

Be-All Wrap Up Issue

July Meeting features BBQ and Pool Party

Presidents Podium

I don't know how I got into this but....

I started writing this column on June 9th, but the chapter meeting on the 21st and the National board meeting in Springfield MO on June 28th kept supplying me with information and interrupting my stream of thought (As though I had any). Now I'm back to business and can finish what I think is one of the largest issues I have had the pleasure producing. (you will notice the number of I's exceeds even Kiki's record)

Today is the 30th of June and hopefully I will get this heap of paper organized and over to the printer before the end of the week.

Picnic

This years picnic will be held at Sheila D's on August 17th. A map will be provided in next months newsletter. This picnic will be open for all to crossdress if desired.

Be-All

The Be-All is over.....I hope every one who attended had a great time. From the reaction of the crowd Saturday evening I think it went well. I really want to thank all those who helped. This happens only every five years so it is our chance to blow off some steam and pat the chapter on the back.

On Wednesday we presented Naomi with a plaque engraved with the Be-All logo as recognition for her founding the Be-All fifteen years ago.

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Miranda Writes...

A Tribute to Denise Peters

After months of working and worrying and wondering just how it would all come together, the '97 Be All turned out to be a wonderful success. Everyone had fun and left with happy memories. It seemed flawless, it seemed easy, it seemed like everything just fell into place. But that is just part of the illusion. Appearances can be deceiving!

For months before the Be All, Denise Peters worked tirelessly and diligently to make it seem effortless. She worked behind the scenes. She was not constantly visible like yours truly. She was not out there introducing the shows or making the speeches. That's just not part of her make up.

Denise spent all of the Be All locked up in the registration room, making sure that everything was going smoothly from that end. From dealing with the hotel, to all the mailings, to personally printing the tickets, to laying out the program brochure, to arranging the finances, and on, and on. She undertook was a massive job, and did it professionally and excellently. It was a HERculean task, so to speak.

We all owe her a great deal of thanks for what she accomplished with a very small committee and a handful of volunteers. Denise is a real special lady, and we are fortunate to have her for our president.

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**Important July Meeting Information on
page 5**

(Continued from page 1) Miranda Writes

And a Special Thanks to...

I would like to recognize the volunteers from Chi Chapter who helped out at Be All. (I do hope I don't leave anyone out!)

Shelly Hartt, Beth Plotner, Roberta Zrna (CGS), and Diana - workshop monitors
Christine Adams - newcomers table (along with Rachel Crandall, Crossroads)
Loraine and Kiki - registration
Alicia - Shopping trip guide
Eve Burchert and Lori Fox - Fashion show
Amanda Lynn - Gong show coordinator
Tony Monzo - vendors and advertising
Candace Mahne - Be All Hotline
The presenters from Chi Chapter included:
Christine and Amanda - Lookin' Good Clinic Amanda also stood in for Voice Clinic
Eve & Carole Burchert - Modeling, Department
Rachel Galen - Hands on Wig Lab
Candace Mahne - Outreach Panel
Dawn Mahne - P.A.L.S.
Naomi Owen - Fantasy Dressing
Rori Petros - Make-Up for Formal

There were several CGS members who contributed to the program:

Mary Anne Foster (with Dennis O'Neill) - Spirituality, and the alternative worship service
Stephanie Young - Transitioning at Work Panel along with Janice Galeckas and Robin Paepke

The main Be All Committee, besides Denise and myself, consisted of Bridget, Toni and Naomi.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and energy to making the Be All such a big success!

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Out Of Focus

BE ALL 97

By Kiki Carmichael

Well, I had a good time. So many interesting and good things happened and I met so many old friends (and made some new ones) its hard to put it all down.

I did get to know the bartenders pretty well too. There was Donna who remembered Olivia and I from last year and a young man by the name of Timbuc or something like that from Afghanistan. He wasn't very friendly. I think we freaked him out. Maybe in the old country he was a Islamic Fundelmentist. They stone people to death over there at the drop of a hat. We finally asked him if we would be stoned to death if we were over there. He just slowly nodded his head. Had another drink on hearing that.

Hardest part of the whole Be All and every Be All I've ever been to is getting up in the morning and pulling myself together. I swear those mirrors in the hotels are absolutely the worst ever created!

I would get out of bed, look at myself in the mirror and want to crawl back in bed and pull the covers over my head! After a cup of coffee, a shower, a shave, a little foundation and a couple frillies I would be able to look in the mirror without wincing.

Sunday morning was the most difficult for some reason. I woke up, looked myself in the mirror realized the unbelievable job ahead of me and wished I had brought some boy clothes. But I hadn't and had to wear what I brought. Once ready though, I began to enjoy Kiki again.

The Sunday Brunch was absolutely fab! What a choice for breakfast. And what a job it was trying to figure out who was who. I recognized only a few but there were still a lot of gals dressed.



I wanted to be in the Fashion Show and a couple weeks before the Be All had ordered the most beautiful dress. It was a sleeveless long red popcorn knit with slits up to the knee on both sides. It would have been just perfect with a broad brimmed hat and 4" white pumps! But it didn't come. Talk about disappointed.

Cruise was great. When I got on the bus on the way home, I realized I had lost an earring and it was the only decent set of earrings I brought. Miranda, God bless her, the next day had a list of things found on the cruise. My missing earring was one of the items.

A couple of my fellow girl friends and I had fun with the young bartenders. Turns out Denise and Bridget hadn't told anyone what kind of a group we were and that Thursday afternoon had called the cruise people and alerted them that we were a group of cross dressers. One of the bartenders was the one who took the call.

He told her, "Well, thank you for telling us", and then didn't say a word to anyone else. Cool! Like "so what". I've said it before and I'll say it again, "We're all going to have to get a

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Elvis as crossdressed by Roberta from Ohio.



A performance by members of the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus



30 members of the 80 member Chicago Gay Men's Chorus



Naomi??, Miranda and Toni at the Be-All board recap meeting.



Honey West as MC for the Gong show.

'Be All' convention gathers cross-dressers

By Dan Pearson
For Press Publications

A hotel in DuPage County recently played host to what some might consider a rather unconventional convention.

Drawn together by the common desire to wear women's clothing, hundreds of men from all across the nation and several foreign countries enjoyed the rare pleasure of being allowed to cross-dress in public.

For many of the participants of the "Be All You Want To Be Weekend" held at the Hyatt Hotel in Lisle, this would be the only time an year they could express themselves in this fashion.

While some of the crossdressed conventioners were easily identified as men, many of those gathered could have passed for genetic females in any other context. Ranging from dowdy to decidedly glamorous, these kindred souls openly celebrated the irresistible appeal of women's apparel.

Since 1983, this annual event, which rotates between five Midwestern cities, has allowed the wide spectrum of transgender individuals the opportunity to meet and mingle in a secure atmosphere.

The recent four-day program included seminars conducted by leading professionals in the area of transgender studies.

Topics covered included fantasy dressing, sexual reassignment surgery, legal issues, partner counseling, wig labs and learning to develop a female voice.

Social activities included a pool party, a boat ride on Lake Michigan, a visit to see the celebrated female impersonators at the Baton Show Lounge in Chicago and a shopping trip to the Yorktown Mall in Lombard.

Now in its 15th year, this year's "Be All" was sponsored by the Chicago chapter of Tri-Ess, a national organization of heterosexual crossdressers, also known as the Society for the Second Self.

"We have our monthly meetings in Elmhurst, but our members come from all over the Chicago area," said Naomi Owen, the "Be All" founder and former Tri-Ess president.



Rachel Crandell shows Dr. Docter how to do a magic trick

"When we started 20 years ago, we used to meet in people's homes behind locked doors and drawn shades. It was a hush-hush kind of thing.

"The idea (for "Be All") was to have a weekend for people who could afford to take the time and wanted to have an inclusive program that included improvement, study and social [activities] all in one package. We provide a unique outlet for people who have a need to cross-dress," said Naomi. "This is not a swinging group. There is nothing illicit going on. Our program is designed to help people deal with this need so that they aren't consumed by shame or guilt. On the other hand, we don't want to attract the wrong kind of attention. So we try to urge our people to dress nice and look nice and act nice.

"The hotels all want our business because we are well behaved. We have many families here, husbands and wives and teen-age children. It is a very wholesome environment and we want people to be proud of who they are and what they are.

To promote a greater public understanding of transgender issues, Naomi has participated in talking to local student and community groups, including classes at College of DuPage.

"We always joke, 'It's not catching. If you didn't come here as a cross-dresser you are not going home as a crossdresser.'"

'Lorraine'

"You changed my life," said "Lorraine," a vivacious and cautious DuPage cross-dresser who only recently rediscovered her femme self.

This World War II veteran, who as a child had been dressed as a girl by "her" grandmother, first became aware of The existence of the Tri-Ess organization after reading an article by this writer published in Press Publications' Spotlight in 1995.

The reason I joined Tri-Ess is because I responded to the interview you had with Candace (Mahne) a couple of years ago and I wanted to thank you.

"I read the article and there was a phone number where I could reach Candace. Very Timidly I called up and Candace was just wonderful. She took my hand and allayed all my fears.

"Later we went (shopping). For the first time in my life I had a dress of my own. Oh, I was so tickled. It made me feel just wonderful, but at the same time I was timid and frightened."

'Rachel'

"This isn't a rare thing," said ;"Rachel" Crandall, 37, a transsexual psychotherapist from Michigan who works as both a man and a woman.

"It may be a rare thing to see in the middle of a Chicago hotel, but this is very, very common. I don't want to make anyone feel uncomfortable, but I do have a right to be here and I have a right to feel safe here. You cannot convey what it feels to be in the lobby of a fancy hotel and to be respected."

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"I wear almost no makeup. I do very little with my hair, but I feel beautiful. This is my fourth Be All. I enjoyed it so much I made it an annual thing. This year I wasn't only an attendee, I gave two workshops as a professional. I was also in the Gong Show," she grins. "I think people like it when we laugh at ourselves and that's what transgendered people need to do more. This is my life, but it's funny. A man in a dress is funny and there isn't anything wrong with laughing at ourselves."

'Kathryn'

Originally from Gary, Ind., Kathryn Hammond, the co-owner of "The Dressing Room," spent 10 years working as a commercial fisherman in Alaska in order to earn the money to open a boutique in Michigan that caters to the needs of the



Kathryn from The Dressing Room, Clinton, MI.

transgender community.

At the statuesque height of 6 feet, 5 inches without heels, Kathryn, who is divorced, says "she" can't go out in public even as a man, without people noticing. "If I had been born a foot shorter, my life would have been very much different."

She sees attending conventions like the Be All an important part of her business, which also allows her to dress as a woman for the entire event.

"Friends of ours in the garment industry say this could be as much as a 60 million dollar business. I think once you come to terms with the fact that this is never going away, that's when you can start having fun with it."

'Rachel'

The red-haired "Rachel," a very serious attorney from the suburb of Bolingbrook has been involved in Tri-Ess for about a year and is attending the Be All in the company of his very supportive wife.

"[The urge to cross-dress] has been with me all my

June Meeting Recap

At the June meeting we welcomed Judy Simmons of Headliners. Judy 'operated' on several 'volunteers' in the latest makeup techniques. We enjoyed the cool lower level meeting room which is much larger than the old room AND is totally surrounded by mirrors.....need I say more?

The following members and guests were present; Alicia M., Miranda, Paula, Debbie & LoriAnn, Andrea, Naomi & Rachel, Gloria, Kiki, Sheila D, Barbara Lee, Barbara Diane & Barbara, Lenore, Candace & Dawn, Amanda, Edie, Lee, Sandy, Janet, Dee Dee, Norma & Joyce & Donna, Colleen & Verna, Toni, Vickie, Pamela A., Dawn & Bessie, Vanessa, Christine A., Jeri, Loraine, Sherri, Debbie, Jamie, Beth P., Margaret, Dana Rose, Rachel & Kate, Andrea, Jeri, Renee & Debbie, Linda, Christina Jennifer & Carolyn, Samantha, Julie Ann, Denise & Kim, Shelly & Linda, Diana, Jackie Crystal, and Joni visiting from Las Vegas.

July meeting schedule

- 4:00 pm Changing rooms open #117 & # 120
- 6:00 pm Changing rooms close
- 6:00 pm PALS & Newcomers groups meet
- 7:00 pm Picnic begins
- 9:00 pm Pool opens

Location of the meeting will be our normal room, just off the South parking lot.

life, but I just started dealing with it in the last four years. It got to the point where it was controlling my life anyway. It was taking up so much space in my head, it was making me nuts.

"I grew up feeling there was something wrong with me. The more people that I meet that are like me, the more it convinces me that I really am not that different after all."

Reprinted from June 20, and June 26th issues, Press Publications FOCUS section.

Next Month we will feature an article by Dan Pearson on his transformation at the Be-All.....

(Continued from page 1) President's Podium

On Thursday, one of the busses going to the boat cruise got lost on State St.but did make it in time for the casting off. After all returned to the Hyatt, our outgoing Treasurer Bridget took the driver to task and read him the riot act and worked on lowering our cost.....

On Friday, Dr. Docter gonged Amanda while she was performing. tsk tsk tsk, guess he lost his patience.....

Friday every thing worked out ok until the panoramic photo was shot. News from the photographer was bad... seems due to a temperature problem at the local developing location the photo had a definite color problem.

Saturday I had originally planned on having 150 at the dinner and some last minute walkins.(Yes, not everyone makes reservations.....) Anyway at 2pm I told the hotel to set for 200. They only had enough Salmon for 150 so special tables were set for 'chicken only' people. We came out smelling like roses, all 200 seats were full.

Sunday we planned on 85 people at the brunch and 100 showed up, the only time we were off on our meal counts. Seems in the past most people left early or on Saturday evening. I guess they just couldn't leave this time...I know I didn't want to go...

Photo Album-----Be-All '97

Scattered thru these pages you will find many photos which were taken during the week of June 4-8. I would like to thank Pamela A. for loaning me her digital camera which I utilized for many of these shots. Unfortunately it did not have a zoom lens, or flash, but wait till next time. Other photos were submitted by Christine Adams and others purloined from where they lay.

Sigma MU

Sigma Mu is the Springfield Mo chapter and on June 28th they hosted the National Tri-Ess Board of Directors meeting. I would like to thank Judy Daniels, Marlana Collins and all those involved for their hospitality.

Swim?

Don't forget, the swimming pool at the hotel will open for us at 9:00 pm. Please adhere to this time schedule. The hotel has been very cooperative with us, including a recent agreement on the room rent and the use of the basement room at the same rate as the first floor meeting room. (They are planning on an elevator...)

Policeman? Fireman?

This months featured gender organization is T.O.P.P.S. which was organized for the public safety professional i.e.: Police, and Fire personnel....Check it out.

Denise

How to Build a Be-All in six months or less.

Start about 15 months before the scheduled Be-All date or BB (Before Be-All) locating a hotel. (See Dec 96 Trib)

June 96

Naomi and I meet at the Hyatt and she signs the hotel contract

September 96

Appoint Be-All committee:

Me, Myself and I as Chair.....(Sounds good)Overseer and Budget watch dog.....(Like I know what's going on)

Miranda Planning (She believed we had an unlimited budget)

Bridget Finance (She knew we didn't so I put them together... heehee.... smart ha?)

Naomi Dean Emitrus and event knowledge Guru

Toni Vendors

Hold Program planning session at Transformations. All the above and Amanda.....We all get to write down what we would like to see and then "Post-It" to the wall.

From that Miranda takes the general outline and begins a program/speaker selection.

November 96

BB Hold a Holiday Enfemme and study how Naomi does it.

December 96

I begin layout of the Flyer, which needs to go out NOW!!!!

Unfortunately we don't have the program schedule yet and can't print any flyers yet. (Hey! We just started, waddya want?)

Naomi goes in for routine 6 bypasses.....Committee down to four.....

I add Be-All notice to the Chi Chapter web page

January

Miranda completes draft #1 of the program schedule. (She ended up with 8 drafts.)

Various meetings held at Miranda's & Denise's over the next few months. Decide what Thursday event will be. Boat trip or dinner show at Candlelight or Drury Lane. (Are we lucky or what. On Thursday, June 5th at about 5pm, unannounced, the Harris bank foreclosed on the Candlelight, Having the sheriff remove everyone and changing the locks and kicking all out. We would have showed up at 6:30, with nothing to do.....)

Feb 1

I finalize the flyer and send to printer

Add Be-All web pages with flyer on the net.

Feb 8

I start sending flyers out, 1300 to Tri-Ess for Femme Mirror, 1300 to IFGE for Transgender magazine. 100-300 to all the Be-All groups, CGS, TONI and GGG.

Toni send letters out to all prospective vendors and advertisers.

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Couples Group

The next Couples meeting will be on **Saturday, July 26th** at Denise's home. Please phone the hotline for information and please let us know you are coming so we can have enough chairs. We need to know how many coming in.

NOTE: There is NO crossdressing at the meeting.

P.A.L.S.

The P.A.L.S. meeting was held at 6:30pm on June 21st just prior to the regular meeting. Present were; Dawn, Kate, Joyce, Donna, Laurie Ann, Linda, Bessie and Debbie.



Rachel and Dyana doing what comes natural

(Continued from page 6) Build a Be-All

Amanda begins work on the Gong show, flyers are sent out and the web page is updated.

March

Bridget scouts around and locates Wagner Charter Boat Co. (The Spirit of Chicago is too expensive at +\$90 per person. You wanna charge +\$90 for a boat ride, then you plan the next Be-All)

Bridget and I travel to the boat yard on Archer av. and view our first selection. The Buccaneer. It is kind of small and has polished wood decks and a SMALL lower galley. The entire boat is painted in a pirate ship motif. We then walk thru the Jamaica, The difference in the price is ONLY \$700, it is covered in case of bad weather and is much larger. So lets take the big one - just in case. We promise 100 attendance.

Start receiving registrations. Revise registration program and start adding these to the database.

Printout acknowledgement letters and mail. (This continues for the next three months.)

April

Miranda keeps turning out those program drafts and contacting the speakers.

I need to find a bus company for the boat trip...The coaches cost \$400 each the school busses are \$160 each...I guess we get what we pay for.

May 5

I Start to worry, haven't printed out the meal tickets yet.... Design and print these locally over the next two weeks.

May 24

Design program and Newsletter and send to printer.

Begin stuffing registration envelopes and meal tickets. Susan Roberts, Miranda and Kiki show up at my house and we get this done in about 4 hours. Programs aren't done yet, they come later.

June 2

Pickup programs from printer, newsletter not ready yet.

June 9

Begin wrapup.

Denise

E-Mail

6/20/97

Dear Denise, Miranda, Bridget, Toni & all those who worked on Be All!

First, I want to thank you and congratulate you on the marvelous job you did in putting on Be-All '97. With little or no experience you took over in the fall of 1996 and put together a high quality, 1st rate Be All. I am deeply grateful to you for keeping the tradition.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the beautiful founder's plaque. It means a lot to me to be honored by so many beautiful friends.

Thank you!
Naomi



Denise

I had a great time. I enjoyed so much of it and went to a lot of the seminars. Really enjoyed the Dr. Docter one's and the voice one with Rachel Crandell and Mary ann Fosters one, too! Good time was had by I ! Thanks for all your work.....you gals did a great job on pulling it all off ! Kuddoes kiddo! :)

LOve ya,
Suzie
SzRoberts@aol.com

June 9, 1997

Dear Denise,

What a wonderful gathering! From what I could see it was very well received by all who I spoke with. Congratulations!

Again, let me thank you for hosting the I.F. G.E. Board and donating the space and Etc. I not only look forward to attending the Be All in Pittsburgh next year - but returning to Chicago when ever there is another fine activity there.

With special & fond regards,
Alison Laing

Denise,

I wanted to thank you and all the gals at Chi-Triess for the great job you all did setting up the Chicago Be-All. I had a REALLY WONDERFUL time, I only wish I could have stayed for the whole thing. Please pass along my thanks to everyone there especially Christine, Miranda, and Amanda. I'm sure there are many others who did a lot of work in setting it up, I only wish I could have met them all. The workshops were very educational, I didn't attend any that were bad. I learned so much about the whole Transgender issue, and about myself. The service at the hotel was great (though limited), and the meals were fantastic.

Again, many, many thanks!!!!
Dianne Sprague



Dr Randi Ettner at lunch

Dear Sisters,

I want to personally thank you for all your hard work and excellent organization of the recent Be-All event at the Lisle Hyatt. You all did an excellent job, and deserve all the appreciation I can muster. I got back from the Be-All Sunday night after spending 3 1/2 days as Lowla. What can I say about the experience? I can't easily come up with the superlatives that I need. I was telling my wife, Kitty, about the Be-All last evening, and little snippets just kept flooding back. There are certain events that happen in your life than are more than just common experience, and I've been fortunate enough to have been able to share one with some of my sisters that has to be considered very near the top of the pile.

I arrived Wed. evening and met with Lisa and Sheena from Guelph, Ontario and with Leah from Pierce, Nebraska. We spent a couple of hours getting acquainted aided by the spoils of the Canadian duty free system and then got dressed and retired to the lobby. That was quite a scene for an innocent Midwestern girl like me. Gorgeous T-girls all over the place, mixed with a smattering of terrified regular hotel guests who were grabbing their children and running for cover. I ended up sharing a room with Leah, which was great for both of us. It did lead to a few surrealistic scences that I would never have expected in a zillion years. But was mutually handy for doing up zippers, buttons and jewelry clasps, that otherwise would have been mostly impossible with the long nails. The next a.m. was down for a light breakfast and then over to the vendors area. They had quite a good selection of jewelry, shoes, wigs, lingerie, cosmetics and breast forms. The clothing selection was poor and mostly fetishistic. Of course they had probably noticed just how much luggage the average attendee was hauling through the front door and figured it was futile to try and sell us any more. I then met Rori, of Transformations Studios in Chicago. As you are well aware she is an ex-singer, ex-jazz dance company director, ex-bar owner, and current makeup artist who currently runs a business catering to the needs of the transgendered community in Chicago. She did my first ever official makeover that afternoon. Quite an educational experience... my face loves her.

Dinner that evening was on board ship, as we cruised the waterfront of Chicago on a beautiful early summer evening. The two girls sitting beside me at the dinner table turned out to be from Upper Michigan, just a couple of hours north of Eagle River - strange coincidence. After that we loaded back into a bus and went to the female impersonator show at the Baton. Not very easy to exaggerate about the quality of the girls there, or the quality of their dancing - it was great.

Day 2 began with actually trying to attend a seminar! Kitty had given me a list of seminars she wanted me to go to... mostly on couples communication. I went to one by Dr. Sandra Cole, called "Relationships are 50/50 - the forgotten journey of the spouse." It was quite good and gave me some much needed insight into the woman's perspective on all this. At a transgender fashion show lunch I sat beside a very beautiful tv from Detroit, named Linda. Turns out she vacations in Rhinelander, 30 miles south of here, where her kids attend hockey school... and that she PLAYS HOCKEY! Couldn't believe it. I mean there are lots of tv's out there, but how many hockey playing tv's? - we we're in seventh heaven. Talk about more strange coincidence. Spent some money that afternoon on Mary Kay and costume jewelry - now have a large sparkly ring for all my fingers and 3 toes, more fake pearls than you can shake a stick, and some great lip stuff from Mary Kay that moisturizes your lips - seems to work about 5 times as well as chapstick. The Mary Kay lady was a hoot. She was so nice and helpful, and in the sweetest way had an amazing knack for selling

you more and more stuff. When I went to pay her with cash, she reached into her bra for her stash of bills. I told her she needed a few more sales to fill out the other side or she was going to end up asymmetrical! That evening I attended the Gong Show - hosted by transgender diva Honey West (what a great voice!). The acts were mostly so bad they were hilarious - haven't regained my hearing from all the gonging going on.

Saturday was the day of the evening gala ball. So it was back to Rori for the evening makeover (the photo attached was after that session) - whewee - everyone should try that once. Prior to the dance, we were entertained by the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus. Quite frankly, one of the highlights of the weekend - they we're wonderfully talented and did a series of little musical songs with transgendered themes that were hilarious, in addition to some serious solo and large group numbers. They deserved the standing ovation they received. That night I proved that I'm woman enough to dance for 3 hrs. in 3 1/2 inch heels - if that doesn't prove it I don't know what would!

I had to admit also to a sense of melancholy leaving Sunday morning, and couldn't come up with poignant things to say to the t-friends I was leaving. Under such circumstances I considered it acceptable to let quiet understanding do the talking. Reality does have a way of reasserting itself though, and when I got home Kitty immediately suggested that we both get dressed in something slinky and retire to the waterbed to make mad passionate love... well, ummm, it was sort of like that... she actually suggested that we retire to the basement to move furniture and clean up to prepare for the drywall guy who comes today... talk about reality... sigh. At work today they are doing the old "he was away for a few days, let's make him pay" thing, and so far they don't seem to have lost their touch. But I'm still basking in the afterglow of the Be-All, so they aren't succeeding in bothering me in the least, and I'm sure it's driving them crazy that I appear as happy as I am.

My wife and I have talked about my experiences there for quite a while the last couple of nights, and we sorted through all the brochures, books and information that I gathered while down there. She critically appraised my glamour photos that I had taken, and approved. I think her words something like "You do a very credible job of appearing as a woman"... that's my sweetie, always the emotional sentimentalist! Really though, I think that nothing but greater understanding, more open communication and an improved relationship can come in the aftermath of last week. That is my goal, that is my hope, and that is what I'm committed to devote energy towards.

I'm looking forward to attending my next event - maybe Fall Harvest in Omaha, or Southern Comfort in Atlanta. I also took the opportunity to sign up as a member of your Tri-Ess Chapter, so hope to reacquaint myself with many of you at some of the upcoming meetings. I won't be able to make all of them but will try to make some. Thanks again for everything.

Hugs,
Lowla
Lowlatv@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/lowlatv/index.html>



Other TG Organizations

T.O.P.S.

TOPS is an organization formed by current and past law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and military personnel. The purpose of TOPS is to promote and support, emotional, professional and legal needs, to the transgendered individuals who fall into the target professions. TOPS does not advocate the "coming out" of individuals to their respective departments or the public at large although we will support and assist anyone who wishes to do so, in any way we can. TOPS does not intend to become an advisory to any individual public safety agency or its administration but to work with them to better understand a significant segment of their work force.

TOPS will afford the opportunity for the Transgendered officer to socialize with others in similar professions, within a safe and secure environment, we are compiling a listing of support professionals to assist members with emotional, medical, professional and/or legal problems. These ancillary support services will include, but will not be limited to; mental health professionals, medical support in an understanding atmosphere, liaison with department administrators as well as legal assistance in gender discrimination matters if and/or when needed.

A newsletter will be published in the near future for the purpose of disseminating this support and information to our membership.

TOPS is being chartered as a non-profit organization so that your membership, assistance, and financial support will be tax deductible just as with any non-profit organization.

Local chapters are being formed as membership numbers dictate. A listing of local chapters along with contact information will be published in the newsletter and will be available from State and Regional Directors upon request.

National and Regional conventions and conferences will be organized as the needs of the membership grows.

TOPS does not advocate the "coming out" of any member. TOPS understands the unique safety concerns a member will have should they come out to their department or individuals within their profession. TOPS will officially discourage the practice of coming out unless it is absolutely necessary in your particular situation. Should your personal circumstances require you to come out, or you are inadvertently outed to your agency, TOPS will do anything and everything within our power to assist you. The process of coming out is a very frightening experience as a number of our members can attest to. Emotional, legal, and mental health assistance will be made available to any member who requests such help. We have formed TOPS so that no transgendered public safety employee will ever have to stand alone.

Membership dues will be assessed at the rate of \$60.00 per

year, paid at the start of each year or \$30.00 every 6 months. Initial membership requires a full year dues to accompany the application.

Membership
PO Box 2215
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Great Lakes Gender Leadership council Activities calendar JULY 1997

Week of July 6-12

- Tues 7/8 8:00 p.m. CGS Meeting, Stardust, 5688 N. Milwaukee (708-863-7714)
Program: Hobby/Talent Night?
- Sat 7/12 2:00 p.m. FORGE, Ann Sather's on Belmont, Topic: Benjamin Standards of Care: Help or Hindrance. C. Michael Munson (414-278-6031)
- Sat 7/12 TONI Social, to be announced, call (219) 650-2142
- Sat 7/12 6:30 p.m. Gemini Gender Group Meeting (call 414-297-9328).

Week of July 13-19

- Wed 7/16 8:30 p.m. CGS Social, Temptations, 10235 W Grand, Franklin Park
- Sat 7/19 6:00 p.m. Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Elmhurst (630-262-8707). Program: Pool Party and Picnic

Week of July 20-26

- Tues 7/22 8:30 p.m. CGS social, Hunters, Elk Grove Village (call CGS for info)
- Sat 7/26 7:00 p.m. TONI meeting, South Bend (call 219-650-2142)
- Sat 7/26 7:00 p.m. CGS/TS Support Group, Transformations, 146 N Oak Park Ave. (708) 383-8338.

Week of July 27-August 2 Who Knows?

August 17

Chi-Chapter Picnic

Sheila D's

(crossdressing allowed)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

PRINCIPLES OF OUTREACH
APPROVED BY THE
Great Lakes Gender Leadership Council - September
3rd, 1996

- 1) Gender Outreach Is not served by "bad mouthing" other groups - the audience usually doesn't understand the differences anyhow.
- 2) We need to explain the full spectrum of gender identity phases - not just Cross Dressers and Transsexuals.
- 3) We need to coordinate Outreach opportunities between organizations to see that representation is as broad as possible.
- 4) We need to better train our members to respond to Outreach opportunities - both formally to larger groups and informally, one on one.

December 20, 1997
**Puttin' On The
Ritz**
The
Chi Chapter
Christmas Dinner/Dance
**Ramada O'Hare
Rosemont**

Full details and prices will be forthcoming during the upcoming months.

For those of you who wish to make early **tower room** reservations, our guaranteed price is \$78

(Continued from page 2)

Thank the Photographer!

One of the things that did not go flawlessly at the Be All was the panoramic group photograph. The film lab that developed the negative goofed. As a result the picture quality was poor. Mr. Wahlberg, the photographer, was devastated! This had only happened once before in his life. It was too late to reshoot the photo, the group had dispersed.

To all those at the Be All who requested a copy, Mr. Wahlberg sent them one free of charge. The prints usually sell for \$25 and cost him at least half that to print up. This was a generous and highly professional action on his part.

If you received a copy of the panoramic photo, why don't you send Mr. Wahlberg a thank you note, telling him how much we appreciate his gesture. The address is:

Panoramic Photography Inc.
7315 Lake Shore Drive
Cedar Lake, IN 46303

July Program: Picnic and Pool Party starting at 7:00 p.m.

For our July Meeting we are having something special for those balmy summer nights: a backyard barbecue and a moonlight pool party. The festivities will begin at about 7:00 p.m. with the barbecue out behind our former meeting room, the Elmhurst Room, located on the south side of the hotel.

Our hospitality committee, headed up by Norma and Joyce, along with Donna, is planning a wonderful meal, all the hot dogs and hamburgers you can eat, lots of snacks and chips, and soft drinks. **You may want to bring some lawn chairs if you want to sit outside.**

The rest of the meal is up to you! We are asking each person to bring a dish to share. You can bring any of your favorite picnic fare, but please bring enough for about 10-12 people. We need salads (cole slaw, bean salad, fruit salad), desserts (brownies, cookies, pies), fresh fruit (watermelon, berries), whatever! Call Norma or Joyce at (815) 723-3097 to let them know what you are bringing.

Pool Party begins at 9:00 p.m. Nitin, the hotel manager has kindly offered us the private use of the hotel pool for our party but only after the normal closing time. Obviously we don't have enough changing facilities for everyone. We are urging those who would like to take part in the pool party to take a room at the hotel, ask for the Tri-Ess room rate and share it with a few friends. It won't cost much, you'll have a place to shower off and change, and you won't be stuck in a wet bathing suit all night.

So get out those teeny weenie bikinis, girls, and come prepared to have a blast at our pool party!

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(Special note: I have a low cost health policy that has a prescription card that covers my hormones).

You are welcome to visit our office dressed any way you feel comfortable.

Transgender Spirituality

Coming in August, we are having a program on Transgender Spirituality presented by Mary Anne Foster and Dennis O'Neill from the Living Circle. Mary Anne's association with spirituality started after her coming out through Tri-Ess and the Chicago Gender Society. During Mary Anne's early years, she produced a public access TV show called Church of Human Kindness, sort of a Donohue show in reverse. Her interviews brought her in touch with many people in the New Age movement, spurring her interest in the feminine aspect of life called spirituality. Eventually she connected with Dennis O'Neill, founder of the Living Circle. The *New World*, an official publication of the Archdiocese of Chicago, ranked Dennis as one of the two best speakers in the Chicago area. See ya at the pool!

Luv and

Miranda



Be All - Thank You!

By Amanda

Now that Be All is over and those who attended are probably coming back to reality, I think a lot of praise and thanks is due to our leaders who put in so much time to make the event a great success. If you never ran such a large affair you probably don't know what it takes to put one on. Just estimate the time it took to get the hotel, negotiate fees, prepare menus, meeting room usage and every detail needed to accommodate guests. It took trips to the hotel, meeting time, many phone calls and time to just sit down and piece everything together.

Registrations. How much effort do you think it took to receive, process and return over 200 registrations? Many sheets and tickets needed to be typed up, prepared in packets and sent out. Then each guest had to come in and register, and someone had to be in the registration room to greet them. Just how long do you estimate it would take you to adhere 200+ stamps to envelopes or cut all those dinner tickets or coordinate packets of tickets where each one could potentially be different based on what the person registered for?

What about the programs? Planning began back in the fall right after the Holiday En Femme. The many presenters needed to be called and confirmed. Then called and confirmed again...and yet again with other questions and last-minute details. What about the phone bill for all the long-distance calls?

Each person giving a program was responsible for their own planning. I would bet each presenter put in several hours getting their programs ready. Add this into the total preparation hours.

For me, putting together the Gong Show took a lot of my time and energy, including 2.5 carloads of borrowed audio equipment and lighting. I was so lucky that a few ladies jumped in last minute to help set up the stage. We had allotted an hour and a half to set things up, but in reality it took about 4 hours. Thanks to those who came by and pitched in with things like wiring up speakers or taping down extension cords.

This is a small sampling of some of the work that a small group of people put in to make others happy. I thought about the often quoted "80/20" rule: 80% relax while 20% do the work. If I were to count up the number of workers versus the number of attendees, it probably was more like the 95/5 rule. I want every girl in our association to be proud and appreciative of those persons who gave so much of their time, talents and dollars to make this a success. I was especially aware of Denise's contribution. Many should have noticed her untiring work for all of us. It was not the kind of work that puts one in the spotlight, but all that mundane preparatory work to get things arranged. I also had the experience of rooming with Miranda who even after the hundreds of pre-Be All phone calls, had many challenges even as the Be All had begun. I watched her take care of many last-minute details, cancellations and problems associated with the programs. There were a few others too, and they also need to be congratulated, commended and thanked, but as my wig covers more and more gray hairs, I just can't remember all or them individually.

Now what about you, our Chi Chapter members? Do you think that for just our regular meetings and events or for the next affair we host, you could help us get that 95/5 rule where it belongs at 80/20? I hope it will someday be a great pleasure to thank YOU for all the work YOU will have done for your girlfriends.

Amanda

(Continued from page 2) Out Of Focus-Kiki

different fetish. This one just doesn't cut it anymore" (unless you're from Afghanistan).

Some of the silly things that happened:

Dr. Yvon Menard was giving a lecture on TS surgery, but before Dr. Menard arrived someone kept coming into the room asking, "Where are the storm windows? Isn't this Menards?"

Dr. Menard also discussed F to M surgery. At the bar that afternoon, I heard a new word for the operation, an Addadicktome.

A couple years ago, I used to get dressed up the trashiest outfits I could put together. I finally won an award as Queen of the Trailer Park. Friday night I wore my best Trailer Park outfit. My Budweiser short dress with wild platinum blonde hair that stuck straight out, the goofiest silver earrings you ever saw, a pair of white 1950's sunglasses and another green pair on top of my head, 4" white pumps and a yellow sweater over my shoulders. I felt marvy but about 10:30 I came completely unglued. So, I wrapped the sweater tightly around my bod, and carrying my shoes, walked to the elevator to call it a night.

A gal in a wheelchair got on and was going to 7, so I pushed the button for 7. She got off and I pressed 2 where I lived. At 6 the elevator stopped and a female yuppie got on. I suspect she had just arrived and hadn't spent any time in the lobby.

She took one look at me and moved to the back of the elevator. Then as the doors closed, she said, "Nice hotel". Well, the only thing that went through my mind was the rest of her sentence, "Why aren't you at Motel 6 you Queen of the Trailer Park?"

The elevator stopped at two, and in my best southern accent I turned to her and said, "Oh, its just so beautiful. Its the best hotel I've ever been in" and walked off! Imagine her surprise when she got downstairs. Bye.

**Miranda, Secret Agent Carol Rodgers (CGS Pres)
and Christine, on the boat cruise.**

Daniel Maroballi
Maroballi Shoes, Inc.
9540 W. 144th Place
Orland Park, Illinois 60462

Dear Mr. Marobelli,

It was truly a pleasant experience that's lead me to write you this letter today. I'd like to share with you an incident that occurred at your Yorktown Easy Spirit shoe store last Saturday, one that I strongly feel warrants special recognition of the employees involved.

I am a member of a local organization dedicated to the support of crossdressers. This weekend, our organization sponsored an international convention at a nearby hotel. We held several events, one of which was a shopping tour which I lead through Yorktown. We were a small group of 4-6 people as we visited the mall.

At the time that we entered the store, we were allowed to browse through the shoe selection without disruption. The professional staff greeted us, to our surprise, with the gender-appropriate greeting. I was especially impressed with your store manager, Patti Janiec, as she assisted one of our "sisters" in selecting a pair of shoes. Though I realize that this might not seem remarkable to you, for me to watch the interaction between Patti and our "sister", was nothing short of inspirational. You see, our "sister" has Muscular Dystrophy, making it very difficult for her to communicate her wishes. While many clerks might have become frustrated, the patient, compassionate, and respectful manner in which Patti attended to this person was truly commendable.

I wanted you to know that, with all of the events that were held over the weekend, that this individual told me that the treatment that she received from Patti was the highlight of her weekend here in the Chicago area.

In today's business world, where people are far too ready to criticize employees for making mistakes, I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your organization for hiring people of Patti's caliber. I don't know if you have any form of award program within your organization, but if you do, I would strongly recommend your highest form of recognition for Patti, as well as her staff. The professional manner in which she and her staff greeted our group, as well as the manner in which she attended to our "special" sister, reflects highly upon Easy Spirit shoe stores.

You might be surprised to know that our organization has members throughout the 6 county area, as well as national and international contacts. We have wives, girlfriends, and friends, all of who could benefit from the high quality of Easy Spirit shoes. Rest assured, with this incident as a reference, the word will be put out. That word will be "When you'd like to get a new pair of comfortable shoes, think Easy Spirit first.

Thank you again for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Alicia Reed
Chi-Chapter/ Tri-Ess