Educational TV Channel

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME TEN, NUMBER 1 JULY- AUGUST, 1991

In June the 1991-1992 ETVC officers assumed their new roles. Pictured above are most of the new and returning officers.

MARTINA RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ETVC

TERI BECOMES MISS ETVC

With 1991 Miss ETVC, Cecile moving to southern California, she was replaced by runner-up Teri (left), as our new Miss ETVC.

Club members voted to return several familiar faces to office in our annual elections in May by re-electing President Trina Martina, Treasurer Nancy Ann and Outreach Chairwoman Telzey.

Newly elected officers were Carol, Secretary; Erica, Education Committee Chairwoman; and Zia, Social Committee Chairwoman.

Per our bylaws, each committee chairwoman was asked if she wished to share the office with her runner-up and all agreed. Joining the group were Evette, Education Committee Co-chairwoman and Lauren, Outreach Committee Co-chairwoman. Shauanna and Quillee will serve as Social Committee Co-co-chairwomen (sounds delicious!). Since the election, Erica has been forced to resign for health reasons and Paulette has agreed to fill in.

Together, all of the elected officers form our club's Executive Committee, a body that meets monthly to determine club policy and activities. Members are encouraged to attend these meetings which are listed in the calendar.

There was no election for Vice-president this year because the lone candidate decided to withdraw, but Rusty is being persuaded by the Executive Committee that she would be perfect for the post.

Congratulations to the new officers and thanks to our outgoing officers including: Secretary Cheryl, Education Co-Chair Jessica, Outreach Co-Chair Kim, Social Co-Chairs Jo Anne and Diahanna and Vice-president Kristyn.

Congratulations also to Teri, our new Miss ETVC. She succeeds Cecile, who moved to Southern California. Teri was first runner- up to Cecile in this year's Miss ETVC contest.

DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES

It's dues renewal time, friends, and time for you to support your club by sending in a check or money order for $20 for your full year's membership. By sending in your dues right away you won't miss a single edition of your newsletter and you'll be able to take advantage of member discounts at our socials. Membership dues are the single most important way your club raises the funds it needs to operate.

WE'VE MOVED!

Actually, to be more precise, the Post Office has moved us. In either case, the result is the same. Beginning July 1, 1991, ETVC will have a new mailing address:

ETVC
PO Box 426486
San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

Please make a note of it for future reference.

Editor's Notes

You may remember last month that I criticized radio personality Rush Limbaugh, a nationally syndicated commentator, whose show is aired locally on KNBR. In a February 4 commentary that was widely reported in the gay press, Limbaugh took a cheap shot at us and gays saying that if a proposed SF ordinance that protects transvestites and other sexual minorities from discrimination goes through then there should also be an ordinance to protect "child molesters and necrophiliacs".

I encouraged people to write and complain but one of our members, Stephanie, decided to call the station directly. Incredibly, she got a direct phone number for Limbaugh, who works out of New York, and got him on the phone. Interestingly, Limbaugh said he did not mean to demean us or gays and that his words, which were widely reported in the gay press, were taken out of context. Stephanie said she believed him to be sincere and promised to send him some ETVC material. I guess that will include the newsletter in which I called him a jerk. Okay, I'll withdraw that assessment since he obviously behaved in a very courteous way to our girl. Hopefully he meant what he said to her.

But what I really want to do is thank Stephanie for following up and contacting Mr. Limbaugh in a appropriate manner. What she did is the kind of positive, nonconfrontational political action that can do wonders to shape the views that opinion makers have of us.

Good going.

Similarly, we should be grateful for people like Ronda Schneider who sent a very well-thought out letter to the American Psychiatric Association asking them to remove transvestism from their list of mental illnesses. Read the letter elsewhere in this newsletter.

What a pathetic election our club just had!

No knock on the new officers, all are terrific, but in this election four people ran unopposed; there was no candidate for vice president and one person who was elected said later that she didn't even want to be on the ballot.

Ladies of the club: This is a bunch of bull. This year ETVC had more than 450 members, a number that made our club the largest in the nation by far, yet we find it difficult to field more than one candidate for most of the key offices in this organization. Sheesh!

NEWS FROM BIZZARO WORLD A group of hate-mongering jerks called the Traditional Values Coalition have been getting some ink lately for leading the looney fringe's assault on AB 101, the proposed Gay Civil Rights bill. That is bad enough, but for some reason they've decided to use us as a foil to try and scare legislators even though gender people are excluded from the protections offered in the bill. According to literature from this group, if the bill is passed, "Homosexuals, i.e. transvestites, sadist (sic) pedophiles, lesbians, gays and bestiality (sic) will have the same minority status as blacks, Hispanics and Asians." I'm surprised they didn't throw in the necrophiliacs like our one-time enemy Rush Limbaugh did.

WE GOT FRIENDS TOO. Who is the most famous woman in the world today? Hint: Madonna. I love Madonna, I admit it, especially now that she has publicly expressed her fondness for transvestites by featuring TVs in her "Justify My Love" video and in her stunning photo series in Rolling Stone Magazine. Quoth Madonna: "It would be great to be both sexes. Effeminate men intrigue me more than anything in the world. I see them as my alter egos. I think like a guy, but I'm feminine. So I relate to feminine men." (from Vanity Fair as reported by Cross-Talk).

Other Stuff: In one of those endless surveys about American attitudes a couple of advertising guys reported in May that their survey had found that four percent of Americans would be willing to have a sex-change for $10 million. Hmmn, I know a few people who would do that for considerably less...

Rich Bitch #1: Columnist Liz Smith recently reported that a man wearing a man's shirt and jacket but a women's skirt, heels and hose went into Palm Beach's famed Kennedy hangout, the Au Bar, and explained that "I'm a multi-millionaire and I like to wear dresses." Liz reported no problems and said our girl left later in a stretch limo...

Rich Bitch #2: According to a report in Cross-Talk, the British tabs are calling Lord David Linley, a member of the Royal family, "Lord Lipstick." Linley, who has been known to wear rather androgenous outfits, celebrated his 29th birthday early this year by wearing a long glittering caftan at a party that featured drag queens and rocker Elton John. Gee, I wonder if he knows who does Lady Di's hair? – Cindy R. Martin

ETVC NEWSLETTER

ETVC is a non-sexual, membership based organization with the purpose of serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services.

For details about ETVC programs, membership, newsletter subscriptions, and classified ads, please write to: ETVC Secretary, PO Box 6486, San Francisco, CA 94101.

OFFICERS

President	Martina
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Carol
Treasurer	Nancy Ann
Education	Evette & Erica
Outreach	Lauren & Telzey
Social	Zia

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership (as of 5/31/91)	455
1990 Membership	431
New members this year	138

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on 4/1/91	$5,138.23
April income	1,069.70
April expenses	1,434.20
Balance on 4/30/91	4,773.73
May income	1,919.00
May expenses	2,042.74
Balance on 5/31/91	4,649.99

The ETVC Newsletter is published in February, April, June, August, October and December. Newsletter contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and the editor, and are not necessarily those of ETVC.

Other organizations may reprint or reproduce portions of the newsletter for their members, provided ETVC is acknowledged.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor:	Cindy
Design, Layout & Printing:	Print Wise
Photographer:	David Swanson
Production:	Carol

AD RATES

	per issue	per year
Business Card	$20	$100
4" x 5"	$50	$250
8" x 5"	$80	$400
8" x 10"	$160	$800

PERSONAL ADS

ETVC will accept personal ads from ETVC members at the rate of $1 per 3 lines. We will not accept ads with a purely sexual objective.

Send ad copy and a check for the appropriate amount to: ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

Ad deadlines are the first weekend of the month of publication (June, August, October, December, February and April).

HOTLINE 415-763-3959

Carol is new ETVC Secretary

The new 1991-92 ETVC year began in June, the new officers have assumed their duties. Returning to their former positions are Martina as President, Telzey as Co-Chair of Outreach, and Nancy Ann as Treasurer. The new Vice President, subject to confirmation, is Rusty. Zia is the Social Committee Chair, and Lauren H. is Co-Chair of the Outreach Committee. The chair of the Education Committee was undecided at press time.

In taking over from Cheryl as the new ETVC Secretary, my duties include overseeing the production of the newsletter, and taking minutes at the Executive Committee meetings. As I reviewed some of the ETVC statistical data, I noted that for the year just ending, (as of 5-31-91), we had 455 current members.

I would like to see involvement in ETVC activities by more of our members. If you have suggestions or ideas for ETVC activities, please send them to me through the ETVC mailbox. Please note the new address for ETVC is P. 0. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Articles for the newsletter are also welcome. I am looking forward to my year as Secretary. I welcome your comments and suggestions for the future activites of ETVC.

ETVC is always in need of volunteers for our various activities.If you are interested in helping us out, please contact me, I will direct your inquiry to the proper person. Involvement in ETVC activities can be done in many ways, there are Committees and other activities available.

I wish to bring to your attention the selection of Thalia as ETVC Member of the Year. Her work in heading the Speakers' Bureau has resulted in ETVC representatives addressing a record number of persons in college classrooms and the public at large.

– Carol

OBITUARY

MARY BERNICE FLYNN

Mary Bernice Flynn, an important member of our Education Committee, passed away in early June at the age of 78. She was dedicated to the ideals of education and was always willing to donate her time to help. Her philosophy which she would proclaim proudly, was "just enjoy it," and she lived by her words. Her daughter, who told us of Mary Bernice's passing, wanted us to know how much joy ETVC had given Mary Bernice in the years she had been in the City. I regret that I hadn't had the chance to tell her how greatly I appreciated her help and support throughout my term as Education Co-Chair. We will miss her dearly.

– Jessica

JONI EVELING ISRAEL
COUNSELOR & DIRECTOR

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Some Tips on Voice

Yvonne Gordon, a speech and language pathologist formerly with a gender program in San Diego, gave a talk on May 11 about speaking like a woman. She said changing your voice is much harder than changing your appearance. Yet it is crucial to passing. Some TS's can do everything but voice, and because of that cannot convincingly make the leap of persona change. However, the change can be accomplished by almost everyone if they get a lot of instruction and are motivated. Here are the basic principles:

Pitch - Males can raise their pitch to the bottom of the female range, but if they do it wrong, it sounds squeaky and artificial, and the stress can cause nodules on the vocal cords and other serious problems. It is very important to relax the voice and to avoid strain yet still get acceptable pitch, and this takes practice.

Breath - Women use more breath than men. Breathiness helps protect the vocal cords as well as helping to sound more female.

Tone Focus - The chest is used prominently for resonance by men, whereas women use the neck, face and cheek. Bring the sound out through the face and eliminate chest resonance as much as possible.

Intonation - Use a lilt in your voice. Boys growing up learn to limit their range, which becomes a habit which may be hard to break. Women play with their voice and are more expressive in all ways, including moving their lips and face more when they speak.

Gestures - Men limit their gestures. Moving the body when you speak is very feminine. Women's body posture is also more relaxed.

Content - Men tend to talk about things that are abstract or impersonal (urban events, sports, problem solving) whereas women frequently talk about their emotions, their bodies and relationships to other people (sex relationships, families, health, weight, food, clothing).

Relation to the Other - Women tend to be non-assertive and more caring. A woman asks for something; she doesn't demand it. She is apologetic at the slightest possibility someone's feelings might have been trampled on. (If a man bumps into her in the supermarket, it is she who apologizes.) She spends more time listening to what others say and asking what they think.

To work on the above requires careful observation of other women, which can be done without a therapist. The therapist serves to give a reality check, since it is often hard to get good feedback from anyone else. Developing a woman's voice takes from two months to two years depending on the amount of support you have and how closely you work with your significant others.

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SPECIAL EVENTS

Movie Drag
July 13

Ralph Judd, owner of perhaps the world's best collection of drag- oriented movie memorabilia, will give a talk on movie drag on Saturday, July 13, at The Galleon, 718 14th St., off Market. Posters and other memorabilia will be discussed and displayed. For information on the location and time call 873-7893.

Mary Kay Makeover
July 20

Joyce Minnig, a Mary Kay Cosmetics beauty consultant, will demonstrate skin care and make-up techniques during a seminar on Saturday, July 20. There will be a door prize and offers of free makeovers and photo sessions as well. For information on the location and time call 873-7893.

Friendship Party
July 25

This social emphasizes forming new friendships, finding people who share a common interest and discovering the varied and interesting personalities that are a part of our unique organization. To encourage you to meet as many new friends as possible, there will be Friendship Cards (the game is bingo with names). Fun, prizes and a great chance to meet new people. Thursday, July 25, 8 p.m. at the Chez Mollet, 527 Bryant St., San Francisco. Members $3, guests $5.

Lauren on Stage
August 6

Our own Lauren, otherwise known as the "Singing Transvestite" will be performing at Freight & Salvage, 1111 Addison St. (at University) on Tuesday, August 6. Show starts at 8 p.m. Call Lauren at [redacted] or Freight & Salvage at 548-7603 for directions.

Public Speaking Seminar
August 10

Thalia, the hardworking leader of our speaker's bureau, will give a presentation on August 10 about speaking engagements and how you can take part in these important outreach activities (see Carol Clark's article elsewhere in this newsletter recounting her experiences).

Dance, Dance, Dance
August 29

Shimmy on down to the Chez in late August for the best dance party of the year. Music you can move your feet to no matter how young or old you may be. There will be a dance contest and a prize for the best theme costume (choose your own era). The fun starts at 8 p.m. at the Chez Mollet. Members $5, guests $8.

Self Defense Seminar

Andy Murphy, an expert in the art of self-defense, will discuss and possibly demonstrate techniques. For information on the location and time call 873-7893.

The Diablo Valley Girls

What's this? Another gender group? You're right! The Diablo Valley Girls is a new group forming in the Concord/Walnut Creek area. Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at 8 p.m. at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo in Walnut Creek. For more information, write to: DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or contact Donna Freeman or Janet Nichols at ETVC functions.

New group for TGs

A peer support group is forming for Transgenderists who have recently crossed over or for those seriously considering doing so in the very near future. San Francisco-Oakland Area. Contact: Boxholder 229, 3311 Mission St. San Francisco, CA 94110

(Ed. note: This is a legitimate group being organized by a longstanding member of ETVC)

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ETVC/RGA Rap Group

The most exciting rap group in the Bay Area meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at the New Community of Faith Church in San Jose. The address is 6350 Rainbow Drive in San Jose. The next two meetings will be on Monday, July 8 and Monday, August 7 from 8-10 pm. There are only two rules: no one dominates the discussion and no one discusses the rap group outside the group. If you know the way to San Jose, join us. If not contact Kim (408) [redacted] or Martina at (408) [redacted] for more information.

TV/TS/TG GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES
A Calendar of Events for July & August

JULY					
1	**ETVC**	**Outreach Committee**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Sunnyvale**	**(415) 849-4112**
2	••••	Foxy Lady Social	7:30 - 9:30 PM	San Francisco	(415) 285-4980
3	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224
5	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 988-0790
6	**ETVC**	**Executive Committee**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(408) 984-5619**
8	**ETVC/RGA**	**Rap Group**	**Meets 8-10 PM**	**San Jose**	**(408) 984-5619**
11	**ETVC**	**Significant Others Support**	**Meets 8-10 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
12	**ETVC**	**Poker Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
13	**ETVC**	**Education Committee**	**Meets at 12:30**	**The Galleon**	**(415) 873-7893**
13	**ETVC**	**Movie Drag**	**Starts at 2 PM**	**The Galleon**	**(415) 873-7893**
13	**ETVC/RGA**	**Daybreak**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Mountain View**	**(408) 984-5619**
17	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224
18	**ETVC**	**Couples Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Foster City**	**(415) 664-1499**
19	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 988-0790
20	**ETVC**	**Mary Kay Makeover**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**TBA**	**(415) 873-7893**
25	**ETVC**	**Friendship Night**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Chez Mollet**	**(415) 641-9002**
26	RGA	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	Sunnyvale	(408) 248-2043
26	Pac Ctr	Open Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224
27	SGA	Dinner/Social	Starts at 7 PM	Sacramento	(916) 441-8379
AUGUST					
2	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 988-0790
3	**ETVC**	**Executive Committee**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Richmond**	**(408) 984-5619**
5	**ETVC**	**Outreach Committee**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Leandro**	**(415) 849-4112**
6	••••	Foxy Lady Social	7:30 - 9:30 PM	San Francisco	(415) 285-4980
7	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224
8	**ETVC**	**Significant Others Support**	**Meets 8-10 PM**	**Pleasant Hill**	**(415) 664-1499**
9	**ETVC**	**Poker Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**San Francisco**	**(415) 664-1499**
10	**ETVC**	**Education Committee**	**Meets at 12:30**	**TBA**	**(415) 873-7893**
10	**ETVC**	**Speakers Bureau**	**Starts at 2 PM**	**TBA**	**(415) 873-7893**
10	**ETVC/RGA**	**Daybreak**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Mountain View**	**(408) 984-5619**
12	**ETVC/RGA**	**Rap Group**	**Meets 8-10 PM**	**San Jose**	**(408) 984-5619**
16	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 988-0790
21	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224
22	**ETVC**	**Couples Social**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Richmond**	**(415) 664-1499**
23	RGA	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	Sunnyvale	(408) 248-2043
24	SGA	Dinner/Social	Starts at 8 PM	Sacramento	(916) 441-8379
29	**ETVC**	**Dance, Dance, Dance**	**Starts at 8 PM**	**Chez Mollet**	**(415) 641-9002**
30	Pac Ctr	Open Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(415) 841-6224

OTHER GROUPS

Pacific Center for Human Growth, a counseling-oriented growth center, sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, and last Friday of the month at 8:00 PM. The Center is located at 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call (415) 841-6224 for more information.

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA) meets on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 8:00 PM at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. RGA can be contacted by writing: Rainbow Gender Association, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170.

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA) Blue Rose Chapter meets at 8PM on the fourth Saturday of each month at the Town & Country Inn's restaurant, 2060 Auburn Blvd., Sacramento; call (916) 441-8379 for directions. Write: Blue Rose Chapter, PO Box 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456 for more information.

The Tenderloin Self Help Centre meets every Wednesday from 4-6 PM at 191 Golden Gate (at Leavenworth), San Francisco, CA. This is a project of the Central City Community Hospitality House funded by the Community Mental Health Services. Call (415) 554-0518 for details.

Telzey (right) returning Co-Chair of the Outreach Committe, with Lauren (left) as the new Co-Chair.

May was sweeps month on television. You might have caught the shows on crossdressers and their sisters, (that was no lady, she's my brother), the TS Lesbian couples, (just ordinary people), or even Donohue with gay transvestite call girls. And several others, like Diahanna, Mariette Pathy Allen pushing her book, and a very uncomfortable host on Good Morning Bay Area. Watch TV Guide for reruns of these through the summer, and Lauren probably taped the best for our video library. Contact the Outreach Committee to get your name on the telephone tree for upcoming shows, or to be on the list of people who might actually want to be on the shows. (We tried and failed last March to meet a request for a crossdresser and significant other for Sally Jesse Raphael).

So you've got dressed and want somewhere to go right right now? Try these Hotlines: The SF Crystal Prism Court: 415-255-8490, the Imperial Star Empire (Alameda County): 415-814-0365, and Downtown Donna's Dance Club Line: 415-561-9771, (great delivery). And don't forget the South Bay Gender Information Line: 408-984-5619.

New books and videos of interest.

The IFGE announces: *Hormones* by Sheila Kirk, M.D., a definitive, reliable review of hormones, the good, the bad, and warnings, by a doctor with years of experience in the gender community. This book can help transgendered people work cooperatively with their physicians to achieve the best and safest results possible. (See full review elsewhere in this newsletter). $9.50 with postage.

Wives, Partners and Others (Living with Cross-Dressing), edited by Jan and Diane Dixon. An anthology of articles, letters, hints, and speeches, dealing with a wide range of relationships where cross-dressing is a factor. The editors have over 20 years experience in their own relationship. $11.50 w/postage.

On video: Face-to-face discussions with crossdressers and their partners, *Husbands and Wives, Best Friends and Lovers*, produced and directed by Donna Mobley. Many subjects are covered including: coping, negotiations, children, and dealing with serious gender identity conflicts. A personal, emotional, perspective of real people as only the video format can present it. $27.50, including postage.

All these are available from IFGE, PO Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778, or check the next copy of the TV/TS TAPESTRY.

Also newly available is *Transvestites, the Erotic Drive To Crossdress*, (1910), by Magnus Hirschfeld, M.D., in a new translation, 425 pages. This should have been in the public library when I was a boy. 80 years ago, Hirschfeld was able to explore all aspects of transvestism, social, physical, and emotional, showing that while styles have changed, the enthusiasm of devotees has not. In three parts, very comprehensive. From the IFGE for $40.45, or for a special introductory $32.95 from Chevalier Publications, PO Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275.

If you would like to buy 25 copies to donate to libraries, Prometheus Books offers the club 40% off all its human sexuality titles, including the above book. See Outreach Committee to start such a project.

ETVC does a lot of advertising, trying to reach out, provide information, bring people together to share experiences. Sometimes we fail. On May 4, a SF Chronicle item told of 32 year-old Thomas Ledwich of Napa who, at 6:30 in the morning put on a red leather dress and black stockings, locked the hotel door, broke the window with a chair and jumped to his death from the 19th floor of the Golden Gateway Holiday Inn. He left no notes. I can't find anyone who knew him, and there was no follow-up story. Imagine, being up all night considering options, and deciding to dress as he liked, even if he had to die. How absurdly sad.

Next Outreach Committee meetings: July 1, in Sunnyvale, and August 5 at the San Leandro Lyons Restaurant. For more information, call Telzey at 415-[redacted] or see me or Lauren at club events.

Get out of town for these events:

IFGE Dinner/Concert Weekend, in Houston, August 3. Contact: Jackie Thorne, Box 441754, Houston, TX 77244. (713)[redacted]

Joanie Sheldon's Tahoe Vacation. Two weeks in August at Lake Tahoe. Come for dinner, a few days, or all of it, always with good food, good friends, side trips to surrounding vacation areas. Family members especially welcome. Contact Joan Sheldon, C/O RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. She's usually at the ETVC Thursday social.

Symposium For The New Woman (Post-Op TS). Sept. 20-22. Outreach Institute, Box 368, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215. (617)277- 3454.

1st Annual Southern Comfort, in Atlanta, GA. Oct. 3-6. Write: Sigma Epsilon, Linda Peacock, PO Box 7241, Tallahassee, FL 32314- 7241

17th Annual Fantasia Fair, Provincetown, MA, Oct. 18-27. Outreach Institute, Box 368, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215. (617)277-3454

2nd Fall Harvest Weekend, Kansas City, Oct. 31-Nov. 3. Write CAF, Box 4092, Overland Park, KS 66204. (913)268-66204

– Telzey

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Let's Talk

The Significant Other Support (SOS) Group is one of several important aspects that distinguishes ETVC from most organizations of its kind. The Education Committee was eager to give the SOS an open forum to tell us, at the April Seminar, their position concerning life in a relationship with a crossdresser. Julie put together the panel discussion at this well-attended event that included herself, (SO of Donna, Membership Chair and past Secretary), Margo (SO of our Education Co-Chair, Paulette), Kathleen, (SO of Amy), and "BK," (SO of Jane Kemper Bentley). Each one told her story of how they came to know, understand, and cope with their husband's crossdressing. For more information, contact Julie, through the ETVC PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Since Julie's birthday was the previous day, the afternoon ended with a birthday celebration.

Ann, Director of the San Francisco Sex Information Hotline (SFSI), headed a panel discussion for our second seminar in May. SFSI is one of the few such hotlines still in existence, and receives calls from all over the world. The panel explained that this non-profit hot line is not a counseling center but gives information in a supportive and non-judgmental way. All calls are anonymous, the SFSI operator giving a "hotline" name for possible future reference by the caller. Training volunteers occurs twice a year, the next is in early October. The cost for this course for SFSI volunteers is $175. Scholarships are available for members of the gender community. Many of their calls are on gender related issues, there is a need for gender community volunteers for this hotline. If you are interested, contact Ann at SFSI, Box 640054, SF 94164-0054.

This year, we have seen many changes in the Education Committee. Martina and others have done a beautiful job in revamping the Article Library. The Video Library is going strong. The Article Library is available on a table at the ETVC Socials each month at the Chez. We now have a lending library. For a copy of the listing of the materials available in the libraries, write to the Education Committee, at the ETVC P.O. Box. Since we took office last year, Paulette and I have been dedicated to bringing you many educational seminars on a variety of subjects, and we even felt the need to expand the number offered to two per month. We have had such noted therapists as Lin Fraser, Linda Thiele, Sybil Holiday, Bill Henkin, Luanna Rogers, and Ari Kane.

We had a makeup demonstration by Margie Boyle; a voice session by Yvonne Gordon; self-improvement seminars such as Ronda's Bradshaw Rap, Jane Kemper Bentley's Going Public, Pat Armstrong's stress reduction. Organizations like the San Francisco Royal Court, represented by Jacqui Jewels, Andrew and Diedre of the Bisexual Community, the Society of Janus, shared their points of view. For transsexuals, Jamie Green and Loren Cameron of FTM, and Judy Van Maasdam of the Gender Dysphoria Program spoke with us. Let's not forget the Education Faire. I wish to thank you and the many speakers for making possible so many extraordinary seminars.

– Jessica

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Carol's First Daylight Adventure

Melissa telephoned me to act as a replacement speaker with an ETVC delegation speaking to a class at Solano College. It would be my first speaking engagement for ETVC.

The alarm clock awakened me at 4:20 a.m. I allowed two hours to shower, dress and prepare myself as Carol. I had attended a class last year as an observer and had made two classroom presentations for RGA.

I picked up Melissa at 6:30 and together, we picked up Lauren.

There were just over 20 students in the class; most were female, and they ranged from just over high school age to two women who seemed to be in their early 40's. We walked in and exchanged pleasant glances and said hello to the class; there were many curious eyes upon us. Soon the class began. After being introduced by the instructor, Melissa opened the talk by explaining ETVC and then each of us in turn gave a synopsis of our life history as a crossdresser.

The students were very receptive to us and took a genuine interest in asking thought-provoking questions. What might have seemed "routine" questions to us were new and of interest to the students. Questions ranged from the usual "Which bathrooms?" to "How do you hide your male parts?" "How can you sit with your legs crossed?" Most of the questions were asked by the female students. The students seemed to have a good rapport with us; it was a small room and was almost like a discussion among friends the way we discussed the topic of crossdressing in an informal, lighthearted manner. Other questions included, "Do you ever wear women's clothing under your male clothes; do you have children, what do they think (same for friends, co-workers, relatives); at what age did you begin; what is your age now?" Several of the women seemed surprised that we would take such an interest in the details of what it takes to become proficient at looking like a woman.

The only skirts and heels were worn by us. The women in the class wore casual shoes and pants or shorts. One older woman told us she once had noticed at Alders in Oakland many size 11 and 12 women's shoes with heels up to 4 inches. The clerk said they were sold to men who liked to wear women's clothes. We had no hostile or confrontational questions. The people accepted our responses well and followed questions up with other related questions.

Walking on and off the campus, we had received no unusual looks; everyone who glanced our way assumed we were as we seemed, women. Confidence goes a long way. Looking scared or out of place draws attention to yourself. Looking the part of a real woman, in appropriate attire, blending in well, enabled each of us to pass the "First Glance" test. After that, people ignored us.

On the drive home we stopped by a friend of ETVC, the Wigatorium in Pinole. Lyndria, the owner, was courteous and we got reacquainted and talked of wig characteristics. We stopped in an Albany restaurant on the way home for a late breakfast. The staff there was most hospitable toward us and displayed only smiles and no contempt as we dined as ladies among their regular crowd.

We drove to a cosmetics store, Beauty Plus, in San Leandro, and received a mini-course in makeup application from Sharon, a sales lady who works there. She was quite polite to us, even commenting to us as she rang up our sale, that we were "lucky in not having to do this except when you want to, and you never have to cope with PMS!"

I arrive at home at about 2 p.m., my taking the day off from work had allowed me to remain "dressed" at home until my wife returned from work. This was a first in many ways for me. It was the first time I ever had a daylight-only adventure as Carol; the earliest in the day I had ever gone out as Carol: in leaving the house at 6:30 a.m., fully dressed as a female, I had imagined how it would be doing this daily if I were a woman.

My first speaking engagement for ETVC as Carol had given me the opportunity to enjoy a day of "being a woman" in several situations, from shopping, to dining, driving, socializing with the girls, and speaking to a class about how it is to be a crossdresser. I was building my confidence level as a woman in public. Just two years ago, I would never have imagined I would actually present myself in public as a female: fully dressed and made up, nails polished, legs shaved, mingling with the public and not feeling out of place or ill-at-ease about any of it. I remained in the female role and mind set all day, until bedtime when I had to return to my life as a male. – Carol Clark

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meetings:

July 1 in Sunnyvale

August 5 at the San Leandro Lyons Restaurant

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Adventures In Genderland

(Hormones And Me)

O.K., persons of gender, it's joke time.....Stop me if you've heard this one before:

Do you know how to make a hormone?

Surely you didn't expect your humble reporter to descend to such depths of lowbrow humor. (Refuse to pay her?) Certainly not! But moving right along to the subject of this month's article, let's talk hormones.

I had been thinking for some time about going on hormones, but had, like many others I suppose, certain reservations concerning both the physical and psychological side effects. What information I had acquired so far was mostly hearsay and much of it secondhand and often contradictory. I decided it was time to separate fact from fiction and began to research the subject more carefully.

I read numerous articles and books, viewed quite a few relevant TV (no pun intended) programs and videos, and also talked to people I knew who were on or had been on hormones. While I felt all this helpful in making me more knowledgeable about the subject, I reached the point where I felt it was time to consult a professional about my specific situation.

I called my regular Kaiser physician, and familiarizing him with my gender status, asked him for a referral to a staff endocrinologist. He recommended a specialist he was familiar with, who I subsequently called and set up an appointment with for the following week. This particular doctor had worked with a number of TS patients, but I was the first transgendered non-transsexual patient he had had experience with. After making him familiar with my lifestyle goals, I asked him both what benefits I could reasonably expect to achieve and also what possible liabilities and side effects might be entailed.

In his experience, while he felt that there would be a slight enhancement of breast tissue, some weight redistribution, and a certain amount of softening of the skin there would be no change in the voice, and little or no effect on hair growth patterns. He went on to mention that hip development in women was due primarily to pelvic bone structure, and would not be affected by hormones, and that breast development, beyond a certain point, was best aided by implantations, if desired.

In addition he added that there was some evidence to indicate that there was a certain amount of strain put on the liver in male patients when hormones were injected or orally administered, but that recently a number of estrogen compounds had become available in patch form, which apparently have little or no deleterious effect upon the liver.

As I happened to mention at one point that I was heterosexual in orientation, he did caution me that the use of hormones could quite possibly have an effect on both my libido and my ability to perform sexually as a male, and that this was something that I should definitely take into account when making my decision.

In conclusion, he informed me that if I chose to pursue this, I would need a psychiatric referral before he would prescribe hormones for me and recommended various clinics for me to look into.

I thanked him for his time, and for the information he had provided me, and told him that I would be in touch when I had made my decision and left. I had a lot to think about.

After going back and forth about it for several days, I finally decided not to pursue the hormone route for the present. Though I felt the slight physical and psychological health risks were acceptable, I was not as accepting of the possible effect on sexual function. Though not in a relationship at the present time, I felt that this may well be an area I would like to re- establish in my life at some time in the future.

Book Review

Hormones, by Sheila Kirk, MD.

International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE).

P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778. $8.00

Reviewed by William A. Henkin, M.A., MFCC

Most people in the gender community who want information about hormones must either do a lot of library research, or rely on secondhand information from others. Since hormones can affect the body profoundly, it is only sensible to understand their different impacts. But not everyone wants to search out and interpret the professional jargon of academic medical journals, and the information lay people provide may have been secondhand when they got it. What to do?

One answer is Sheila Kirk's Hormones, a new handbook intended for use by non-medical people in the gender community. It is brief, easy to read, informed, informative, and to-the-point. While she does not try to tell you everything you ever wanted to know about hormones and what they'll do for you, Dr. Kirk does provide "a little" information about anatomy and biophysiology, discusses the sex hormones in both genetic males and genetic females, and explains the functions, benefits, and liabilities of estrogen, progesterone, and anti-androgen therapy for the MTF, and androgen therapy for the FTM. She provides a short guide to "hormones you can buy," and begins her book with an adamant warning about black-market hormones, hormones prescribed for someone else, and hormones taken without adequate medical supervision.

The only question I have about anything in this book is Dr. Kirk's statement concerning androgen-induced clitoral growth in the FTM. "The reports in the medical literature record a length of three to six centimeters (1-1/2 to 3 inches) approximately," she says. "It can function somewhat in sexual arousal and orgasm, but only phalloplasty will provide what the individual truly desires." Not all FTMs truly desire penetration-size penises, and for those who do phalloplasty is rarely fully satisfactory.

Still, to have only one quibble in 60 pages is to think very highly of a book, and I do. Dr. Kirk has brought an experienced medical eye to the homework she has done for you. Recently retired from private practice as an obstetrician and gynecologist and as Assistant Clinical Professor of Ob-Gyn at the University of Pittsburgh, she is a member of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, and a member of the IFGE Board of Directors Executive Committee; she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Outreach Institute, President of TransPitt, and Director of the Be All convention in Pittsburgh. In addition to papers she has written for the medical community, she is the author of previous booklets such as How to Find a Doctor and How to Be a Good Medical Consumer. In April she received the IFGE Trinity Award for extraordinary service to the CD/TS community. Hormones is another example of her gracious service.

Adventures In Genderland – continued

What I decided, for the time being, was to put the energy into electrolysis instead, and to put off the hormone decision until such time that I am sure that it is the right decision for me.

****** NEWSFLASH **********

Just before going to press, I learned, in talking to a mid-op TS friend of mine, of a new estrogen hormone which when given in low to middle dosages, gives all of the positive benefits of other estrogen compounds on the market, without affecting sexual function. Hmmm! sounds interesting.

Will report in further columns.

Ciao – Lauren

Creating Place

Recently I was sitting in my office doing research when I pulled out a copy of the DSM IIIR, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. This reference is used by the mental health profession in classifying every conceivable human condition affecting one's own sense of self and how others may view you.

References such as these provide a valuable service when a correct diagnosis or label has been applied, thus enabling the care giver to provide supportive counseling or refer elsewhere for appropriate services. However, these very same labels also prove an irreparable disservice to those dealing with the very humanness of just "being."

Just being, in today's society is extremely difficult. We live in what may be called a "dualities mind set"...resulting in the polarization of individual realities which affect large segments of society. In a polarized mind set, things always must be one or the other. Black or white, good or evil, male or female, masculine or feminine. Thus, making acceptance of natural variations against the "norm" relatively difficult on individual and social levels.

As a whole, we are bombarded with polarizations through our media, television, advertising, etc., which invariably portray the narrowest spectrum of humanity. Men are portrayed as aggressive "go getters" who are resolute in promoting their masculinity through a variety of male-oriented activities. While women are portrayed as weak, vulnerable, size 6's, always preening in front of their mirrors for men.

For the transgendered, I use this term broadly; the dualities mind set presents what might be considered an ultimate hell. For transvestites this means living partially or completely closeted for fear that family, friends, coworkers just wouldn't understand. For the transsexual, it means fathoming a partial or full transition under the scrutiny of a hostile society. I admire Kim Stuart's insight on questions of gender in her comprehensive book The Uninvited Dilemma. Her choice of words reflect accurately the journey of those blessed with the "Third Gender" in a society where self and social integration is relatively difficult when no such gender exists.

Like the transgendered, those dealing with alternate sexualities have also had a significant struggle in developing individual community and social identities. Referring back to the DSM IIIR, until the early 1970's homosexuality was classified as a deviant sexual disorder...comparable with pedophilia, zoophilia, etc. After a long difficult struggle, gays and lesbians were able to successfully lobby the American Psychiatric Association to have homosexuality and lesbianism reclassified as an acceptable variance of sexuality.

In conversation with my colleague, author Denver Harold, he intuitively suggested that although the gay and lesbian communities appear to have a significantly larger population than the transgendered community, it may very well be that an equal or larger segment of the population may be affected by behaviors stereotyped transvested or transsexualed.

It has often been suggested that the dominant society displays a wide variety of unacknowledged and unspoken of transgendered behavior. I suggest that stable transgenderism is in actuality a naturally occurring variation amongst the various extensions of a gender spectrum or continuum. Thus, individuals who have made a naturally occurring shift on the gender spectrum and having found a place of stability as a transsexual or transvestite, are no less a naturally occurring variation of gender in humanity than is the individual who has had fewer questions of gender.

It would seem that an individual who has developed a refined sense of self and a comfortable place along the gender spectrum while furthermore being comfortable with saying, "This is where I came from and this is who I am today," would appear to have found a position of mental health within this life-journey...and not necessarily be mentally disordered or deviant as the labels would indicate.

As we move through the process of "becoming" as humans, as transgendered, a significantly healthy step involves being able to share our experiences and life-journey with others. With practice, sharing our inner selves becomes habitual, and as we feel more comfortable, we can thus choose to move on cross-educating our friends, family, colleagues, community, and society. Hopefully as others witness our ability to "share who we are," they too, will feel comfortable moving on, fulfilling their life-journeys and designating respect to all life-processes.

– Joni Eveling Israel

(Joni Eveling Israel is a gender and life-transitions counselor in San Francisco. She may be reached by calling 415-558-8058.)

Books for the way we live ...

TRANSFORMATIONS: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them 111 pages of photos by Mariette Pathy Allen $24.95

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Trying to Change the Shrink's Minds

(This is an excerpt of a letter recently sent by ETVC member Ronda Schneider to the American Psychiatric Association which is revising its diagnostic manual, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Current definitions consider crossdressers to be suffering from mental illness, a fact that does serious damage to the perceptions held of us by both the medical world and the general public. Many of the references in this letter are to passages in the current DSM-IIIR manual.-Ed.)

American Psychiatric Assoc.
1400 K St.
Washington, DC.
Attn: Wendy Davis, M. ED., DSM IV Coordinator

Dear Ms. Davis:

I agree that Transvestic Fetishism (302.30) is a paraphilia because it interferes with reciprocal, affectionate sexual activity.

Transsexualism (302.50) is clearly a disorder, although I think you should acknowledge that many people consider it a physical, not a mental, disorder. This is the only case I am aware of in which a person is considered to have a mental disorder because of a persistent discomfort about a physical defect and a realistic preoccupation with correcting it.

I believe that GIDAANT (302.85) as defined in DSM IIIR, is not a disorder, either mental or physical and to say that it is is unnecessarily prejudicial and damaging to crossdressers. "Discomfort and sense of inappropriateness about one's assigned sex" might easily be caused, and I believe is often caused, by dissatisfaction with the conventional gender roles society forces men to adopt. As page xxii states, conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are not mental disorders. I believe the primary problem is in the restrictions and taboos and expectations present society places on the masculine gender role, and that a normal human response by men who are distressed by gender expectations is to seek to express their dissatisfaction by gender bending or to express their humanity by changing gender or to seek temporary relief or explore the forbidden side by crossdressing.

According to your criteria, every crossdresser has a mental disorder, yet I have met a large number who seem well adjusted and who do not desire to change themselves, but only to change society to make people more tolerant of modes of personal expression and more willing to tolerate behavior in both genders that formerly was considered exclusively masculine or feminine.

Feminism has acquired for women the right to many modes of expression and behavior which were formerly considered proper only for men. Many individuals who would fall into category 302.85 want nothing more than a similar tolerance applied to men. Calling them mentally ill is as unfair as calling a woman mentally ill in 1940 for wanting to wear pants.

The fact that there are often conflicts with family members and others does not mean that the crossdresser is mentally ill for failing to shrink from conflict. It is often the intolerant others who are the more mentally dysfunctional.

It is true that most crossdressers in this society experience considerable distress from rejection and hostility of others. Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln experienced the same thing but that alone does not suffice to designate them as having a mental disorder. – Ronda

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Significant Other Support Group

The Significant Other Support Group wants to invite all Significant Others to attend our SOS group meetings. Group members define Significant Others as wives, lovers, friends, children and others close to TV/TS persons but are themselves not TV/TS. We encourage you to ask the SO in your own life to come to these meetings, particularly if the SO feels they need support from their peers in dealing with their feelings about the TV/TS in their lives. It is important to emphasize that all meetings are kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. This is to help insure that a safe, supportive environment is created in which all attendees will feel secure enough too really be able to share and talk about their feelings. We are frequently assisted by a helping professional with a specialty in our area of concern.

The SOS group meets the second Thursday of each month from 8 to 10 p.m. Our next meetings are scheduled for July 11 and August 8. You are all welcome with open arms. For more information call Ginny at [redacted]

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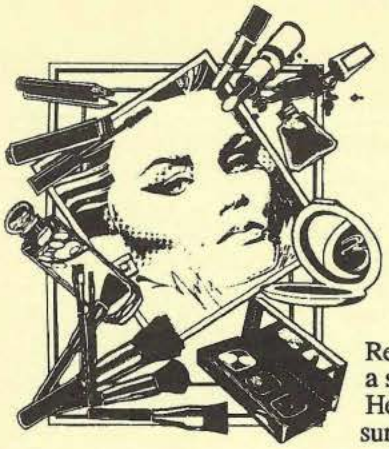

Rating Lipsticks

No crossdresser in her right mind would go out in public without her lipstick but what is the best kind for you?

Recently, the SF Chronicle carried a story rating major lipstick brands. Here is the first of two parts summarizing those those ratings:

Lipsticks rated on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest score.

FASHION FAIR: $9.50. (Formulated for Women of Color.)

Color choices: More than 50 shades.

Finish/feel: Felt moist going on, a little creamy, not dry.

Durability: Two to three hours.

Comments: Liked the fruity fragrance. As it faded, it started to dry and made us want to lick our lips a lot by the end of the day. After two hours started looking pretty dull.

Score: Three lips.

ORLANE FROST PEARL LIP COLOR: $15.

Color choices: Six pretty, high-fashion colors, most are vibrant.

Finish/feel: Goes on dry and powdery; applied with a velvety applicator; felt like putting on eye shadow.

Durability: Six to seven hours.

Comments: Liked the attention-getting colors; it didn't crack lips.

Score: Five lips

MAYBELLINE SHADES OF YOU: $4.25.

(Formulated for women of color.)

Color choices: 18 shades, six frosts, very bright colors.

Finish/feel: Went on moist but not

Durability: Four to five hours.

Comments: A good value for the money. Colors are a bit bright, but can be toned down with gloss.

Score: Three lips.

CHANEL ROUGE EXTREME: $18.50.

Color choices: Limited; only four colors, but they are gorgeous, ranging from a ft. dark pink to a rich, warm red. (Another half dozen colors are due in the fall)

Finish/feel: Goes on thick and creamy, feels that way for the first hour so, then begins to fade. Feels only slightly dry.

Durability: Four hours

Comments: Loved the way it went on; would like to see more color choices. At this price, you expect a full-sized lipstick. Felt as though you are handling a precious commodity every time you roll it up.

Score: 4-and-a-half lips.

BORGHESE LA MODA LIPSTICK:$17.

Color choices: 15 high-fashion colors, ranging from pink to fuchsia some with frost.

Finish/feel: Goes on thick, but creamy and smooth; colors tend to be bold, so on the days you feel like blending into the background, choose another lipstick.

Durability: Four hours

Comments: La Moda's frosted colors give the lipstick a sheen that is nice for evening. Went through a cup of tea and an orange before lunch, and there was still plenty of color.

Score: Four lips.

COTY 24: $4.85.

Color choices: 27 shades, ranging from coral pink to a neon fuchsia.

Finish/feel: Waxy, but smooth and not too thick; wasn't particularly creamy, but it wasn't very dry either.

Durability: Could last all decade; the stuff is permanent.

Comments: You want long-lasting, you got it. And surprisingly, this lipstick didn't feel as dry as some of the expensive brands tested. Lots of color choices, but would like to see some warmer shades. Because of the stain, it is quite bold on the lips. Not for the faint of lip.

Score: 4 lips.

PRESCRIPTIVES MATTE: $14.

Color choices: 12 high-fashion colors, including some retro-'60s pale pinks and oranges.

Finish/feel: Goes on thick and creamy. Does not feel overly dry.
Durability: Three to four hours; will take you through lunch.

Comments: This lipstick felt less dry than some other mattes. Rich, pretty colors; doesn't feel overly heavy on the lips.
Score: Five lips

ELIZABETH ARDEN ALL-DAY: $12.

Color choices: 25 colors in all shades of red, pink, orange and brown.

Finish/feel: Goes on smooth, starts feeling like clay when the wind hits.

Durability: Four hours.

Comments: After three hours the color was still mostly there, but the lips were feeling like a galvanized tire tread. Sure, you don't have to put more on, but you want to, in the worst way.

Score: Three-and-a-half lips

Barbara A.

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Martina's Klosent

Our election has taken place for the new Executive committee and I must apologize for the lack of candidates. Next year we must have at least two people for each position, preferably three. I hope that you voted for those who you felt will best advance the purposes of ETVC: educate the members and the public and have fun doing it. YOU CAN HELP! Volunteer your services whenever and wherever possible. Join at least one of the three permanent committees and look into one of the following special committees: bylaws, facilities, hostess, Cotillion, Gay Pride Celebration. Also, each permanent committee has subcommittees: Social activities - decorating, purchasing, special events; Outreach - telephone tree, hot line, speaker's bureau, big sisters and more; Education - Libraries (video, article, book), special talks and presentations and more.

My special thanks to all those who regularly gave hours to making our club what it has been this past year and certainly improved our future. The awards given went to: Tiffany, Heather, Jane, Vanessa, Stephanie, Diane, Barbie, Bob, Ginny, Nancy, Julie, Cindy, Donna, Thalia, Lauren, Marie, Melissa, Jennifer, Rachel, Roxanne, Geri, Zia, Sherry, Carolynn, Keiko, Ralph, Mary Bernice, Allison, Lauren, Margo, Ronda, Melanie, Monica, and Bridgette. If I missed anyone please forgive me as this article was written prior to the awards ceremony.

– Martina

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Jane Kamper Bentley — INTOLERANCE

My cousin's spouse is a moron. Husband, father. Responsible, but also a regular guy. And a moron.

When he works, he works hard. Since emigrating to California from the Midwest in the late sixties, he has worked his way up to a well-paying and important job in civil service. When he's off you'll find him tackling projects around the house or hoisting a few with his buddies and catching the game on TV.

He used to drink Oly, now it's Bud, but less of it, because he's developed a taste for good jug wine. Though he likes his booze, he's not a fall-down, sloppy drunk. The only way you can tell how much he's been drinking is by the increasing bitterness of his quips, which are clever but hardly ever make you laugh.

He dresses neatly, with casual, good taste, favoring the Eddie Bauer look. Never lets his hair go more than a few weeks between cuts, which he wears in the same style now as 20 years ago, if a bit shorter and grayer. His mustache, too, over time has been trimmed back, no longer taking a little outlaw droop at the corners of his mouth.

Habits of good grooming extend to his domain, as well. In 1975 he and my cousin purchased a rundown suburban house and spent years repairing and sprucing it up to become the pride of the neighborhood. It seems as though he can fix anything and has a special talent for restoring furniture. Patching, painting, replacing; he just never stops, and the results are impressive, if a bit stifling. For while all is neat and lovely _ even imaginative _ nothing invites. The sofa does not say, "Sit on me," but, "Sit carefully." The pictures do not say, "Look at me," but, "I match the lamps." All over the house objects seem to whisper _ "pick up your feet!...watch the crumbs...are your hands clean?...don't touch!" _ like exasperated adults in a museum.

He coaches his daughter's softball team and is proud of her field savvy but bristles when he brings up the subject of girls who play on boys' baseball teams. If you suggest that ability, not gender, should determine who plays where, he reminds you with the prickly patience reserved for fools that girls have girls' teams and boys have theirs. He feels sorry for the girls who try out for boys' teams because they are the victims of pushy parents who just want to stir up trouble.

If asked, "Are you afraid of what girls can't do, or what they can do?", he repeats what obviously wasn't heard the first time.

Oh, but I resent having to know this man. Afternoons in his company during mandatory holiday visits are both boring and infuriating. My wife holds her tongue, awaiting the chance to divert the conversation, as he recites talk show insights about which he knows nothing except what he thinks he believes. I find that I must leave the room or argue _ or sit silently when I most want to speak up.

I am still angry that I had to exercise my greatest forbearance when he least deserved it _ and without his knowledge _ at a restaurant during a Mother's Day dinner, when he sneered, "That goddamn bitch _ that Sally Jessie Raphael _ says she runs a family show. Do you know what one of her topics was last week? Transvestite husbands. What a thing for little kids to see." My wife and sons and I exchanged quick glances. All I could say was, "They're people, too."

That moron.

What if I were to say, "We're people, too?"

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Longtime ETVC volunteers Ginny and Nancy Ann were among the ETVC representatives at the I.F.G.E. convention in April.

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August

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