

THE TRANSGENDERIST

JANUARY 1994

A Publication of Transgenderist's Independence Club, Albany, NY

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie [REDACTED]

Happy New Year, everyone! I hope you enjoyed the holidays, and will continue to support our Club in 1994. We are still looking for people to plan, organize and take responsibility for more interesting programs and activities. If no one steps forward, we will just keep going as things are now, with weekly meetings and monthly dinners.

I am trying to give the newsletter a new look, and still learning how to make my word processor software do what I would like it to do - the new banner headline is an "equation"! Now, I have to figure out how to make it do artwork. I have also decided to combine our two leap-frogging bi-monthlies into a single monthly publication, since we have not recently been getting enough material to distinguish between "outreach" and "inreach".

DINNER PARTIES: We are planning to continue our monthly Dinner Parties in 1994, starting on **January 15**, at the *Northway Inn* as usual. Please sign up at the club room or call Joan by Thursday night, January 13. I will be visiting IFGE in Waltham that weekend, so will miss it.

I am planning to attend the Texas T Party on Feb. 23-28; please contact me if you are going and may want to share a room. I will also be going to the IFGE Convention in Portland, Oregon from March 12-20.

There's an interesting article on Animal Sexuality in the January issue of *Scientific American*. In mammals (that includes us), chromosomes determine sex and gender. In other species, other factors such as temperature play a part. The same

biochemical hormones that determine sex affect the brain to induce behavior that will insure survival of the species. But there is a lot of natural variation, which is essential for adaptation. Besides butch female dominant spotted hyenas, there are mice that are affected by the sex of their litter-mates, all-female lesbian lizards, hermaphroditic, transsexual and transvestite (female mimic) fish, and she-male snakes! The author states "every male must contain evolutionary traces of femaleness." So, our behavior is perfectly natural. And not necessarily a "throwback", I believe, but a surviving variation useful for future adaptation. Do we humans really need super-aggressive males, now that lions and tigers are endangered species?

Mailing list - January 1994

The net membership of TGIC has remained fairly constant for the last few years. While we have lost some old members, we have gained a nearly equal number of new members. Our mailing list this month, which is typical, includes:

General Members & Couples	70
Life Members	3
Prospective new members	18
Friends	6
Helping Professionals	22
Exchanges with Clubs	33
Exchanges with Magazines	4
TOTAL	156

Contents

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie [REDACTED]	1
FATHER'S SPECIAL NIGHTIE - Laurie B.	3
TINA IN P-TOWN - Tina [REDACTED]	5
IT'S SO SAD - Roni [REDACTED]	6
BENDING OF GENDER BECOMES CHIC	9
ANNOUNCEMENTS	10
CALENDAR	10

TGIC

Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

TGIC
PO Box 13604
Albany, NY 12212-3604
Phone (518) 436-4513

TGIC Officers

President Winnie
Vice President Joan
Secretary Joyce
Treasurer Winnie
Newsletter Editor Winnie

TGIC Membership Dues

General Member \$40/yr
Couples \$45/yr
Key Club / large closet \$40/mo
Key Club / small closet \$30/mo
Key Club / attic storage \$15/mo

The Transgenderist is the newsletter of TGIC, published monthly and mailed First Class to members, prospective members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications.

Copyright 1994 TGIC. No part of any TGIC publication may be reproduced without prior permission from the publisher.



The
TIFFANY CLUB OF NEW ENGLAND
Inc.
presents their
TWELFTH ANNUAL
FIRST EVENT '94

Wednesday, January 26, 1994
thru
Sunday, January 30, 1994

THE CROWNE PLAZA
1360 Worcester Road
Natick, MA 01760
(508) 653-8800



TCNE, Inc. (FE94)
P O Box 2283
Weburn, MA 01888-0483
(617) 891-9325; (617) 899-3230 (n,8,1)

FATHER'S SPECIAL NIGHTIE - Laurie B.

Back in the late fifties or early sixties, I remember watching a TV program centered about the loss of a woman's husband of many years. The woman was in her bedroom, sitting on the bed, clutching a silk or satin nightie and telling her daughter how much her late husband had meant to her. The many ways in which he brought special magic to their relationship. Into the discussion, the woman laid the nightie on the husband's side of the bed, made sure it was smooth, and explained the significance of the nightie to her daughter.

While her husband had been a highly successful businessman, wearing only the best pin-striped suits, and acting totally proper, in bed the nightie had helped bring a magic of its own to their lives. The nightie represented a freedom, a lightness, a communication between husband and wife that dissolved all the social taboos. The nightie belonged to father.

The wife added further that when her husband wore the nightie, it was a special something that belonged to only the two of them, and never left the bedroom. It was just too beautiful to become a regular piece of clothing, such as a favorite pair of socks or a tie. The nightie was like love itself; delicate, fragile and meant to be carefully attended to. And yet it never decreased her husband's manliness.

This story has always stayed with me, and seemed to contain so many basic truths within its simple tale. And in a way, it tells the story of crossdressing, from A to Z.

Whether in complete drag or just wearing an ankle bracelet, whether dressed to pass or a man in a nightie, we are who we are, and the clothing or jewelry is a finery that adorns, but doesn't replace, what we are feeling.

Unlike modern movies and fiction, where the wife of the CD husband might have described in detail how he turned into a bondage TV slut whore slave, in the TV program I saw the man retained his dignity before his wife, and the two of them entered into a mutually agreeable, romantic love making.

And the "mutually agreeable" phrase is the one which I think lies behind many of the problems crossdressers face in their attempts to have society accept them. Because the crossdresser is society, and makes up the rules, too.

Each one of us is a product of genes, social environment, upbringing, mystical and supernatural influence, intelligence and choice. As well as possible neurosis and other psychotic ailments, whether large or small. And let us not forget hormones and sunspots and mood swings. Native Americans, in their wisdom, realize that it is impossible to explain why we are what we are, or to change it in fundamental ways.

In the same fashion that most young heterosexual males don't walk the streets in just a jock strap, because they'd feel foolish, many crossdressers are anxious about looking foolish. Now, is this concern over foolish behavior the result of society's dictums, or an essential part of our psyche? And is the concern based on environment, genes, upbringing, etc., or just plain old good sense? Many crossdresser fears over society's reactions may be exaggerated concerns over looking foolish, although there certainly are physical threats associated with crossdressing, should one face certain elements of society.

Now, all of the preceding seems to say that one of our tasks is to find a nice "middle ground", where we can relate to our important friends and lovers without losing our dignity. Or our need to dress smartly. But "middle ground" doesn't mean selling out or giving in, it means facing facts in an intelligent manner.

Society, meaning people other than ourselves, is changing, and lots of people are familiar with crossdressing, B&D, S&M, C&W, etc., and no longer as frightened of "strange" behavior. But we are also in exactly the same boat, because we are society, too (we fear "straight" behavior!)

Just as we're interested in crossdressing to satisfy some need of possibly unimaginable origin, there are women who are interested in CD males. And others who may find it interesting, too, for whatever reason. There is a biological concept called "sport", that when something new and genuine and different appears, it draws interest. Such as a new color or shape of flower, or men who start to radically act or dress differently (but in "good taste"). Just like a new breed of flower or fruit, society can come to the aid of us "radical departures", and take a genuine interest (or there may be persecution).

There is also another biological concept of interest to crossdressers, the theory called "100 monkeys". Based on observations of monkeys, there is a critical mass in a population, for any given learned behavior, where exceeding that limit leads to widespread acceptance and adoption of the behavior. While it may sound like some New Age fantasy, when the critical mass in a population is reached the behavior modification can travel over distances, and does not require direct contact. In the monkey observations, animals on an isolated island picked up on new behaviors learned on the mainland, despite the distance and no direct observation or contact.

Translating the "100 monkeys" to "society", crossdressing in private has long been a fairly widespread fact, and has seeped into outward society, to a degree. But crossdressing can range from a nightie in the bedroom, to feminized male slaves, to the current craze in New York City (crossdressing parties).

Where crossdressing, to whatever degree, is done without feeling foolish and is taken out of the closet, the biological concepts of "sport" and "100 monkeys" may apply.

We both influence, and are influenced by, society. While our fantasies may have us recreating Marilyn Monroe's greatest moments, what actually "goes" and enriches our lives may be a lot more modest. Since life is so complex, one cannot pronounce a formula for success.

In my work-a-day world, acceptance of references to crossdressing and nylons has been noted in many folks who seem "stuffy". And somewhat freewheeling folks have ragged endlessly about my earring, throwing about references to homosexual sex acts. Women who I told I was wearing nylons actually looked, and were enthusiastic about the discussion. Society is not homogeneous, or obvious, and seems to generate some very paranoid, us-versus-them viewpoints despite the absence of a totally antagonistic crowd.

The moral of this sometimes meandering, rambling trip through psycho-sociology? In a society where many still repress their instincts, drives and needs, and straight-laced behavior is often the norm in some quarters, whole-hearted devotion to what you are need not lead to horrible frustration. But, on the other hand, reality and fantasy may never meet, although this, too does not automatically mean continuous suffering.

We are more than crossdressers or transsexuals or transvestites, and hopefully, like the father in the TV program, we'll be remembered more for the magic than the nightie.

CHOICES COUNSELING ASSOCIATES

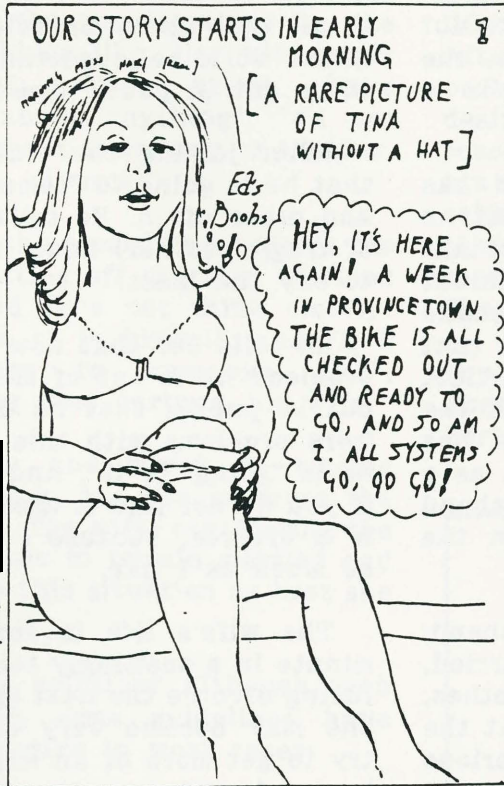
Lesbian/Gay Affirmative



ARLENE S. ISTAR, C.S.W., C.A.C.
MOONHAWK RIVER STONE, B.S., Ph.D. CAND.
(518) 439-9270

PAUL G. POSTIGLIONE, C.S.W.
(518) 462-5016

266 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, New York 12054



An original story based largely (but not entirely) on real life.

Tina in P-Town

It's sad, oh so sad. What's a wife to do? After twenty or so years of marriage, the wife finds out that her husband is a "TRANSVESTITE".

Here all these years the husband has been deceiving her into believing that he is a fairly good husband with no deviant behavior. Now all of a sudden she finds out that she does not really know her husband at all. And to make matters worse, now that the husband has joined a crossdressing club, he has decided to go *en femme* to all the club functions. And even worse, he has decided to go out "in public" dressed as a woman. And the worst sin of all: The husband has prettier and sexier clothes than the wife does! So what's a wife to do???

Maybe the wife knew that her husband, years ago, shortly after they were married, did occasionally wear some female clothes, but seemed to do it only as a lark. At the time, it did not seem that he was serious about wearing female clothes, and she may have gone along with it for awhile. The crossdressing did not appear again for several years (that she knew of). But unbeknownst to her, the husband was continuing this charade behind her back.

When she did find out -- either discovering some evidence left on purpose by the husband or the husband telling her -- she was shattered to learn of the extent of his dressing *en femme*. (Sometimes, the wife does discover that there is something quite strange going on with her husband. At first, she may think that he is having an affair with another woman. She may confront him for the truth. At this time, he may confess that he was not having an affair with another woman, but with women's clothes!)

Usually, by this time he has joined a crossdressing club and discovered that he is not the only one in the world who likes to wear female clothes. He may have seen one of the talk shows and seen crossdressers

in all their glory on television, but never in the world believed that he would be able to go out in public dressed *en femme*.

After joining the club, he has decided that he is going to "come out of the closet" and dress often. He tells his wife this bit of tragic (to her) news. She is devastated, to say the least.

He tells her that now he has solved his problem; he is out of the closet and going out in public, that he does not have any more problems with this lifestyle and that he is "going for it". And furthermore, wife, if you do not like it then the only solution is a divorce, because I am going to dress as much as I like.

The wife's life is shattered. From one minute in a seemingly tolerable marriage to facing divorce the next is too much to bear. She may become very depressed and may try to get more of an explanation from the husband, and may even try to talk him out of this "crossdressing thing", to not avail: The husband will never give up this newfound freedom after so many years locked in the closet.

Poor wife. Now what is she to do since that &!%\$#@ husband is not giving in ... nor even talking to her in a civil tongue? Divorce seems imminent. The husband may say something about a wives' support group, but can she handle that in the emotional state she is now experiencing?

Most clubs, I believe, have experienced this type of behavior from new members. Some members, when talking to a new member that has been married for several years and the wife does not know, will advise the new member not to tell the wife about the crossdressing because nine times out of ten it leads to the previously described scenario ... that there is a strong possibility that the wife will not accept this type of behavior from a husband.

If the husband continues to insist on dressing *en femme* (which he almost always does) everyone will start hearing all kinds of excuses that the marriage was on the rocks already. Things like, "my wife never understood me"; "we never have communications about anything"; "we are always fighting about something or another, so why not get a divorce?"

It seems that the crossdresser wears his bra too tight, cutting off the flow of blood to the brain, and does not think clearly. All he can think of is himself, and "H E double toothpicks to everyone else", including his long time partner, his wife.

Some husbands and wives do muddle through this trauma, but life is never the same for the wife. The wife, considering the alternative, chooses to remain married and tries to deal with this situation as best she can.

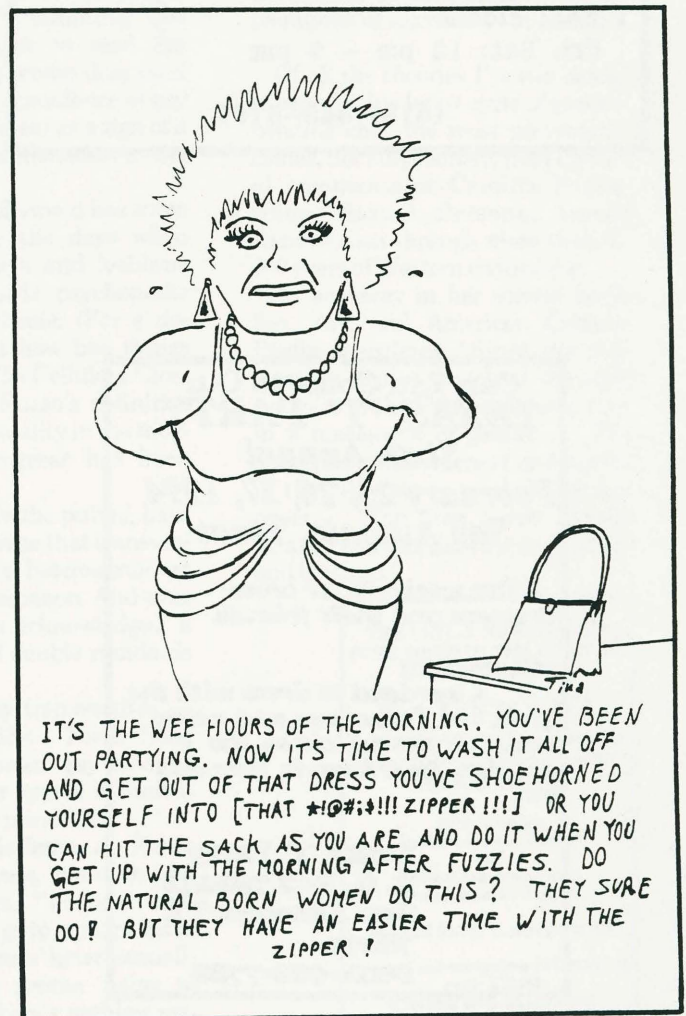
So what is the solution? Although each case is different, some guidelines have proven to be effective in most cases:

1. Tell your soon-to-be wife, before you are married, that you are a crossdresser. Explain what it means and how it will affect her relationship to you and your relationship to her.
2. If you have been married just a short time -- say, less than two years -- tell your wife and explain how that will affect her relationship to you and your relationship to her.
3. If you have been married for several years, like twenty or thirty, expect the scenario described above.
4. If you have been married between two and twenty years, hope for the best -- it could go either way.

As stated before, every individual case is different. But generally speaking, this is pretty much how it happens.

If the husband wants to stay married and still crossdress, **COMMUNICATE** with your wife. Reach an understanding; compromise; **DO NOT** put all the blame on your wife. After all, she is not the one who has the problem, **YOU** are the one with the "strange desires"! Don't force the issue. Be reasonable, not demanding. (Loosen up your bra and let the blood flow.) And, for heaven's sake, talk to the successful crossdressers that have managed to hold their marriages together and still be able to crossdress. They know what it takes; believe them.

Reprinted with permission from the Northwest Gender Alliance newsletter, Portland OR, via Cross-Talk #45.



Tawny's Boutique

A store for the transgendered community only!

- * Regular & full-figure clothing
- * Shoes, wigs, breast forms, lingerie
- * Hosiery, cosmetics, jewelry & more
- * Understanding, helpful & confidential
- * Front and discrete rear entrances

16 E. Main St., Amsterdam, NY
(second floor, look for American flag
and "T's" in the windows)

Hours:

Sun: 12 pm - 7 pm
Mon, Tues, Thurs: 5 pm - 9 pm
Wed: closed
Fri, Sat: 12 pm - 9 pm

(518) 843-8761



PRESENTING I.F.G.E.'s Eighth Annual

'COMING TOGETHER - WORKING TOGETHER' CONVENTION

**Portland, Oregon
March 12th - 20th, 1994**

Can You Come to Our TEXAS 'T' PARTY Sixth Annual February 25, 26, 27, 1994 San Antonio, Texas

*A fun weekend for cross-
dressers and their friends.*

Come for:

*A weekend to dress with the
girls, the Texas sun and warm
weather, the activities, the
outings, meet friends, new and
old.*

**Texas 'T' Party
P. O. Box 700042
San Antonio, TX
78270
1-210-980-7788**

SPONSOR:

**The International Foundation
for Gender Education
P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778
617-899-2212**

HOSTS:

**The Northwest Gender Alliance
P.O. Box 4928, Portland, OR 97208
503-774-8463
&
Emerald City
P.O. Box 31318, Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 284-1071**



The C.D. Reader

Collector/Trader of C.D. Literature

EMILY SINGLETON
R 4, Box 128
Knox, IN 46534

Wanted Back Issues of
Tapestry, Transvestia,
C.D. Magazines & Fiction

BENDING OF GENDER BECOMES CHIC

TIMES UNION, Albany, NY, December 30, 1993

BY MICHAEL MILLS
Cox News Service

Girls will be boys and boys will be girls/ It's a mixed-up, muddled-up, shook-up world...

— Lola, The Kinks

Robin Williams puts on a dress, wig and makeup, and millions of Americans flock to see "Mrs. Doubtfire." The art-house crowd is likewise drawn to "Orlando," the Virginia Woolf adaptation in which Tilda Swinton starts out male and ends up female. The Amazonian transvestite RuPaul vamps his/her way through a series of campy music videos, becomes a dance-club darling and prepares to break into film.

There's more. French diplomat Jeremy Irons has a long-term romance with a man disguised as a female opera star in "M. Butterfly." Next year, we'll see Johnny Depp in "Ed Wood Jr.," Tim Burton's screen biography of the cross-dressing B-movie director.

What's going on here? Is this the fallout from "The Crying Game," with its notorious secret that the male protagonist's object of desire — the beautiful hairdresser and singer played by Oscar nominee Jaye Davidson — turns out to be a man? Has Hollywood, to borrow Cary Grant's comment in "Bringing Up Baby," "just gone gay, all of a sudden?"

Not exactly. The movies have been playing dress-up for more than three-quarters of a century. Long before performers as disparate as Milton Berle, Bugs Bunny and Divine earned easy laughs by donning female attire, Chaplin got in drag in the early 1900s, as did Wallace Beery, Harold Lloyd, Stan Laurel and Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle.

In 1959's "Some Like It Hot," Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis became two of the most memorable cross-dressers in movie history. Nearly a generation later, Tim Curry joined them with his unforgettable performance in "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

(Women — from Dietrich in "Morocco" to Barbra Streisand in "Yentl" — get into the act occasionally, although not nearly as often as men.)

A decade or so ago, cinematic gender-bending reached unprecedented levels, and the industry rewarded much of it with Academy Award nominations. In 1982, Dustin Hoffman got a Best Actor nod, as a man pretending to be a woman in "Tootsie," and Julie Andrews was a Best Actress contender, as a woman pretending to be a man who's a female impersonator in "Victor/Victoria." The next year, Linda Hunt won a best supporting actress Oscar for playing a man in "The Year of Living Dangerously."

Why this seeming obsession with cross-dressing? It's tempting, but probably too simple to read the proliferation of big-screen drag (and the accompanying abundance of gay characters and themes) as a sign of a new wave of sexual liberation in the film industry.

It's true that Hollywood has come a long way since the days when cross-dressers, gays and lesbians were routinely made psychopaths and objects of ridicule. (For a detailed look at just how bad things used to be, read The Celluloid Closet, the late Vito Russo's definitive history of homosexuality in the movies.) But the progress has been mixed.

The movies, like the public, have been slow to recognize that transvestism is as much a heterosexual as homosexual phenomenon. And even when that fact is acknowledged, a complicated set of double standards seems to apply.

Films about gay transvestites — for instance, 1988's "Torch Song Trilogy" — are labeled "gay movies." It's assumed their appeal is limited to the appropriate minorities.

Put Dustin Hoffman or Robin Williams in a dress, however, and the rules change. "Tootsie" and "Mrs. Doubtfire" go to great pains to point out their heroes' heterosexuality, and to even greater pains to emphasize that there's nothing sexual about their gender-bending. It's a matter far more important — for Hoffman, access to a job; for Williams, access to his kids.

The combination of cross-dressing and sex, these movies seem to say, is an uneasy one best left to gays. Even an odd hybrid such as "Kiss of the Spider Woman," an art-house film that crossed over to mainstream success, confirms the old stereotypes. William Hurt's Molina is so effeminate that his sexuality is effectively diffused, and his fling with Raul Julia's Valentin is made to seem an aberration — Molina is normally attracted to boys.

In other words, the movies needn't get too carried away congratulating themselves on their enlightened explorations of sex roles — at least not yet.

Of all the theories I've run across to explain this latest cycle of gender-bending chic, the most provocative comes, not surprisingly, from cultural commentator Camille Paglia, whose Sexual Personae traced transvestism through more than 3,000 years of Western civilization.

In an essay in her second book, Sex, Art, and American Culture, Paglia speculates: "Since the psychedelic Sixties dissolved the rigid sex roles of the Fifties, we have been in a maelstrom of gender ... The drag queen has emerged in America in the Nineties as a symbol of our crisis ... The drag queen ritually acts out and exorcises our confusions and longings."

THE ONLY NEWSLETTER
PUBLISHED IN THE COUNTRY
ESPECIALLY FOR...

PARTNERS
A publication for couples
and folks interested in
relationships

sponsored by:
Boulton & Park Society
and
Women Associated with
Transgendered Support

Send \$2.00 for a sample issue

Annual subscription (4 issues) is
only \$12.00
(Canada add \$2.00/other
countries add \$8.00)

Please make checks or money
orders payable to:
Boulton & Park Society

Write to:
PARTNERS
P. O. Box 17
Bulverde, TX 78163



ANNOUNCEMENTS

POLICY: Short announcements and advertisements from Club Members are published free for two consecutive months (once each in TGIC News and The Transgenderist), unless cancelled by the originator or a specific request to continue is made.

BOOKCASE WANTED

With recent donations of books and magazines, the bookcase and file cabinet in our Club Room are overflowing. If any of you have a spare bookcase you are willing to donate to the Club, please contact us. Measure its size, so we can make sure it will fit somewhere in the room.

TRI-ESS MEETINGS

The LCL Chapter of Tri-Ess, a National organization for heterosexual crossdressers, meets in Schenectady on the third Saturday of each month. They encourage wives and girlfriends to attend, and have a more active couples focus than TGIC at this time. Members of TGIC are welcome to attend their meetings; there is a meeting fee to pay for the motel suite. Contact us for LCL meeting times and location. In a reciprocal agreement, members of LCL are welcome at all TGIC meetings and dinner parties. Several individuals are members of both groups.

TALK-SHOW VIDEO

One night in December, TV talk-show host *Jerry Springer* featured "Men who work as female models." To order a videotape copy for \$24.95, call:
1-800-FOR-VIDEO.

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked. (NYS Health Department) *Albany Area:*
(518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

CALENDAR

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 - 10:30 pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the Central Ave. night spots after the meetings.

JANUARY 1994

Jan 13 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Jan 15 Saturday, 8 pm
Dinner Party, Northway Inn
Jan 20 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Jan 27 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

FEBRUARY 1994

Feb 3 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Feb 10 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Feb 12 Saturday, 8 pm
Dinner Party, Northway Inn
Feb 17 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Feb 24 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

Contact TGIC for more information. Some registration brochures are available in the Club Room

Jan 26-30 *First Event (Tiffany Club), Natick, MA*
Feb 25-27 *Texas 'T' Party, San Antonio*
Mar 12-20 *IFGE Convention, Portland, OR*
Apr 21-24 *Moonlight in Manhattan, NY*
4/27-5/1 *California Dreamin', Burbank*
May 19-22 *Paradise in the Poconos, PA*

WHY DO OUR SUBSCRIBERS CALL

CROSS-TALK

THE GENDER COMMUNITY'S MOST USEFUL MAGAZINE!

NEWS & COMMENTARY ... READER LETTERS ...
ADVICE COLUMNS ON MAKEUP, FASHION, &
PASSING ... PROFESSIONAL & SIGNIFICANT
OTHER INSIGHTS ... CARTOONS & HUMOR ...
PUBLICATION & PRODUCT REVIEWS ... CLASSIC
'TRANSVESTIA' REPRINTS ... HOTLINES, EVENTS
CALENDAR, READER PROFILES ... AND MORE !!!



FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF: SEND \$7.00 FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!

Make check or money order payable to Kymberleigh Richards, and mail to:
P.O. BOX 944, WOODLAND HILLS CA 91365. CA residents, add 8.25% tax.