Renaissance News

Volume 7, No. 2 | Vision - Integrity - Quality | February, 1993

Celebrating Family Diversity

Two very special programs at the IFGE convention

Renaissance is very pleased to announce the addition of two outstanding programs for the 1993 IFGE convention aimed at helping families deal with issues surrounding transgendered behavior.

The first of the two programs is *Crossdressing and the Family: Coping With A Crossdressing Partner.* This is a hands-on workshop about communication and negotiation in a committed relationship for couples who still have issues about crossdressing in their relationship. While the focus is on couples, everyone is invited to attend the session.

Participants will be taken through written and verbal exercises designed to point out the similarities and differences in the way men and women communicate and negotiate issues. The group will then be led through a discussion of relevant issues and provided with tools and resources with which to develop communication and negotiation skills. A list of extremely useful publications will be provided. (These publications are available at Giovanni's Room, a bookstore within walking distance of the convention site.) This program is scheduled for Friday, March 19, 2:00 - 3:20 PM.

The second program immediately follows the first. *Crossdressing and the Family: Children Coping With A Crossdressing Parent:* will focus on children's issues about a parent who is "different," specifically a crossdresser. Topics will include a discussion of a child's cognitive development, whether and when to tell a child, how to tell a child, what to tell a child, and what are the potential issues that might arise for the child immediately and in the future.

Included will be a list of reading resources that have been found useful with children in a "family of difference." (These publications are available at Giovanni's Room, a bookstore within walking distance of the convention site.)

The workshop leader for both programs is Carol Cobb-Nettleton (MS, DSW). Dr. Carol — as she is often called — is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She is a Clinical Family Consultant for chronically ill children and their families at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She is also an Instructor in Medical/Ethical Decision Making.

Dr. Carol has worked with both transvestites and transsexuals, conducted Partner's Workshops for the spouses of transgendered people, and is a close friend and supporter of Renaissance.

In addition to these special programs, Dr. Carol will facilitate a panel discussion earlier in the day at 11:00 AM on establishing Effective Partners' Support Programs. Partners of people dealing with gender issues often need as much support and advice as the person themselves. Yet, it is often difficult to convince the partner that he/she should attend a Partners' Support meeting. This panel will discuss the various methods of organizing an effective Partners' Support Program, and working with Partners in a group setting. A Q&A period will follow the presentations. Panel participants will include Evelyn Kirkland (Renaissance), Linda Peacock (Sigma Epsilon Tri-Ess) and Cynthia Phillips (Bolton & Park).

See you at the convention.

Support your community from within

by JoAnn Roberts

We keep talking about building a sense of community, but we have an immensely large obstacle to overcome in order to simply lay down a good foundation: fear.

One of the things that strikes me the most about the gay/lesbian community is the support they offer each other, and I am *not* talking about psychological support. I am talking about commercial, monetary support. For example, pick up any gay/lesbian newspaper and just look at the ads from people offering services to that segment of society. We're talking house painters, realtors, attorneys, accountants, etc. Lots of service oriented businesses advertise in gay/lesbian publications looking for their business.

Why don't we offer the same services? Well, because no one has asked before and everyone assumes that our

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Chapters & Affiliates

New Jersey

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, PO Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Chapter leader - Terri Risley; Assistant Leader - Phil Muniz

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Meets on third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, PA. Doors open at 8:00 p.m. Write to Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020 or call (215)630-1437. Chapter Leader - Maryann Kirkland

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at The Greens at Westgate in York, Pa. Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or call (717) 780-1LSV. Chapter Leader - Yvonne Sullivan

Affiliates

MOTG: PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701

American Educational Gender Information Services (AEGIS): PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 939-0244

Renaissance News

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JoAnn Roberts
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Rachel and **Beth Marshall**

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

And, don't forget about...

Articles, opinion pieces and letters to the Editor are always welcome at the Renaissance News. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to Renaissance News, P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Complimentary and irate letters to the Editor may be sent to the same address.

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, 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics, and 9-Understanding Transsexuality.

Pen Pal Program: If you would like to be a pen pal contact Maryann Kirkland at P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Attn: Dept. PP.

Events Calendar

« « « « «

February

6th **Ren. So. Jersey Chapter**
6th **LSV meeting**
20th **Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter Dr. Jeffrey Walper, "Gender and Communication"**

March

14th - 21st CONVENTION

Chapters wishing to have their programs listed should get them to the Newsletter at least one month in advance. Two is better.

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Children Wanted For Interviews

Dr. Carol is very interested in interviewing children of crossdressers and transsexuals. If you are going to be at the convention and your children are willing to talk to a counselor in complete confidentiality, please contact JoAnn Roberts through the Renaissance office.

ROGER'S NOTEBOOK

#76, by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

One of the ideas that has received a lot of attention during the past couple of years is the contention that a transgendered person is handicapped and therefore needs both specific protection under the law and perhaps also special considerations by society. This concern was heightened by recent and specific exclusion of transgendered persons from new laws enacted to protect people who are handicapped.

As I thought about this situation, I wondered just what "handicapped" really meant. My thesaurus lists a variety of synonyms for handicapped: afflicted, crippled, disabled, disadvantaged, hindered, impaired and maimed. Then I thought about the community's recent actions to get all the gender dysphoric definitions removed from the DSM-III-R. The contention is that transgendered persons are perfectly normal. To list their behaviors in a mental disorder classification was considered both improper and unfair. Now there seems to be a conflict here. Either being transgendered is a problem or it isn't! Obviously there is no answer to this conundrum.

In some cases, a transgendered person is handicapped by the feelings and behaviors that accompany this phenomenon. This handicap can take a variety of forms. Perhaps the most severe is when the feelings are so overwhelming that they interfere with day-to-day functioning. In such cases, I would describe the person as crippled or disabled. However, the solution is not a new law, but rather assistance for the person so that they can learn to manage their feelings. This is analogous to the therapy a person might receive after a physical injury.

However, there is a more subtle disadvantage that many handicapped face. This is often described as discrimination. Sometimes this discrimination is unintentional. It is caused by not recognizing the "hurdles" some people face because of their handicap. For example, wheelchair-bound people need ramps and lifts to allow them equal access to public facilities. In a similar manner, persons known to be transgendered face social discrimination. For example, consider the ejection of post-surgical male-to-female transsexuals from the annual Womyn for Womyn Music Festival in Michigan. Even though transsexuals live a woman's lifestyle, they are not considered to be authentic women and so are barred from participation. Similarly, persons known to be transgendered can be evicted from housing simply for that fact even if they are model tenants.

Where does this leave the transgendered person? In a sense, they are handicapped by society's generally negative attitudes toward all sexual minorities. This leads to discrimination against them in a variety of overt and subtle ways. It is not clear to me that passage of new laws nor removal of transgender categories from the DSM will do much to change this situation. From my observations, it seems that the only workable strategy is education that will help the general public understand more about all aspects of human sexuality.

This course is long, tough and slow. It means putting yourself on the line in a variety of situations. Letters to the editor, pushing for appropriate sex-education in the schools, speaking out against all forms of discrimination and becoming active in social causes for other minorities can all be effective. Eliminating discrimination is not accomplished so much through legal remedies as through demonstrating to others that they need to be considerate of those who are different from themselves.

You may contact Dr. Peo at PO Box 3445, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, or by phone at 914•452•8405. All communications are kept confidential. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. All others must obtain written *approval from Dr. Peo.*

January Fund-Raiser Results

The silent auction at the January meeting of the Greater Philadelphia chapter raised $625 in support of our Tier III activities for the IFGE convention in March.

In total, we've raised over $1300 toward our operating expenses for things like the bus-trip to Atlantic City and the Casino Night. We're lookin' good.

According to Yvonne Cook at IFGE-HQ, there are over 100 people registered for the convention as of January 26 and that's more than in any previous year at this time. We're hoping for a record attendance.

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Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

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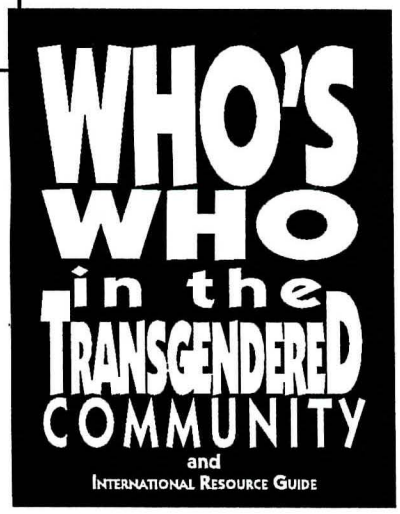
New from CDS

Sacred Cows Make the Best Hamburger — A collection of 39 of the best essays and editorials by JoAnn Roberts from the pages of *LadyLike*, *enFemme*, *ITS* and *Renaissance News*. You'll find out why JoAnn is one of the most respected writers in the TV/TS community. $12.00 plus $1.50 p&h. Pa. residents add 6% sales tax.



Who's Who in the Transgendered Community — Who *is* Billie Jean Jones anyway? Where can I find large size shoes? Is there a support group in Kansas City? You'll find the answers to these questions and more in the first annual Who's Who in the Transgendered Community. Don't miss out on the premiere issue. $15.00 plus $2.00 p&h. Pa. residents add 6% sales tax.

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News and Reminder Beat

by Angela Gardner

SOUTH JERSEY LEADERSHIP SET

The South Jersey Chapter election results are here. The new Chapter Leader is Terri Risley. Assistant Chapter Leader is Phil Muniz. Beth Cocciolillo takes the Treasurer position and Linda Willows is the Secretary. Emily Sheldon will become a Jane of all trades, acting as special assistant to the SJ board. Congratulations everyone!

And now... (musical crescendo)... The News! If you've been keeping up with the news you probably heard about President Elect Clinton's Renaissance Weekend. Well, they didn't tell you everything that went on. Sure, you heard all about his meetings with advisors and you saw a picture of Clinton jogging with his Secret Service men. You didn't hear about his top level, secret meeting with the National Board of Renaissance. We gave him makeup hints and style advice for both himself and Hillary. That's why they called it a Renaissance weekend. Sorry. I made that up. Wishful thinking.

EDNA IS EVERYWHERE

This one is true. It's a Dame Edna explosion! Dame Edna Everidge the noted television personality, author and all round glamour girl from Australia, has been all over the American airwaves. Her specials on NBC, her original British show in reruns on PBS and her live reports from Times Square on New Years eve have made this a Dame Edna year. Where will she go from here? A report in the Philadelphia Inquirer tells us that Dame Edna's new home for the rest of the year will be the Fox Network. We could be seeing a thirty minute series from the Great Dame as soon as March. If you saw her British series on PBS you know that it was a bit more daring than her sanitized NBC specials. The new Fox show could be more like the original and Dame Edna may be exercising her rapier wit in a less censored way. See NBC, your attorneys shouldn't have tried to lace the outrageous Aussie's corset so tight.

DRAG IN ADVERTISING

The folks who brought you Ernest P. Worrel, the advertising character who rose to movie stardom with his, "Hey Verne" routine, seem to enjoy their crossdressing. First they took Ernest, (actor Jim Varney) and put him in drag for more commercial forays as Bunny Jeanette. Now they have unleashed another drag character: Sister. Alex Mebane, the creator and portrayer of Sister describes her as a caricature of his grandmother. While projecting an open minded,outspoken attitude this little old lady, (kind of a country Dame Edna) is supposed to be a sports lover who packs an automatic weapon. Oh, Sister!

THE MOUTHS OF BABES

It doesn't take an automatic weapon to devastate the crossdresser who is convinced that she always passes. One good "read" and she can be reduced to a mass of quivering silicone. Sure is lucky I no longer feel it's important to pass completely. I say that because the other night I went to a friend's house for dinner. She's a single mother and last minute problems kept her little girl home with us instead of with her daddy. I arrived and was introduced to this charming two and a half year old as she was having her dinner. As I was preparing the potatoes au gratin just around the corner from mom and daughter I heard the little dear say in a casual tone, "Mommy, Angela's a boy." Well. Mommy assured her little angel that I was really a girl and several days later nothing more had been said. I guess that someday I'll probably have to split the therapy bills with her mother. (That's fair. Right?) In any event, it just goes to show that you can't fool all the people all the time. And, maybe the two-and-a-half-year-olds aren't the only ones to notice. What if the others all notice and they're too darn sophisticated to ask their mommy about you?

THE CRYING GAME

That brings me to a critically acclaimed film that has been playing around the country. It's called, "The Crying Game." If you see it listed you might like to catch it. (It's rated R so you don't have to worry about any pesky two and half year olds being let in.) One of the main

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(BEAT - continued from page 5)
characters is a transgendered hair dresser. It's supposed to be the big surprise of the film but it's not used as a cheap device. It's the pivotal point in the plot. The writer/director, Neil Jordan is dramatizing the ways that love can lead to a slow unraveling of identity from surface attraction to deep devotion. If it plays at a theater near you check it out.

BE A PAMPERED LADY

If you are in the Philadelphia area you might like to check out the services offered by the Pierre & Carlo Spa/Hair Salon located at the Bellevue Hotel in center city. Yes the hotel is not just open for Henri David's Halloween Ball. Mark Gilbert is the salon's coordinator and he wrote us a nice letter offering their services which include wigs, hair care, makeup, skin care, massage and more. One of their full day spa packages is called the Renaissance Day. Two hundred and fifty dollars gets you a one hour massage, a one hour facial, manicure, pedicure, lunch, hair cut and style plus makeup. Actually, that's not a bad deal. For information on individual prices and appointments call 215-790-9910 and ask for Mark. Tell him Renaissance sent you.

DEJA VU

Back in December we told you that Carolyn Perry from York, PA. was trying to organize midweek group meetings in her area. She was also interested in trying to get some retail outings together and maybe even put together a sewing circle. Well, I sent her a letter so she'd know we had run the announcement and asked her to let me know if she got any response. The letter came back to me a couple of days ago marked, "return to sender, address unknown." I sent this thing before the Elvis stamp came out. What's up? It seems to be postal whim that kept this letter from delivery. You have to give the post office a card with the names of everyone who will be receiving mail at your box. Perhaps Carolyn didn't fill one out. Sometimes even when you do you still get mail for everybody who ever used that box for the past fifteen years. Go figure. We're going to try again. If you would like to get involved in any of the things Carolyn purposed get in touch with the LSV Chapter. Their address and phone number are on page two. They have promised to get in touch with Carolyn and have her get in touch with you. We shall overcome.

EVERYBODY'S TALKIN'

Part of the services Renaissance offers to the general public is a Speakers Bureau. We provide transgendered people who can speak about the subject in an informed manner to college class's, church groups and radio and television programs. This year we are hoping to expand our number of speaking engagements and to prepare we are having a Speakers Bureau Training Session. The session is set for April seventeenth from two to five pm at the Greater Philadelphia meeting site. If you have spoken in public before or if you are interested in giving it a try leave a message on the national phone or drop a line to the King of Prussia office marked Attention Angela. Watch the newsletter for further details.

DELIGHTFULLY SALUTING SUSAN

Speaking of leaving a message at the National Office. Just who do you get when you call the office? In the evening you'll get the answering machine. Leave your message and who ever you want to speak to will call you back. Providing you speak clearly and leave your number. If you call between ten am and two pm you may get to speak with our National Secretary, Susan Persing. Susan handles the mail and the phone, routing the requests to the proper people and mailing out information. In addition to this already demanding job she takes phone messages for the Greater Philadelphia Chapter since they share the National phone. If you talk to Susan tell her she's doing a good job. We think so.

TRANSGENDER KISSINGER

We have reported on the activities of Phaedra Kelly as she tries to do the big job of making things better for the Third World's transgendered. If she can get the funding, she is ready to embark on another jaunt to intercede on behalf of transgendered Kurds. If you can spare a few pounds, yep, pounds, send them to Phaedra in the form of a check. Make it out in pounds, not dollars, to International Gender Transient Affinity, 1, Bank Buildings, School Green Road, Freshwater I-o-W, P040-9AJ, UK. When Phaedra

(Continued on next page)

AB COUNSELING

Murray D. Gegner, Ph.D.

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(BEAT - continued from previous page)

deposits the check and the British Bank sends it to the States they will convert it to a dollar amount so you can get the correct amount in your check register.

PARTNERS SPEAK OUT

One of the action items the New Idea Forum came up with was more participation from the life partners of transgendered people in the activities of Renaissance. To get the ball rolling we are welcoming article ideas from partners. Does your crossdresser try to wear your clothes with out asking? How does that make you feel? How do you and your partner deal with the relatives? The kids? What advice would you offer to other partners of the transgendered? All ideas will be reviewed by our new Partner Editor, Evelyn Kirkland. After Evelyn has reviewed them she will pass them along to me and we'll give you the go ahead to write the article. Send your ideas to: Renaissance News, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020, Attn.: Partners.

National Board Meets

by Beth Marshall

The Renaissance National Board met on January tenth. In attendance were: Managing Director-Brenda Davidson, Treasurer-Joanne White, Co-chair of Outreach- Angela Gardner,GPC Leader- Maryann Kirkland, Co-chairs of Membership-Elsa Larson and Beth Marshal, South Jersey Chapter Rep.- Emily Sheldon, Librarian-Lee Etscovitz and at large member- JoAnn Roberts.

Joanne White submitted a nineteen ninety three National budget estimate of seven thousand eight hundred and eighty six dollars for expenses and eight thousand one hundred twenty five dollars in projected income. It was agreed that this was only an initial approximation and the board voted to approve the budget on a month-to-month basis.

(Continued on page 8)

THAT'S IT...

for February. Remember there is no regular GPC meeting in March because of the IFGE Convention. There will also be no Renaissance spring formal event. The IFGE banquet will be your big shot at getting all dolled up. Keep in mind, if you are nervous about going to an event in downtown Philadelphia dressed in your feminine finest..don't be. Transgendered hordes from all over the country will be descending on Philadelphia in a attempt to make it into the City of Sisterly Love. If you would like to know what a big IFGE convention is like talk to Maryann, JoAnn or Alison. They can tell you about their previous convention experience and let you know how much fun you'll be missing if you give the convention activities a miss. Why I'll be escorting a lucky group of diners to Hepburn's on the eighteenth of March. There is nothing to fear but fear itself. Hey, where did I hear that before?

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Warning Issued on Hormones

Feminizing and masculinizing hormones are necessary for most transsexual persons in order to live in the gender of choice. But they are not without risk and should never be taken without medical supervision.

Experimenting with hormones is illegal and can be dangerous. Black market preparations may be contaminated andmaynotbehormones at all. Even with the proper substances, overmedicating can cause a variety of debilitating and even fatal conditions; undermedicating may result in few, if any, of the desired physical changes. The type of medication, dosage, and route of administration are critical and can be regulated properly only by a physician.

Estrogens, the female hormones, arenotmagicbulletstogrowbreasts. Their effect is global. They will affect major bodily systems, including the emotions, the sex drive, and the ability to procreate. This is also true for androgens, the male hormones.

It is important that those who desire to be on hormones understand the physical changes which will occur over time and the effect those changes will have on their careers and on their relationships with others. To do this, the individual should explore his or her gender dysphoria with a psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor prior to beginning hormone therapy.

Hormones should never be taken without an authorizing letter from a clinical behavioral scientist as defined by the "Standards of Care" of the Harry Benjamin International Gender DysphoriaAssociation, Inc., and then, only under the supervision of a physician who specializes in internal medicine or endocrinology, and who periodically monitors hormone patients' blood chemistries. It is critical that the individual be aware of the risks and benefits of the medications they are taking so that they can make informed decisions about them.

Those who are interestedinlearning more about the benefits and risks of hormones may read Hormones by Sheila Kirk, M.D. This bookthoroughly discusseshormonal therapy in language the consumer can understand. It is available for $9.50 postpaid from the International Foundation for Gender Education, P.O. Box 3657,Wayland, MA 01778.

Remember: Safeguard your heart and your life. With competent medical supervision, the risks from hormones are minimal.

FThis "Medical Advisory Bulletin" was issued by AEGIS, the American Educational Gender Information Service. Inc.
FFReprinted from Renaissance News, Vol. 6, No. 7.

(BOARD - continued from page 7)

A motion was made and approved that reimbursement requests for authorized expenses must be submitted to the treasurer within sixty days of the date the expense was incurred. This was done in order to keep our accounting and budget analysis as up to date as possible. Late reimbursement requests will have to be submitted to the board for individual consideration.

Because our yearly budget is now over five thousand dollars we will be required to make more detailed financial filings with the IRS. All chapters will now have to submit a balance sheet or yearly budget to the National office so the required IRS form can be completed.

If you would like a copy of the National budget send a self addressed envelope to the treasurer at the National office. Cash on hand at the time of the meeting was one thousand five hundred and sixty dollars.

Membership reports that renewals for ninety three are in pace with the renewal rates of previous years. All members are reminded that this is the last issue of the Renaissance News that they will receive if they do not renew for ninety three.

The January issue of the Renaissance News was mailed a bit later than usual. Subsequent issues are expected to be mailed on or before the first of each month. Experience indicates that some members receive the Newsletter within three to five days after mailing while others have reported getting their issues as long as three weeks after mailing.

Our Editor in chief, Angela Gardner reminds all those interested in submitting articles for the newsletter to please submit the ideas first, before sending in the written article. Angela will let you know when she will need the article or if someone else is writing a piece on the same subject. Please submit your ideas to:Angela Gardner c/o Renaissance News, PO Box 530, Bensalem,PA 19020. The publishing deadline for each issue is the sixteenth of the preceding month. (March sixteenth for the April News,etc.)

Outreach reports that a speakers training seminar will be held in April.(See, "Everybody's Talkin'" in Angela's column for details.)

South Jersey Chapter rep Emily Sheldon reported the results of the Chapter election. (See Angela's column for the details.)

Greater Philadelphia reported gearing up for the IFGE convention by scheduling a silent auction for their January meeting. Money raised will be used to fund our hostess duties. (Ed.s'note: See story on page one.)

Other items discussed by the board included a review of the January second planning meeting. (Over fifty items were discussed at that meeting and twenty eight were singled out as items to be pursued in the immediate future. Watch the newsletter for further details.)

The board will investigate the possibility of tax exempt purchasing based on our non-profit status.

Kelly Harris offered her resignation as an at large member of the board due to her inability to attend meetings. The board accepted her resignation and the Managing Director will be sending Kelly a letter of thanks for all of her work on behalf of the organization.

Michelle Lynn was given an at large position on the board in recognition of her service to Renaissance.

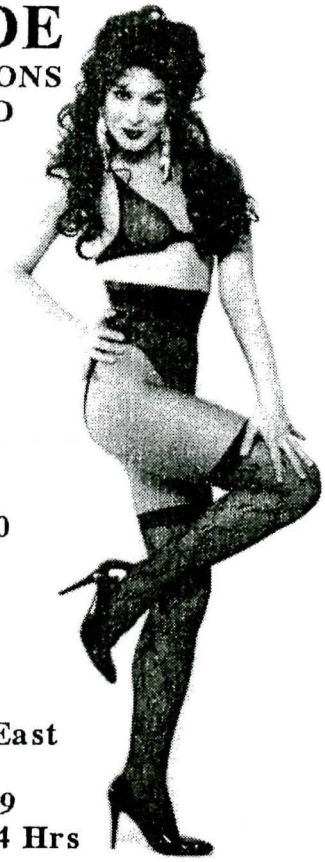
The next Renaissance National Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April tenth, at one PM. Any member wishing to attend is welcome. Check with your Chapter Leader or a National Board member for details.

Positions Available

The Chéz Renaissance Casino has openings for good looking ladies, over 21, to work as cocktail waitresses, Black Jack dealers, and other casino positions during the Renaissance charity benefit at the IFGE convention. Must be able to work in high heels, provide your own uniform (all black for waitresses, white blouse & black skirt for dealers). Employment will be at the Casino lounge on the second floor of the Hilton Hotel, at Broad and Locust streets in Center City, Philadelphia, from 8 PM to 1 AM, Friday, March 19, 1993.

Each casino worker will receive a mint set of 100 MONAS. Applications may be mailed to Susan Persing at the Renaissance National office or submitted in person at the February meeting of the Philadelphia Chapter.

WILDSIDE
TRANSFORMATIONS BOUTIQUE AND TV HOTEL
(AS SEEN ON THE DONAHUE SHOW)



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Held at the Wayne Counseling Center with Dr. Lee Etscovitz, Renaissance National Librarian and former Professor of Human Behavior at Drexel University.

Sessions begin at 7:30 PM on Mondays & Wednesdays. The fee is $25 per person per session.

Advance registration required. Write PO Box 471, Willow Grove, PA 19090 or call 215•657•1560.

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Hot•Stuff

JoAnn Roberts

"Two or more people actively engaged in pursuit of a definite purpose with a positive mental attitude, constitute an unbeatable force."

Happy New Year babies! Let's hope 1993 exceeds all of our expectations. Now, Ms. Roberts (that's me) must apologize for the relatively somber tone of her last column. There were lotsa things competing for her attention during the holiday season, not the least of which was a house full of college freshpersons. No dressing for awhile for this DQ. However, the bright spot in all this was the receipt of that drop-dead-red suit I mentioned in a previous column as a Christmas present. I had no idea my family was reading this column. I must remember that for my birthday column.

Speaking of drop-dead-red, that's the color on everybody-who's-anybody's lips these days. But, honey, it's not just any old red. It must be one that's not too blue and not too brown. Check out YSL Poinsettia, Ultima II Click, Chanel Dragon Red (my fave). L'Oréal True Cherry, or Lancôme Flamant.

According to those who say they "know' these things, the nail of the 90s is short, almost shovel-like, with rounded corners and tips extending just to finger's end. What?? Not this girl! Give me blood-red talons any day. After all, long lacquered nails are signs of power and wealth and if you aren't actually powerful and wealthy, you might as well look as though you are.

Another nail trend is called layering—that's combining sheer coats of different colors. I don't know about you, but this Queen of Prussia isn't dressed unless her nails are done, but blood-red polish can be a real pain to remove, especially if you're only going to be dressed a short while. So, layered pink and beige polish can make nails look and feel finished, but is easy to remove without stains.

Fantasy is always Hot Stuff and the hottest stuff in the modeling scene are Sci-Fi and Fantasy females. These new-age kits are nothing like the old Aurora figures of the 1950s. Of special note are model kits of Elvira–Mistress of the Dark, the Maria Robot from *Metropolis* and Catwoman from *Batman Returns*. Then, there is the Warrior Statue Series from SQ Productions. These five female heroic figures stand six and a half inches tall and are similar in style to Frazetta and Boris depictions of warrior women. Each figure is $35 or you can have the set for $150. If you're interested in the figures or similar artwork, send $1 to SQ at PO Box 4569, Toms River, NJ 08754.

According to *Vogue*, Paris corsetiere's (that's custom corset maker to those of you who don't speak French) have never been out of work. Here in the U.S., we have our own corsetiere, BR Creations, in Mountain View, California. If you want that perfect fit in a corset (and every TV *must* have at least one real corset—the Queen has two) then write to BR at PO Box 4201, Mt. View, CA 94040. If you just *have* to have one right now, give Paddy a call at Wildside. They stock the finest corsets from England.

Moving over to the continent, we have word of EuroFantasia '93 from friend Jenny Sand who is organizing this first pan-European gathering in Denmark. The eight-day affair is patterned after the Outreach Institute's Fantasia Fair. The information received here notes that Merissa Sherrill Lynn, Executive Director of the International Foundation for Gender Education, will open the event with a keynote address. (Hmm! I wonder who approved that travel expense?) Anyway, the rumor mill has it that Outreach Institute exec Ari Kane is steaming about being left out of the fun. EuroFantasia happens May 8th through the 15th. For information, write to Box 442, N-4301 Sandnes, Norway.

Moving back to the USA, my good friend and Executive Director of AEGIS, Dallas Denny, tells me that Eugene Schrang, M.D. will be visiting the Atlanta based organization to discuss the latest techniques in reassignment and cosmetic surgery. Dr. Schrang is a protege of Dr. Stanley Beiber, and practices in Wisconsin. We've been hearing very good reports about him and here's a chance to meet him up close and personal. Schrang's talk will take place Saturday, February 20, 1993 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Tickets are $10 advance sales or $15 at the door. Contact AEGIS at 404•939•0244.

Back to the *really* important stuff—there are many ways to make your lipstick last and now Princess Borghese adds another to the list—foundation built right into the lipstick. The downside is the cost, $20 a tube. But, like Oscar Wilde, I have only the simplest of tastes: only the best.

Diversity is the watchword for the decade and it means including everyone. You can see the "diversity" influence even in cosmetic lines. For example: Cover Girl has extended their *New Shades of Beauty* cosmetics for all skin tone types, especially darker skin. Now if only we could get our community leaders to embrace diversity, that would be something.

If *Cosmo* and *Allure* (you *must* read these to stay on top of things) are a little too "fluffy" for your tastes, pick up a copy of *Lears*. This magazine, published by the widow of the jet magnate, is short on the fashion scene but long on useful and thought-provoking features for the more serious woman. Well... I may read it, but I'll never take myself seriously.

Most of you know about the Sexy Shoes catalog and if you don't, look around, they've been advertising almost everywhere. Here's another shoe resource, StatSHOEesque in Florida. They say they specialize in "high-fashion" shoes in sizes

Hot•Stuff

from 9½ to 14, narrow to wide. Call 305•452•9816 for a free catalog.

!!Hot Tip!!: We need new blood and leadership on the board of IFGE, so when your ballot comes, throw out the old and bring in the new. My personal hot candidate is F-t-M Taylor McGowan from Houston, Texas. Taylor has impressed quite a few folks. Vote early and vote often.

To make your lashes look thick and lush, smear (yes, smear) eyeliner pencil into the base of the lashes and follow with two coats of mascara. Separate the lashes between coats with a special lash comb.

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Just a reminder to save your money—those home electrolysis units don't work. I just saw one advertised in a fashion mag for $20. Save that Jackson and spend it on two pairs of those wonderfully sexy microfiber pantyhose I told you about.

Have you ever wanted to be a model, or at least be able to do the catwalk like superstars Christy Turlington and Cindy Crawford. So you can. Here, courtesy of *W*, are the ah... right steps. (1) Cross Step: One foot crosses completely over the other; (2) Pivot: When your crossover foot hits the ground, twist it toward the inside giving a swing; (3) Bounce: Usually on the front-end of the Pivot, but just a little; (4) Arm Swing: At the end of the runway, hands are firmly placed just below hips; (5) Hip Swivel: Roll out the hip just a tad at the shift of weight, then roll back in the other direction; (6) Head: Hold your head perfectly still while your body sways beneath it; (7) Gaze: Eyes straight ahead, aloof and above it all. Got that? Okay, now ah-one and ah-two.

Since the January newsletter went out so late, I'm going to skip a Quickie Quiz for this issue to give people time to respond to the January quizzle. (See, I do too know how to be nice.) But, just to keep you trivia buffs sated, here's a bit-o-Trek trivia you won't find just anywhere. The typeface used on the saucer of the Enterprise for "NCC 1701D" is Eurostyle and the Trek designers copied it from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

I hope that I'll get to meet a lot of you during the IFGE convention here in March. Unlike some other editors, I *love* to meet the people who read my stuff and I always have time to chat. So, if you see me at the convention, stop and say "Hi!"

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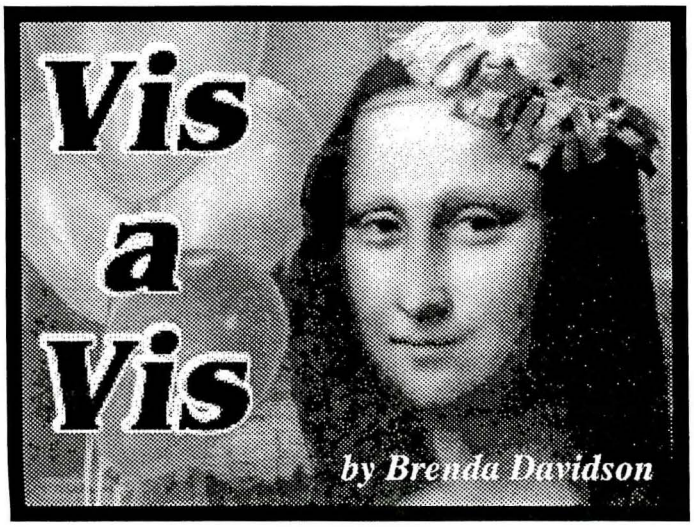


Optimism: noun, 1. The doctrine that everything in nature is ordered for the best. 2. The tendency to always take the most hopeful view of matters social or political. 3. Belief in the world's improvement.

Every month I wade through a six inch pile of gender gazettes from around the world searching for cool news from other seekers of the grail. Complete reading of some of this stuff is akin to being force fed by Bugs Bunny but in the end I do get a bird's eye view of how the community is doing. It turns out that with a few exceptions we're not doing as bad as some would have us believe.

The first long term piece of evidence confirming this is the simple observation of the increase in the number of gender organizations and support groups in this country during the last twenty years. While it is true such organizations existed well before 1973, their growth after 1983 is staggering. Why this sudden growth? Even though transgendered people have existed throughout recorded history (and most probably before), could it be that we are in the right place at the right time? Has modern communication, public acceptance (or at least a will to listen) and a transgendered population determined to live their lives as happy individuals finally come together to move mankind up the next rung on the humanity ladder?

Time is on our side now so it looks as though each and every one of us should keep doing exactly what we're doing. This is only the first inning of the ball game folks, and no one knows how long the inning is going to take. With that I have only two questions. 1) Where's Carl Sagan when you need him? 2) If I wear a green dress tomorrow will it affect something I do twenty years from now? Brenda Davidson's definition of optimism: We're not in bad shape for the shape we're in.

DELETERIOUS PHYSIQUE

Where there is prey there are bound to be lions and tigers and bears or blood sucking, scumbag, tuxedoed leeches. Recently I received an envelope addressed to Renaissance marked to my attention. It looked innocent enough. There was a company logo and a return address where one should be. I opened it and read as follows: (with my editing along)

Brenda Davidson
Renaissance-LSV
Box 2122
Harrisburg, Pa. 17105-2122 [Just fine so far]

Gentleman: [First mistake]

We are a voice mail bureau specializing in 800/900 interactive services. [Credibility is beginning to slide] Our client Michael Salem Enterprises Inc., [Reread opening sentence] who has a 900 Telephone Program "Transvestites Meeting Transvestites and Others," [credibility has just slid right into the dumper] has asked us to obtain your written permission to include your events or organization in this program. [A snowball in hell would have more of a chance] This listing is completely free and offers you a way of advertising your event or organization to this particular market.[I'm not sure I would want anyone reading this listing to come to my event, and putting me into a "particular market" really pisses me of f.]

If you are willing to grant permission to be included in this line, please indicate so, by sending us a letter of authorization on your organizations letterhead. [Again, the snowball thing.] A sample letter is enclosed.[This looked more like a statement of expatriotisim.]

Your cooperation is anticipated and appreciated.[Again, the snowball thing.] Should you have any questions, please call us. [No need to waste the dime, you've answered any I might have had.]

Sincerely,
Ronald Blau
President [Ron, if you're going to use that title, respectfully do a little more research on your clients.]

Ronald is the president of:
Tele Disc Inc.
33 Great Neck Rd.
Great Neck, NY. 11021-3382

Under other circumstances I might have considered the listing as a way of reaching out to those who need to know there is better. While there are legitimate transvestite vendors MSE Inc's been ripping respect off of this community for long enough.

A LITTLE RIP OF FAITH

I was wondering when our born again brethren would surface and now my soul has received this script to pass on to the flock.

The "Grace and Lace" publication for Christian crossdressers hails from the heart of the bible belt in (why do I feel like someone is looking over my shoulder while I'm writing this?) Jackson, Mississippi. For those who may be struggling with crossdressing and religion this newsletter does present some fruit for thought. I am not religious by any stretch of the imagination and at first I cast this into the "so much for that one" pile without opening it. Curiosity killed the cat and got the best of me so I just had to find out what this one was all about. One of the pieces was a twelve promise crossdressers "Desiderata," or as they called it, "A Crossdressers Contact With Self."

I will know new freedom and happiness. I will not regret the past nor deny its existence in my life.

I will come to know serenity.
I will come to know peace.
I will seek to help others no matter

how badly I have failed myself.

I will discard feelings of uselessness and self pity.

I will shift my interest from serving myself to serving others like me.

I will discard self-seeking as a way of life.

I will allow my whole attitude and outlook on life to change.

I will no longer fear what people think nor will I fear economic insecurity anymore.

I will handle formerly baffling situations intuitively and well.

I will come to understand God is doing for me what I could never do for myself.

While you may not agree with all of these promises I think you will find some of them staying in your mind.

Grace and Lace Letter
c\o Lee Frances Heller (Publisher)
P.O. Box 31253
Jackson, MS 39286

REVELATION

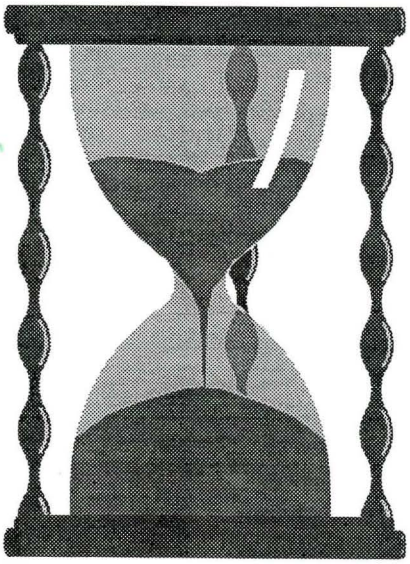
The Tau Chi chapter of Tri-Ess in Alief, Texas, got a soul shaking at one of their meetings recently when a member showed up with a date. The level of conversation dropped off considerably when the western attired gentleman complete with beard, cowboy boots and hat entered the room. The silence was finally broken by the member announcing that the intruder was their speaker for the evening, Sharon Stone of Sharon Stone and Associates Counseling Services. Sharon had been in a play earlier in the evening as a woman crossdressed as a male. A video of the night's performance was shown and a few thoughts were shared. The thought that really hit home was a question posed by Sharon asking the attendees how they would feel if their spouses were to come to them and say this is the way they would dress from now on. This netted a response in the newsletter of, "I would accept my spouse no matter what," with a further thought of, "but the beard and mustache would have to go." It got interesting when attendees were asked how many would be willing to let their wives come to bed dressed like this. Amazingly the top five answers were:

1) I've got a headache.
2) I'm going to watch the late, late, late, movie.
3) I'm hungry.
4) I just don't know.
5) Oh what the hell.

Seems the "Share and share alike" rule doesn't apply here or "What's good for the goose is not good for the goose if she's dressed like a gander." The subject gained print in different sections of the same newsletter with a bold face note from the board of directors requesting clearance of all guest and speakers prior to the meeting date to preserve security. Sounds like some skins may be a bit thin.... or feeling guilty.

WE GET LETTERS

Recently I have received several fan mail letters addressed to my old post office box as advertised in I.F.G.E.'s Tapestry. Being the first "fan mail" I've received and since I was really not expecting it I neglected to give an outlet to your praises. You may want to jot this down so I will give you time to find a writing instrument and paper.



OK, you're back so without further ado the new address is as follows:

Brenda R. Davidson
P.O. Box 4714
Harrisburg, PA. 17111

Un-fan mail will remain unopened. Letterbombs will not be signed for.

ATTENTION!

Anyone in the transgendered community who is involved in the March on Washington please contact JoAnn Roberts immediately.

P. O. Box 61263
King of Prussia,
PA 19406

Thank you...

(SUPPORT - continued from page 1)

people will be too scared to advertise their services. But will they? Consider this: I stopped by the home of another board member not too long ago and their was a gentleman doing repairs on the house. He approached me and informed me that he was a member of Renaissance. Well, it just so happened that I needed work on my home too and here was a perfect opportunity to throw a little money into the community and get my house fixed up. Even better, I didn't have to worry about this guy seeing anything he shouldn't because he already knew who I was and what I do for a living. (I usually have magazines, newsletters and tons of photos all over my office, not to mention my stock shelves.)

Now that's only one story, but there should be a lot more. We should be offering each other the benefits of our services, but we don't because, we assume, that everyone is afraid of discovery. All I can say is that in my personal experience, the fear of discovery is much, much worse than the actual consequences. Besides, if you can't trust a sister, then just who the hell can you trust in this world?

So, all of you who have services to offer — accountants, attorneys, physicians, designers, landscapers, house painters, realtors, whatever — join in and put your services to work in the community where it will benefit our members the most.

The board has considered a proposal to include Services Offered listings in the newsletter, much like the Classified Ads in the newspapers. The fee would be very nominal (*e.g.*; $3 for 3 lines for 3 months). We need to hear from you if you want to place a Service Offered ad. Please contact JoAnn Roberts at 215-640-9449 or Angela Gardner, Newsletter Editor, c/o PO Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Ads will begin in the March or April issue.

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