and two major missions are to come. The IFGE lists are handed out on each mission and are sent with advance contacts and follow-up mailing.

Also, we have asked IFGE to update the listing several times, but there has been no reaction to date. IGTA *only* deals with front-line causes. There are now three confirmed groups in the Islamic countries of Turkey and Pakistan. Our work in the Netherlands in late April introduced four Dutch groups hitherto unlisted. In addition, there is a new group in Scotland and another in Ireland. With our visit to Russia and Latvia, groups there are closer to requesting their own listing.

It would help if IFGE would publish a simple form, phrased in normal language (i.e. without initials and coded designations) for use abroad and accompanied by a post-paid, addressed envelope. This would help these groups request their own listings.

It would also help if addresses for

U.S. groups spelled out the full name of their state as well as the designation "U.S.A." If you are serious about the global village theme, then become serious about letting the world know where you are.

RENAISSANCE...

You provided us with information leaflets; these too have been used up. The ones concerning advice on children and families, explaining transvestism, and how to form a group would be very helpful on our Russian mission. I have been told the latter item is to be phased out, but it is a very serviceable item for IGTA. We have been at pains to encourage its use and adoption, asking Islamic groups particularly to write their own version based on Third World experiences and needs. Please reissue this.

ETVC...

A long time ago you sent us a world directory. What has become of it? We have provided information to update the listings but have never had a reply. That booklet, you will appreciate, would be much easier to carry in a suitcase or in my mission shoulderbag than the bulky IFGE listings. If any group has this compact but complete and up to date publication, we could do with a bulk amount.

GROUPS IN AUSTRALIA...

They have remained totally silent and unhelpful in this world project to date. The Elaine Barrie Project, which some three years ago accorded me an "honorary life membership" has not even sent its news-

letter since then, a newsletter called *International Nuscene*. Three years is a very long time to have ignored the needs of a world community now emerging from every corner of the globe. Certainly, their response is worse than even IFGE's to date.

GROUPS EVERYWHERE...

We need advice booklets, information and leaflets in bulk to distribute abroad. These items will be carried to new groups and hitherto unknown communities. This will help them and gain you their appreciation. Regrettably, we can't offer payment or even help with postage.

A contact is especially needed in Japan. The language barrier is understood to be one reason for the silence from groups there. Perhaps they could designate a permanent overseas coordinator (as the South African Phoenix Society did several years ago with very good effect) as well as establish one reliable address, we could discover what they are doing and help open up Asia. Does anyone know of groups in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia?

IGTA is and has been reaching out to unexpected, hitherto forgotten, and abandoned areas of the world and finding people there who are helping themselves regardless of their isolation — or perhaps because of it. But when one finds several groups in a free and open Holland that no one knew of before our recent visit, one must wonder how much of this free world is involved in group liaison. IGTA will continue with Third World and front line cases. So will you please surface the rest of your iceberg?

Use your power; join in the dance

(continued from page 7)
the doorway?

When you allow yourself to walk through that doorway, you realize that what you're doing is living an experiment. Right now, Western cultural traditions are undergoing radical changes. The gender community is in the middle of this seismic change, searching for the essence of masculinity and femininity and combining them. We must keep asking ourselves: "What is the meaning of what we're doing for the culture at large?" surely our mission is not just to try to accommodate ourselves, to fit in, to apologize for being unusual, to smell like victims. Rather, I think, we must become leaders in this changing society, spiritual, artistic, intelligent sages, people who are not afraid to see more and know more.

The seriousness of our mission needs playfulness. In fact, some of the best experimentation and learning comes from playing. On the dance floor, there is the experiment of finding a new self to move in, or move with. Self-expression goes beyond just recreating an aesthetic

form, following the "how-toness" of prescribed positions. There's also interpersonal play: reaching out, moving with others, creating new combinations, mixing it all up. Finally, there's an overview of the whole floor, a moral vision, the sense of community moving together. This is playing at its best; creating new visions. Dancing serves to remind us of our body: the source of pain, pleasure, and questioning, especially for the gender community.

Besides dancing, the ways you express affection is another innovation. You go beyond the stereotypes associated with your anatomy to express love and affection in hugging, crying together, holding hands, gestures of admiration, and gentle adjustments of clothing. You express love without being lovers. Don't you realize how special you are, my friends, and what you have to offer society?

Finally, you've invented these conventions. They're like islands out of time. You must keep experimenting with what works for growth; work to strengthen your inventiveness; and prepare to lead society in

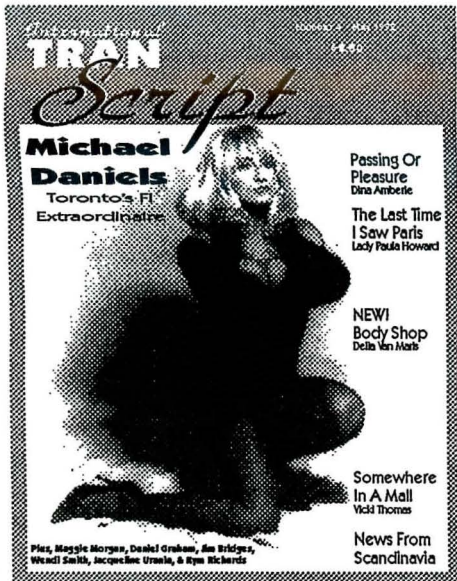
new spiritual directions. You can become the modern-day Berdaches, artists, teachers, gender gurus!

One way to keep the experimentation fresh: associate more with the arts and artists. Art is about revelations. It allows us to move from formulae to invention. Another is to keep observing our cultural icons. What does Madonna say about our society? President Bush? Can we reinterpret them back to society in a new way?

Once we have clear and powerful images of ourselves, and of the gender community as a whole, maybe we'll be able to empower the media with a new vision of ourselves, and ultimately, of themselves, as definers of the world.

Come, let us dance together.

⇒ This essay may be reprinted in its entirety by other transgender community publications without prior permission from the author or from Renaissance. For a complete copy of Ms. Allen's speech, write her at 100 Riverside Dr., Apt AB, New York, NY 10024



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Texas hospitality

(continued from page 9)

limiting the "T" to couples only.

I believe this points to an even bigger issue: that of presenting programs for diverse interests. Who, for example, is going to put together activities, seminars, and events for non-couples? For non-transsexuals? For non-whites?

This problem of limited diversity has existed at all the regional and national events I have attended. My observation is that the organizations, publications, and events are oriented toward and dominated by white, "heterosexual" males (WHMs) whether they are crossdressers/transvestites or transsexuals. This a case of simplification. The real diversity in Genderland is excluded by the nature of the "filter" that sees crossdressers, transvestites, and transsexuals as WHMs; that sees significant others as non-crossdressing white heterosexual females; that requires the addition of "female" to its non-male description of other cross-gendering people, i.e. female-to-male, male-to-female); and finally the filter that filters out homosexuals, erotic fetishists, genderbenders, people of color, etc. What emerges is something I've heard called "the purity of crossdressing:" emulation of an idealized femininity by and for WHMs, which could be described as another example of patriarchal control, a filter that is

being exposed, but not by WHMs.

I feel that the WHM element, if it is to grow, must actively engage others to participate in the groups, publications, and events. Otherwise, the "community," as it is sometimes called, will just be another good ol' boys' club."

Furthermore, the programming at these events needs to have more diversity, such as crossdressing as an aspect of masculinity (for males) and as an aspect of femininity) for females); as an aspect of eroticism,

Renaissance is YOU!

(continued from page 8)

when we can. We also provide guests for local and national television programs. The major shows, like Donahue and Sally Jesse Raphael, pay all expenses, but local shows don't. Again, we try to provide reimbursement to our members who participate in these activities.

These costs, plus the newsletter costs for professional printing and proofreading (necessary to produce a quality publication), plus postage, are paid for from your subscription money. When you join a local chapter, the national organization receives only \$16, primarily top pay for your newsletter subscription. The remainder of the annual dues stays with the local chapter to pay for their meetings, programs, and special events. So, like many people

role-playing, sexual expression, and transculturalism; and as a deconstruction of the binarism of gender. A reduction on the emphasis on transsexualism is in order. Hormones, voice, and body changes are dealt with so extensively and thoroughly that they have become the ideal for far too many gender explorers who are not being shown other paths to "gender euphoria." They are, in fact, being shown how to swap one rigid sex/gender classification for another as an affirmative course even though their motivation may be the rejection of ex-

(continued on page 13)

in this country, the national organization is on a fixed income. A local chapter can run a 50/50 drawing or put up a box for donations.

This message is our national donation box. If you have a few extra dollars and you would like to help us continue to produce one of the best, most consistent, and informative transgendered newsletters in the country, please send a check or money order to the King of Prussia post office box. And when you send your donation, drop us a line and let us know how we're doing. If there is something else we can do to help more people find themselves, we would like to know that too.

Time for another cliché, but, I trust, an apt one: "Thank you for your support!"

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You can help others find answers

The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) and photographer/author Mariette Pathy Allen are cooperating on a project that will provide information on crossdressing to communities across the nation.

For a fee of \$15, plus \$2.50 for postage, IFGE and Allen will send a copy of her book, *Transformations: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them*, to any legitimate public library or learning institution specified by the donor. The books may be given anonymously or dedicated to

the donor or to another individual.

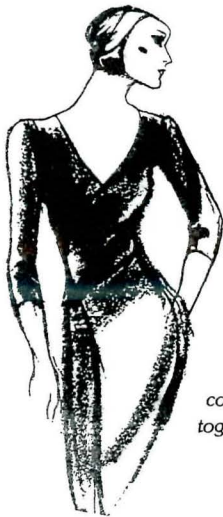
The library project has its roots in the search for information that every transgendered person experienced. Even now, few libraries carry information on the subject, and when they do, such books are often unsympathetic to the phenomenon or fail to discuss it in personal terms. This project, as the promotional material from IFGE states, will "help someone learn more easily what we learned so hard."

The book is also invaluable to spouses', family members', and

friends' understanding of crossdressing.

People wishing to donate *Transformations* to legitimate public or institutional library or libraries of their choice should send \$17.50 for each copy to IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778. A six percent service charge is applied to Mastercard and VISA purchases. Provide the name and address of the libraries you wish to have books sent to and any dedication you may desire.

Individuals may also order copies of *Transformations* for their personal use at \$27.45 per copy postpaid.



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DeVeareaux

(continued from page 1)

Griffin while trying to get free.

A general murder charge in Pennsylvania is equivalent to first degree murder. Courtroom observers note that while DeVeareaux had changed his story at least two times, there was no indication that the slaying was premeditated. They doubt the efficacy of the defense provided by DeVeareaux's court-appointed attorney.

DeVeareaux continues to be held in Graterford prison, but will probably be transferred to another prison before the end of the summer.

Hospitality

(continued from page 12)

pected gender attributes and not biology.

That wasn't too hostile, was it?

By the way, I really like RN; I believe is the best of the monthly newsletters.

— Billie Jean Jones
Sacramento, Calif.

⇒ Ms. Jones, we hasten to add, holds the title of Miss ETVC for 1992 and also publishes GenderFlex (formerly TVGuise which is available at \$2 per copy at 3430 Balmoral Dr, #10, Sacramento, CA 95821.

THE **ICONOCLAST**TM
JoAnn Roberts

WAYLAND, MASS. - The Congress saga continues...

The executive director of the **International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)**, **Merissa Sherrill Lynn**, has kept the issue of the **Congress of Reps** her number one priority. She has prepared not one but three different Congress proposals since the April IFGE convention. Each more complex and complicated than the last.

Lynn finally managed to convince the Executive Committee of the board to formally ask the Congress for a series of documents, among them, "purpose and goals," "internal structure," and "the internal operating procedures of the Congress of Representatives." This last is a good example of Lynn's disdain for the Congress and all it represents. How so, you might ask. Well, after six years of existence, IFGE cannot provide the same documentation it is requesting from the Congress in 90 days.

Meanwhile, Lynn continues to twist the truth about what really happened at the April board meeting. In a letter to all the reps, she says, "The IFGE board fail[ed] to adopt a policy concerning its relationship with the Congress..." In actuality, nothing could be farther from the truth. No such policy was ever presented to the board for consideration. Anyone who disputes that is welcomed to inspect the official, unedited minutes of the board.

Lynn seems to be counting on her stature as a "sacred cow" to keep the criticism at bay. If she keeps this up, she'll have to buy a copy of *What Color Is Your Parachute* soon.

Meanwhile, did anyone else noticed that Lynn changed the spelling of her first name? I mean, she is the editor-in-chief of the *TV-TS Tapestry*, isn't she? And, wouldn't you expect the editor-in-chief to

make sure her name was spelled correctly in her own magazine?

Well, for not just one but for the last two issues of *Tapestry*, Lynn's name has been misspelled prominently in the table of contents. I guess she was too busy creating congressional proposals to notice.

In addition, the design of the magazine has taken a turn for the ugly. If anything, it's harder to read now than it ever was.

ATLANTA, GA. - On to more, ah, comforting topics...

The schedule of events for **Southern Comfort** (Sept. 30 — Oct. 4) looks great, with a little something for everyone. The crew putting on this event has worked hard to achieve a balanced and interesting program. Here's a peak:

- *Real Women Don't* - a discussion of the techniques of physical demeanor and issues of "passing."
- *The Transgender Alternative* - perspectives on cultivating gender diversity and gender liberation.
- *Cosmetic Surgery* - see yourself "after" surgery through the use of a computer imaging system.

Anyone interested in the complete program can write to Southern Comfort 92, P.O. Box 33311, Decatur, GA 30033.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. - Mea culpa, mea culpa...

In the May issue of this column I misquoted **Billie Jean Jones**, the reigning Miss ETVC, as calling the Hospitality Suite at the **Texas "T" Party** the "Hostility" Suite.

Jones sent me a letter clarifying the remark:

"I feel I must clarify my original statement because the implication is that I felt hostility emanating from the staff of the 'T' Party..."

"I felt no such hostility. "I used the term 'Hostility Suite' because **Linda Phillips** used that term... I thought it was cute and

humorous."

I take the rap for misinterpreting Jones' remarks and owe an apology to Phillips and the "T" committee. I am sorry. (Betcha thought you'd never hear that, didja?)

The complete text of her letter appears on page nine of this issue.

SAN ANTONIO, TEX. - Speaking of the "T" Party...

The July issue of *Gender Euphoria* has an article, more a harangue, by **Mary Frances (Muffy) Williams** concerning the events leading up to the decision to make the '93 **Texas "T" Party** a "Tea for Two" couples oriented event. Williams is one of the originators of the "T" and a co-founder of the **Boulton & Park Society**, the organization that sponsors the event.

Williams rants about the anti-social behavior that has plagued past "T" Parties, i.e., the "bearded lady," and various "cross-dressed sluts from hell." These are serious problems to be sure, but what I find interesting is that no other event in the country seems to have them, a point that Williams fails to take into account. If other events don't have the problem, then it would seem that there is something inherent in the atmosphere of *this* event that allows the problems to happen.

On another note, *GE* editor, **Tere Frederickson** wrote a cute little "puff" piece on building community by eliminating the factionalization in our community.

"Every time we turn around here are new factions cropping up in the 'politics' of the gender-transposed. Factionalization breaks the bonds of community and we often work at odds with each other, with the result that progress is limited at best or regressive at worst. IFGE was created to be the organization coalescing the community, providing for a common community and

THE **ICONOCLAST** TM
JoAnn Roberts

achieving that elusive synergism. It is still working toward that goal, but unfortunately often mired in the 'politics of personality.'... I too issue this ... challenge to our community to learn to work together and establish a common plan to pursue our goals, most effectively using available resources, and avoiding the pitfalls of discord caused by personal interests."

That's a great sentiment and I am all for an inclusive philosophy. But I have some trouble accepting the sincerity of the writer when that same person is responsible for some of the factionalization caused by exclusionary rules. Her actions speak louder than her words.

▼▲▼

HARRISBURG, PA. - Now hear this...

I was really sorry to hear that the Luau that had become a perennial event at the **Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Renaissance** has been canceled for this year. Brenda Davidson, chapter leader and the Luau's impresario, regrets that she is too tightly scheduled this summer to undertake the event. She hopes it will return next year.

While on the subject of Renaissance, has anyone noticed **Beth Marshall** hauling around a load of books to chapter meetings lately? That's the **Renaissance National Traveling Bookstore** which offers quality publications at reasonable prices. All proceeds go to the national organization.

The bookstore offers such fare as the *TV-TS Tapestry*, *International TranScript*, *Hormones* by Dr. Sheila Kirk, and many, many others.

▼▲▼

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. - Make a statement, plant a tree...

Donations are being accepted for the **AIDS Memorial Grove** in Golden Gate Park in the names of **Doris Fish** and "Tippi." Both Fish and "Tippi," members of the infamous SF troupe **Sluts a-Go-**

Go, died last year.

With a donation over \$10.00 you will receive a copy of *LadyLike #13* with a pictorial *Tribute to "Tippi"* or *International TranScript #3* featuring the Sluts. It was "Tippi's" wish that a tree be planted and **Bob Davis**, "Tippi's" partner at the time of her death, is honoring that wish.

Send all donations to Bob Davis at 2731 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

While we're here in the City by the Bay, I'd like to congratulate ETVC member **Ginny Knuth** on her award as ETVC Member of the Year. But much more significantly, the award has been renamed the *Ginny Knuth Member of the Year Award* in recognition for all the service and effort that Ginny has put forth on behalf of ETVC.

For those of you who don't know her, Knuth is a GG and her partner is ETVC treasurer **Nancy Ann Martine**. Way to go, Ginny!

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RED BANK, N.J. - New network in process...

A new group for couples where both partners are comfortable and supportive with the crossdressing aspects of the relationship is forming for the purpose of socializing in a non-sexual atmosphere.

Interested parties should contact the **East Coast Couples Network (ECCN)**, c/o MOTG, P.O. Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701.

▼▲▼

HOUSTON, TEX. - Stop! you're hanging the wrong woman...

I've been meaning to mention this and now I see that she's getting more active in her own group so I better do it now.

There is another **Joanne Roberts** who happens to be a member of the **Gulf Coast Transgender Community** and I had the pleasure of meeting her at the IFGE convention in April. Since I arrived a little late, she told me that people

had been coming up to her and saying things like, "So, you're JoAnn Roberts!" Fortunately, no one wanted her (my) head.

I've also been told there is yet a third JoAnn in Nevada somewhere. Gee, maybe we can have our own convention. Naw, then someone would want to tell us how to run it.

▼▲▼

HADLEY, MASS. - New group in forming stages...

According to a story in the *Outreach News* of the **Connecticut Outreach Society**, a group has formed in western Massachusetts and also serves southern Vermont. The **Sunshine Club** will meet one Saturday evening each month.

Interested parties should contact **Roberta Steel** at P.O. Box 149, Hadley, MA 01035.

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PROVINCETOWN, MASS. - Have we got a deal for you...

Recognizing the economy is in the pits, the management of **Fantasia Fair 1992** has developed three special deals for those who are interested in attending the Fair but worried about the cost.

Deal #1 is a special 10 day package at the Crown & Anchor for only \$895 (double occupancy). Deal #2 is an extended weekend, Oct. 16 to 18, plus Monday's programs for \$495/475 (per person single/double). Deal #3 is an extended weekend, Oct. 21 to 25 for \$625/605 (per person single/double).

In order to cash in on these deals you must send a \$200 deposit before August 31 to FanFair Ltd., 405 Western Ave., Suite 345, So. Portland, ME 04106. Deals #2 and #3 are on a space available basis.

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NOTA BENE - The opinions expressed here are mine and mine alone. If you have a comment, positive or negative, write me at P.O. Box 61263, KofP, PA 19406-1263.

Drag queens stage 17th annual invasion of gay Long Island summer resort town

"It's the invasion of the drag queens!"

That cry went up July 4th on the Pines, an exclusive gay resort area on New York's Fire Island, as 140 men in women's clothes disembarked after a short ferry ride from Cherry Grove, another gay resort which is close geographically but far away socially.

While there are 25 summer communities on Fire Island, these two have given this barrier island that shelters part of Long Island from the Atlantic Ocean the reputation as a gay Mecca. Cherry Grove has been attracting gay summer residents for 40 years, and has a unabashed spirit. The Pines was first developed in the 1960s as a more upscale — and some would say uptight — resort.

Seventeen years ago the first contingent of gay man in drag invaded

the staid Pines to protest the closeted lifestyle that looked down on the campier elements of the gay experience, such as drag queens attending the afternoon tea dances. This separatist spirit was too much for Thom Hanson, a Manhattan actor and Cherry Grove summer resident who lead six of his friends in the first invasion on July 4, 1975.

The invasion force has since grown 20-fold, and nearly two decades later, the influx of men in negligees, ball gowns, and even a nun's habit, has become a welcomed

Independence Day tradition.

"It's just another way to celebrate freedom," said Pines real estate broker Bob Howard as he sat in his office overlooking the ferry slip thronged with Cherry Grove drag queens and an unofficial welcoming committee of more than 1,000 from the Pines, many of whom were also in drag.

"This is patriotic," said Michael Bush, a summer resident of the Pines for a decade. "It's a Fourth of July tradition and it is ours."

Quote/unquote...

"I don't care what your boyfriend says — real men DON'T wear brassieres!"

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