

# News & views

## Renaissance Highlights of '93

by *Angela Gardner*

Well ladies and gentlemen, we made it through another year. Most of the media have run their review of 1993 and I'm running late but let me list a few Renaissance highlights, even though it's February by the time you read this.

In January of '93 we had the New Idea Forum. The second day of the new year members gathered at the LSV meeting place and spent a productive afternoon coming up with a number of ideas for future implementation. We actually got around to working on some of them and the list is still around for the board's consideration.

In March we hosted the IFGE Convention at the Hilton (Now the Doubletree) Hotel in downtown Philadelphia. The event was lauded by IFGE leaders as the best convention ever.

April brought the March on Washington. Thousands of gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals and transgendered people descended on our nation's capitol and Renaissance girls were there too. They wore flats, completed the march and helped make an important point about our country's diversity.

In May, television history was made when Bill Cosby appeared on the same show as RuPaul. It was the Arsenio Hall Show and since then RuPaul has appeared everywhere. I haven't seen too much of Cosby. Maybe RuPaul will start selling Jello this year. She is wholesome enough.

June brought the Semi-annual-When-Ever-We-Can-Get-It-Together-Wine-Tasting at the Chadds Ford Winery. Winemaker/owner Eric Miller showed a group of Renaissance winos several varieties of his excellent product. After the tasting the girls made their way to the Ship Inn for more drinks and late dinner.

June also had Renaissance on the air in an unlikely format. Dina Amberle sent a letter to Philadelphia sports talk radio WIP AM. The midday host, Jody MacDonald, read the letter on the air and refrained from any crass comments.

July found us a new affiliate as the Metropolitan Gender Network came on board as our third affiliated organization.

August brought the heat wave and everyone's makeup melted. In spite of the heat, some pervert in drag was chasing women in Tyler State Park. He

was not apprehended but we did issue a Fashion Police Citation.

Some of us still made it to the meeting and I tried cooling off in the pool at The Raven. Other girls had fun in the sun at Rainbow Mountain in the Poconos. This was the beginning of the Swimsuit Issue. (We just received a photo from a girl in New Zealand who didn't know about the cut off date for submissions. She looks like my friend Wilma from North Jersey. See Photo.)



September brought the third anniversary of MOTG. It also brought the retail orgy known as Vendor Night to the GPC meeting. JoAnn Roberts had her CDS Paradise In The Poconos, an event that

many of the confused and befuddled masses think has something to do with Renaissance (it doesn't).

In October we all dressed up and went to Halloween Parties. It's our duty as crossdressers. Henri David surprised this editor by having his party on Saturday night the thirtieth instead of Halloween night the thirty-first. Caught me with my pantyhose down. I went to the UK to hide in shame and I caught a British cold. Ahchoo!

November passed in a busy blur. Renaissance speakers talked to classes at the University of Pennsylvania three times. I didn't manage to attend the Erie Sisters' Riverside Gala Weekend in western Pennsylvania and I hear I missed a great time. Mariette Pathy Allen debuted never-before-seen photos at the GPC meeting. Most noteworthy item for November was the election of the first GG Renaissance chapter leader, Linda C., as head honcho of LSV for '94.

In December the Renaissance Holiday Party gave everyone an opportunity to wear their fancy dresses and the college team dropped in on Temple, Bucks County Community College, and Rutgers University. Neiman Marcus had a great sale and I over-taxed my credit. Again. The month ended. The year is over and I think this is probably the very last year-in-review article you'll see. Till next year that is.



# RENAISSANCE

## Chapter & Affiliate Information

### Chapters

#### New Jersey

**South Jersey/Shore Area:** Write Renaissance SJ, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Meets the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open at 7 p.m. Call 609-435-5401 for details.

#### Pennsylvania

**Greater Philadelphia area:** Write Renaissance GPC, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020-0530. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call 610-630-1437 for information.

**Lower Susquehanna Valley:** Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (1578) for location and times.

Would you like to start a group in your area? If so, we can help with our chapter/affiliate program. Write to the Director of Outreach, Chapter Development, Renaissance National, PO Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA 19406 or call 610-630-1437 and request our Community Outreach Bulletin No. 1.

### Affiliates

#### Georgia

The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-987-8535. Information resources.

#### Louisiana

The Gulf Area Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

#### New Jersey

Monmouth/Ocean Trans-Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701. Local support group.

#### New York

Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665. Local support group.

# Renaissance News & Views

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Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to our editorial office care of Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020-0530. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

Renaissance is a 501[c]3 non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public.



## Resources



### Background Papers:

- Background Papers are \$1.25 each:
1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
  2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
  3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
  4. The Matter of Children
  5. Annotated Bibliography
  6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
  7. AIDS/ HIV Safety and Ethics.
  8. Understanding Transsexualism

### Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

### Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

### TransParent Forum:

If you are transgendered and have children, that makes you a TransParent. If you'd like to network with other TransParents contact Elsa Larson, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, Pa., 17105, attention: TransParent.

### Events Calendar

#### February

- 5 Renaissance LSV Meeting  
Lee Etscovitz-Gender Journey
- 5 Renaissance SJ Meeting
- 6 Miss Gay Pa., USA, New Hope.
- 13 MGN Meeting
- 19 Renaissance GPC Meeting
- 25 Texas "T" Party starts
- 26 MOTG Meeting

#### March

- 5 Renaissance LSV Meeting
- 5 Renaissance SJ Meeting
- 5 MOTG Movie Fund Raiser
- 13 MGN Meeting
- 16 IFGE Con., Portland, Wash.
- 19 Renaissance GPC Meeting,  
Turrey Kepler, Legal Issues
- 19 MOTG Meeting
- 26 Sunshine Club Anniv. Banquet



## News Beat...

copy of the article in *Ladies Home Journal* called, "Trading Places." It ran in the January issue with Dolly Parton on the cover. The *Journal* took a married couple who where also actors and had them switch gender for a week and otherwise go about their lives. I recommend that you read the article. It contains some good information on what it's like to cross the line and to those of us who are going out as females, it's interesting to hear the woman's observations on becoming male. I bought a copy for the Renaissance library and it will be available there or I'm sure you can find it in your local library's periodicals section. It won't still be in the stores by the time you read this. They both look pretty convincing and personally I think he makes a more attractive woman. Of course I'm upset since he is an actor and now his agent will be submitting him for all the roles that I, Miss Gardner, should have. Oh, the pain.

### SISTERS KEEP ON DOIN' IT FOR THEMSELVES

I spoke with Pam Dresser of the Erie Sisters group and got their election results. Their new president is Chris Holt. The group boasts not one but two vice presidents and they are Lottie Hatfield and Diane L. (Diane is one of the initial people I've mentioned before.) Pam Dresser steps into the business manager's pumps and

Becky, a lady so anonymous she doesn't even have an initial, is a director at large.

If you want to learn more about our sisters in western Pennsylvania keep your eye on the mail box for the next issue of *TV-TS Tapestry*. The New England publication will feature the Erie Sisters in the next issue.

### REACH OUT AND TOUCH A TRAN

After a long drought we have finally landed ourselves a couple of spots in the media. One local shot in *Chester County Living*, (the Sunday magazine of the *Chester County Daily Local News*) ran on the Sunday after Christmas. Right there on the cover it's JoAnn Roberts and, who's that standing next to her, looking slightly cold? (not emotionally, it was freezing and I didn't have the sense to wear a coat when we stepped outside for photos. That's right it was me.) Dorothy McCabe is the writer from the *Daily Local News* who interviewed JoAnn and I at the Great Valley Hilton. We all stayed on through happy hour and had a great time. The article is not only excellent but has already gotten us several calls for information on the group. As with all media mentions, we'll have a copy in the Renaissance library for your perusal.

The other media mention is of a more national nature and I haven't seen it yet. We were recommended by IFGE as a group that might be able to provide a crossdresser to be interviewed on camera by the *Working Woman* television show. Since there

wasn't much on my calendar in December, I agreed to do it and the producer of this nationally syndicated show brought her crew right into my little home. This was great 'cause I was forced to clean up the place. I did have to ask them not to pile the equipment in the hall as it might attract a little too much attention from the neighbors. (A girl has to be discreet and a van load of equipment outside the door... well, you know how nosy people can get.)

After the interview, and obligatory transformation shots, we adjourned to the Franklin Mills Mall for scenes of Angela in action, shopping of course! The show is scheduled for February 6th, so check your local listings if you're reading this before then. (That's another thing we're trying to improve: delivery time.) I'm sure you won't see that much of me in the piece since the producer talked to RuPaul and a host of other gender rebels but we'll wait till the sixth and see what happens. Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my closeup.

### PLUG IN AND TURN ON

The LSV News has a new editor. Elsa Larson has stepped aside to concentrate on parenthood, the Transparent Project and taking care of the national data base, making way for Cierra Lang at the editor's desk. If anyone out there has any tidbits that they haven't already sent to *Renaissance News & Views* and they think they might be of interest to LSV members send them to the *LSV News* care of, Cierra Lang, PO Box 238, Scotland, PA 17254-0238.

Looking through Cierra's first issue

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I noticed some news that computer literate members everywhere should find helpful. Paula Kaiser is the SYSOP of the Jersey Shore System Gender Support Bulletin Board. Cierra says that if you tap in you will probably find her there, so just send your submissions to the *LSV News* by E-mail. (Ms. Kaiser is also author of Background Paper #6)

OK, here's the computer talk on plugging in: 609-693-8849, 300 to 9600 baud, 8 bits, No parity. LOGON using APRIL MAY with the password FRIENDS (all caps). After all that you'll find yourself in the submenu (Is that like a sub basement?) where you can register your name of choice for future access. The board is available 24 hours a day for your late night CB activity. See, I know the lingo.

**READ IT AND WEEP**

Afterwords is a magazine and card store on twelfth street between Walnut and Locust streets in Philadelphia. They have one section that is dedicated to magazines on body modification. Now I'm not talking about pumping up your muscles or using the Mark Eden course to increase your bust. No, while they probably do have mags on these topics, what I'm talkin' about here is reducing your waist (permanently) to nineteen inches, tattoos everywhere, and let's not forget body piercing. They carry a whole section on this kind of stuff and since I'm always looking out for my readers who may be interested in this kind of thing I report my findings to you. I

mean, I didn't actually take the time to read any of these mags. Well, not all of them. I really only glanced at the corset mag. I deny even looking at the one about piercing. Ouch! I got so entranced with the body-mod mags I forgot to mention the rubber, leather and fetish mags. They got 'em all.

The store carries these niche items as well as gay and transgender oriented publications, main stream stuff and the Sunday newspaper. They have a good selection of cards including drag queen birthday cards. Heaven knows we all need those. It's a pleasant store with a friendly staff and they're just up the street from Hepburn's and Duck Soup. What more could you ask for?

**EVENTS, YES WE GOT EVENTS**

All right girls, lets get that wardrobe picked out for the next few months of activities, starting with the Miss Pennsylvania USA Pageant at the Eagle Firehouse Ball Room in New Hope, PA. That's right, they had the Miss New Jersey USA Pageant in New Hope and I thought one might have to go to New Jersey for the Pennsylvania contest but, no, they stayed in Pennsylvania for this one. It happens on Sunday, February sixth. Tickets are fifteen dollars in advance and twenty on the day of the show. Charge with Visa or Master Card by phone at New Hope Video, 215-862-3556. Miss Monique Trudeau and Tinsel Garland are your emcees. Wear a cocktail dress at least. No sneakers!

February eight through thirteenth, if you haven't seen it already or if you

want to see it again, *La Cage Aux Folles* is back at the Forrest Theater in Philadelphia. (Six Tony awards, count 'em.) Charge-by-phone at 800-447-7400. Not sure who's in the cast but I hope this hasn't become such a classic that they cast a woman as Alban. Maybe Ann Margret or someone like her. I'm all for non-traditional casting but I just don't think that would work.

Planning a trip to Texas? Pack your cowboy boots, your ten gallon hat and your prettiest frock. It's the Texas "T" Party from February 25 through 27 in San Antonio. Hurry up and get their brochure. It will take you several days to fill it out. There are thirty seven, count 'em, thirty seven things to fill in on the registration form. Contact the Boulton & Park Society. I'd call. Time is running out! 210-545-3668. If you write, it's Box 700042 (they even have big box numbers in Texas) San Antonio, TX 78270. They claim to be "Lost in the fifties" so don't forget that fru fru prom dress.

Heading for the UK at the end of March? How about attending the Maria Hart Club breakaway weekend. The girls will be on holiday in Bournemouth from March 25 to 27. It costs one hundred and fifty pounds. That's about two hundred and twenty five bucks. It includes the services of a Rolls Royce for special trips around town. Maybe you need to pick up some pantyhose or something. There will be an in-house beautician dispensing expert advice.

For more information contact the

*continued page 14*

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# Roger's Notebook #85

A theme that I have examined from time to time in earlier columns is the motivation for male-to-female crossdressing. Asking the average crossdresser why he crossdresses is likely to elicit some response such as, "I am exploring femininity," or "I just do this to relax." Recently this topic has come up in various newsletters from around the community and in some personal correspondence I have received. The interesting thing is that the tone of the writing has changed dramatically.

Initially, there was never a reference to an erotic component and there was always the rationale that the crossdresser was trying to understand something about that elusive thing we label femininity. More recent writings acknowledge that there is (or was) at least a sensual component, if not a truly erotic one. The other perspective is that many crossdressers remain "men in dresses" rather than some semblance of a woman.

Some of these writings are either by women or written for newsletters that address crossdressing within a male-female couple. What these authors seem to be saying is that there is often little behavioral or emotional shift when the man puts on women's clothing. That is, he still behaves in very masculine ways. One writer speculated that such lack of behavioral change was rooted in the male's need to continually assure himself and others that he was still masculine despite the clothing. This is based on the subconscious fear that to be feminine is to move to second class citizen status.

As I have written before, femininity is not clothing or makeup but rather a way of seeing and interacting with the world. In the last few years there have been a number of books written on the biological differences between males and females. A major focus has been on differences in brain structure from which it is inferred that males and females process information in very different ways. This, in turn, strongly affects the way they relate to the world.

If these biological differences are a strong influence on behavior, then one can speculate that it is going to be very difficult for the crossdresser to behave in feminine ways and thus explore femininity. For him to do so, he has to learn new ways of thinking. While this is certainly not impossible, it means overcoming many years of socializing together with an internal "program" that doesn't process information the way a female brain does. So it is hard for him to understand why women behave the way they do. This makes it difficult for him to explore this alternate culture.

On the behavioral side of the discussion, there have been a number of recent authors who have described the different actions of men and women as they relate to each other. Simplistically, men behave individualistically and hierarchically while women are concerned with the whole situation and interpersonal relationships.

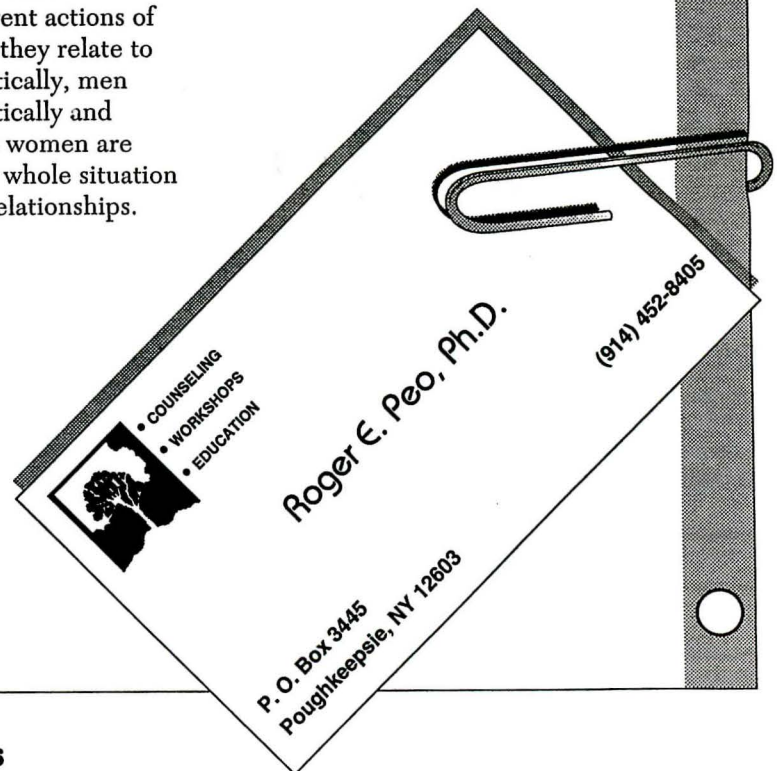
Thus, there seem to be both biological and sociological differences between the sexes. Perhaps they are so fundamental there will never be a true comprehension by one sex of the other sex.

This situation is neither good nor bad. What I am trying to express is the idea that for a male to explore femininity, it may be more difficult than he expected. Maybe this is not needed. Perhaps all that is required is crossdressers to enjoy whatever they do and not try to explain or understand it. (A cautionary note: This is not a license to ignore the effects of crossdressing on your partner.)

You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential.

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# What's Hot for 1994 at CDS?

## • Videos •

The Straight Dope On Hormones  
Coping With Crossdressing: The Video  
Cosmetic Surgery Options  
Art & Illusion Tricks & Tips  
Basic Makeup Application  
Speaking As A Woman  
What Is Femininity?  
LadyLike Department

## • Publications •

1994 Who's Who & Resource Guide  
The Cross & The Crossdresser  
Art & Illusion: A Guide to Crossdressing  
Speaking As A Woman  
Sacred Cows Make The Best Hamburger  
Transsexual's Survival Guide I  
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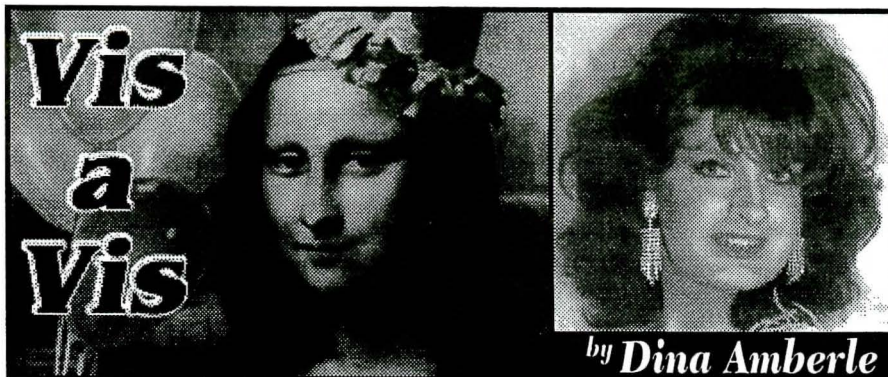
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some of these Tri-Ess ladies, you would agree wholeheartedly).

Well, it's an interesting point and one that's come up in our own Renaissance gatherings. There are plenty of places to be outrageous and it's not necessary to make oneself a spectacle in a mixed public setting.

---

**Let's Talk About Sex, Baby!**

*La Femme Silhouette*, the newsletter of the Alpha Omega Tri-Ess Chapter in Cleveland, carried an interesting article by Deborah Benton. Deborah is grappling with the issue of sexuality and crossdressing. She writes that 'some people want to divorce gender and sexual issues, but I'm not so certain they can be separated'.

This is heavy stuff for a newsletter - and believe me, I've seen a lot of newsletters. Even more remarkable because it's from a Tri-Ess member, who takes an oath of neuter sexuality before being allowed into the sorority and learning the secret handshake.

Among the questions she raises are: How do we really feel about attention from men when we are crossdressed? What is the true reason some crossdressers enjoy heterosexual relations while wearing feminine articles? Deborah admits that she has fantasized about being a woman having sexual relations with men. And she is feeling uncomfortable about the denial of sexuality in the crossdressing community.

I don't think Deborah is trying to make a case for bisexuality for herself or others. It seems that she is just trying to say that the sex issue is present, perhaps not the over-riding factor in our crossdressing, but one that shouldn't be swept under the rug or left unmentioned because it conflicts with the image we are trying to cultivate with the public at large.

---

**Giving Great Airhead**

*The Rainbow* newsletter of the RGA group in San Jose carried an article by E. Fenton, who apparently is the wife of a crossdresser, in which she chastised many crossdressers for being airheads. Oh, yeah, fer sure, she called us airheads, like du-uh...

[Errata: The January *Vis A Vis* deleted the last line of a paragraph on page 16 "Dare To Be Different". We don't know what it was, but we apologize for the confusion. - Eds.]

In one of my early Economics courses, I learned about the law of diminishing returns. If you increase one of your factors of production, your output should rise accordingly. But you will eventually reach a point where an increase in production input will not provide a proportional increase in output. That is the law of diminishing returns.

When I first started this column, I got a lot of material from just a few group newsletters. Now I am receiving massive amounts of newsletters but my output has not increased proportionally. Diminishing returns, see?

---

**The Whole World Is Watching**

The Boulton & Park newsletter, *Gender Euphoria*, had a cover story criticizing the Tri-Ess management for allowing media coverage of the Holiday En Femme. The girls at B&P seemed to be concerned about the Tri-Ess membership's privacy rights being violated. But they also seem to be criticizing the Tri-Ess gals out of both sides of their mouths.

There is a sarcastic tone to the piece because of the 'new' Tri-Ess philosophy to be a little more open-minded about community relations. And while they are ribbing the belated enlightenment of Tri-Ess, they are indignant about the lack of privacy at the Holiday. You can't have it both ways, girls.

But the interesting thing about the

whole article is this paranoia about media coverage and guests of the event being seen on television. The B&P author reminds us that it isn't easy to explain to your boss or wife what you were doing on the 11 o'clock news in a dress. And right she is. But how could anyone's boss or wife recognize someone in full drag in a fleeting glimpse on television?

My own feeling is that if you can be that easily recognized by someone, you aren't doing something right. Certainly the guests have a right not to be subjected to a media zoo if they pay good money to attend an event. But public exposure is important for groups like ours and the number of new members who find organized groups through media coverage is testament to the strength of media outreach.

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**It's My Party & I'll Dress How I Want To**

*The Southern Belle* from the Atlanta Tri-Ess Chapter had a letter by Diane Kendall in which she complained about the way some of their members dress for meetings held at a Ramada Inn. Apparently, some of those straight-laced Tri-Ess girls are showing a bit too much leg and cheek in their fashion choices.

Diane points out that she believes in an individual's freedom of expression but reminds us that others also have rights not to be subjected to inappropriate dress or behavior. In a public venue such as a Ramada, there are families and other guests who should not be forced to see a man dressed as a woman dressed like a streetwalker. (And if you've ever seen



Well, it seems that Mrs. Fenton is a feminist and finds that speaking with some of her husband's crossdressed friends at RGA gatherings is something less than an intellectual experience. She suggests that if we want to emulate women, 'don't be a bimbo.' It seems that many of the conversations she finds herself in with otherwise intelligent crossdressers revolve around such less than weighty topics as nail polish, stockings, and drag shows.

But on a deeper level than mere conversation, she challenges the crossdressers to present some evidence they've really crossed gender boundaries by exhibiting some feminine traits like compassion, sense of aesthetics, and emotional faculties. 'If you can't, please don't claim you've crossed any gender boundaries' she says, 'you're just a guy in a dress'.

We could all dismiss this as just a feminist reaction to our preoccupation with the shallow elements of femininity. But Mrs. Fenton is really trying to make us think about what it means to be a real woman. If we're only in it for the clothes, then fine, admit it. But if we really mean what we say about wanting to 'express our feminine natures' than we had better ante up with something a little more profound than where we bought our pocket-books for half-off.

**PPOC vs. IFGE**

*Girl Talk* is the newsletter of PPOC, the Powder Puffs of Orange County (one of the great names for a group). I think it's safe to surmise that

someone at PPOC has it in for the bigwigs at the IFGE. They have a column called 'Queenspeak' in which they 'interpret' certain IFGE platitudes in plainer language.

It stems from the \$60,000 deficit that IFGE is currently running. All of the interpretive statements end in 'Send money' and a few are thinly veiled accusations that someone at IFGE is mis-appropriating funds. For example: the statement "As a *Tapestry* subscriber, you are keenly aware of the importance of IFGE to the TG community" is interpreted as meaning "Send money. Renew your subscription." One more: the statement "Although political action is important, the real struggle is for people's hearts and minds" is appended with "...and wallets. Send money."

Now I've made a studied effort to not pay any attention to the IFGE and I don't know anything about their money problems, the leadership, or what they are trying to do. But this type of cat-fighting between groups - although highly entertaining - always leaves a sour taste in my mouth. And sometimes sarcastic naysaying speaks louder about the naysayer than about the target of the attack. So there. Nyah, nyah, na-nyah, nyah.

**I'll Take Two. The Second One I'll Wear Home**

The people at Vernon's Specialties (a TV boutique) in Waltham MA sent out a new flyer with some very interesting items listed for sale.

Along with the typical high heels,

corsets, and breast forms you'd expect from a full service boutique, Vernon's has a line of 'totally life like dildoes in molded latex with realistic texture' and that is where they can really 'service' the crossdresser.

The bargain of the selection would have to be the Ejaculating Butt Plug for only \$14.50. The Jeff Stryker model is a pricey \$59.95 but you probably get a photo of pretty-boy Jeff on the package. The middle choices raise some questions in my mind. You can buy the 6-inch Realistic Model with Balls for the same price as the 8-inch Realistic with Balls, both priced at \$39.95. I don't know, it seems to me that any rational crossdresser would go for the extra two inches if it's not gonna cost you any more. The Executive 5-inch Realistic is priced 25% higher at \$49.95. But you know those executives; money is no object, even if they're getting shortchanged by 3 inches. And it's a real shame we didn't get this flyer in time for Christmas because I'm sure we all would have splurged and invested in The KONG Realistic, even at \$67.95. Admit it, you always wanted to be Fay Wray in the famous movie.

You know, now that I think of it, Vernon's Specialties is in the same town (Waltham, Mass.) as the headquarters for IFGE, just down the street. Maybe that's where they ran up that \$60,000 deficit. I wonder how many inches of Realistic molded latex 60-grand would buy?




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# Hot • BUZZ

JoAnn Roberts

The world does not require so much to be informed as to be reminded.



The hottest buzz this month is the publication of a major work by one of our own, Dallas Denny, Executive Director and founder of the American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), an affiliate of Renaissance. *Gender Dysphoria: A Guide to Research* published by Garland Press hit the shelves in January. This 700-page reference volume lists over 3,000 citations (many annotated) of articles and books from medical, legal and psychological sources. The book also includes a comprehensive listing of support groups and information services. ISBN: 0-8153-0840-X; \$99. This publication shows what can be accomplished by **one** person focused on a task. Creating tools and resources for our community is talked about by many, but beyond the grasp of most. Denny measures up to the task.



IFGE board co-chair, Sharon Ann Stuart, sent me a copy of a great article from the January 1994 issue of *Scientific American*. "Animal Sexuality" by David Crews examines how different species develop sex and masculine and feminine traits. Mammals derive their sex, and consequently their gender roles, genotypically, i.e., sex is determined by chromosomes. In some reptiles, sex is determined by incubation temperature. Some animals, notably fish, change sex based on social environment. Some of these fish change only once while others can see-saw back and forth (I know some people like that). And even parthenogenic species (self-cloning) exhibit the masculine and feminine behaviors of their oviparous cousins. However, an even more important finding for transgendered people is that female embryos surrounded by male embryos (in species that give birth to multiple young) are more masculine in

behavior than their sisters developing in an all female environment. This finding has implications for studies on transsexualism. There's a lot more to the article. Pick up a copy or check your local library. It's an easy read.



The French may not appreciate EuroDisney but they do know how to make a political statement. AIDS activists, sponsored by Benetton and ActUp Paris, placed a giant condom over the 70 foot obelisk in the Place de la Concorde. A spokesperson for the Italian sportswear firm said the condom was put there because of opposition to Benetton's ad campaign that featured people tattooed with the words "HIV Positive."



With hemlines rising higher this Spring, one hopes the economy will follow. But shorter skirts means that legs must look great. While waxing is still the preferred home method for leg hair removal, many women are turning to sugaring. The principle is the same, but the mixture of sugar, honey and water doesn't attach so firmly to the skin. Proponents say the process is much less painful. But both wax and sugar may become things of the past in the near future. Institut Esthederm, a French beauty line, is making its way to U.S. shores with a post-depilatory product, based on a patented enzymatic complex, that slows down regrowth, prevents ingrown hairs, and makes the hairs finer and lighter.



Donna Karan, she whose pantyhose I adore, found herself in hot water, fashionably speaking, over a remark about supermodels. Karan said the fees pulled down by the likes of Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford were "immoral." Meanwhile, a simple outfit of skirt, blouse, and sweater bearing the initials DKNY (Karan's "low priced" line of sportswear) can run to three figures, and a Donna Karan evening en-

semble can easily top four digits. Is this the pot calling the kettle black?



Avon isn't sitting on its powder puff in the information age. Realizing that more women are out working during the day, Avon will be targeting them at night with infomercials. Not wanting to be left out of the infomercial blitz, look for designer Norma Kamali to start hawking her wares on TV too.



Wig-lets: according to Gwen Bourhis at Bitz-n-Pieces in Manhattan... the best wigs are René of Paris and Jacquelyn... Wigs should be washed every tenth wearing in cold water and baby shampoo... You can't buy a good wig for less than \$100, and wigs are not returnable... Worn daily, a good synthetic wig should last 3 months; a human hair wig will last 8 to 12 months.



Well, the cat's out of the bag and I didn't do it, although I've known about it for quite some time. That "custom created just for me" makeup you've been buying in all probability comes from a factory in New York, regardless of whether you bought it from a makeup artist or Victoria Jackson's infomercial. Mana Products' private-label line "Your Name Cosmetics" was profiled in the December issue of *Allure*. Down in the corner of the piece was a photo of the company's product catalog and it would look very familiar to many folks who frequent the various TV events around the country. I knew about it because Eric Lee who does the makeovers at my Pocono weekends has been buying and using the Your Name stuff for years. Remember, Caveat Emptor.



Words to ponder — Anne Rice, vampire novelist and pornographer: "[when I joined the women's movement] it was about power, earning the same pay for the same job. Now it's about protection. We are saying we want to be al-

# Hot • Buzz

## Queen of Prussia

lowed in a man's world, but we can't take it; you have to protect us."

Spring fashion shows this winter were no better than last season. Designers were showing everything ultra-short and ultra-sheer. Some took sidetrips into the kinky zone, like Donna Karan's DKNY neoprene skirt. (Somehow I can't see it mattering in a place like the Vault or Paddles.) Even though clothing designers can't seem to get the message that their clothes are too outré for the real world, shoe designers not only heard it, but replied with great looking, sensible (well, sensible to a TV) baby doll pumps with high heels, mid-heels, and spectator styling.

Words to ponder — Dolly Parton: "When people ask me why I wear five-inch heels, I tell them its 'cause I can't find six-inch ones."

I love makeup brushes. Can't do my face without 'em anymore. I collect sets and have four right now. Many beauty experts agree that brushes with natural bristles are best. Natural bristle has a cuticle that holds color and deposits it smoothly. Nylon bristles won't behave that way. Vernon's Specialties in Waltham Mass., one of our long-time advertisers, carries a great line of natural bristle, wood-handled brushes.

In my Art & Illusion Tricks & Tips workshop, I talk about the "ideal" feminine face being an oval. Now, I'm going to have to change my spiel. The "classic canon" is a standard of beauty for a Caucasian — specifically Anglo-Saxon — face. Cosmetic surgeons have applied this standard indiscriminately to Asians, Blacks and others alike resulting in a homogenized, Anglicized, concept of beauty. As more people of non-European ethnic heritage enter the field of plastic surgery, they're questioning the previous standards and seeking to redefine them. An associ-

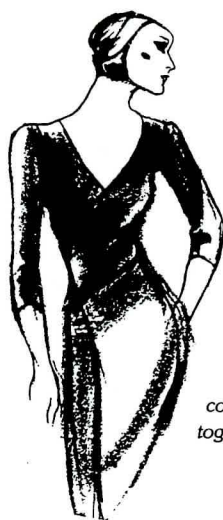
ate professor of plastic surgery has completed a study of 400 models from multiple ethnic groups. They study has established, for example, that a rounded face is the pinnacle of Asian beauty. Placing cheek implants in an Asian woman's face would destroy that beauty. Similarly, an African-American woman's nose is considered beautiful if it is shorter and more rounded than a typical Caucasian nose. The results of the study will be published soon.

I was rooting around in my bookshelf looking for something to read and came across my copy of Samuel R. Delaney's *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains Of Sand*. It's not an easy book to describe, except to say it's a love story, set in the future. (Actually, any of Delaney's books are hard to describe.) Anyway, what makes this book so interesting is (a) it was written in 1984, and (b) sentient beings in society, whether male or female, are referred to as women, "she" and "her." There is no "man" and "he" is used only for sexual objects. Seems as

though Delaney predicted the rise of women as role-models for social interaction. The second book of the diptych should be published this year.

Received a note from Phyllis Frye, Executive Director of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. The 1994 conference will be held August 17 through the 21 at the Hilton Southwest Hotel in Houston. Register before April 1 and pay only \$128 per person. Attorney's attending the conference can earn continuing education credits, contact ICTLEP at 5707 Firenze St. Houston, TX 77035. But more importantly, the conference needs health care and HR professionals to attend. Last year's conference resulted in a number of very important policy statements that need additional input. The ICTLEP welcomes **anyone** to attend.

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# TransParent Forum by Elsa Larson

It's a lovely summer Saturday morning; cool, breezy and sunny; the perfect day to take the family downtown to visit our century-old farmer's market. "Is there a hooker convention in town?" I wonder aloud as I spot her crossing the street at the end of the block in a low cut, white sun-dress, waist length wig, black fishnets and four inch heels. As she approaches, most of the people on the sidewalk turn to stare, for this vision of loveliness is sporting some manly tattoos and a hint of five o'clock shadow. Most observers comment on how inappropriate the outfit is for grocery shopping. She disappears into the market. When we enter a minute later, she is gone and there is no sign of her passing.

Our baby watches everyone and takes it all in stride. It's not something to get excited about like a balloon, a dog or a toddler. Someday soon, she'll have thoughts that she will likely voice loudly to no one in particular. "Why was that man wearing a dress? Why was everyone staring at him?" Perhaps she'll say, "You're prettier than that Daddy." Or, "You'd better tell him about Renaissance."

I think back to my own days of shopping while crossdressed. Most comments I overheard were acceptable and the worst was a very loud, "May I help you, SIR?" I recall the time at a Danskin outlet when a very loud two-

year-old voice wondered, "Mommy, why is that man trying on leotards?" When I later encountered the same mother and child in the ladies room, the mother kept herself between me and her child while I got out of there before they got even more upset.

Now, I'm in an unexpected role reversal. Instead of being observed by a child while crossdressed, I am the parent of the child watching the crossdresser. While I completely understand the urge to get dolled up and go shopping, I also realize that parents worry **a lot** about their children. I'm not ready to lock my daughter away and sell the television, lest she observe men wearing dresses, nor do I want her to feel free to tell everyone that it's OK for a man to wear a dress whenever he wants, just like Daddy does.

Times are indeed achangin'. Public crossdressing has gone from perversion to weird to quirky. The inappropriateness of the outfit may be considered more from a fashion perspective than a gender perspective. Transgendered parents may feel obliged to share this knowledge with their children. What, where, when and how we share it with them is the subject of the *TransParent Forum*. We'd be delighted to have your ideas or questions. Send them to TransParent. The address is on page two.



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# Letters to the Editor

December 13, 1993

Dear Angela:

I am questioning the suitability of an ad which appeared in the December, 1993 issue of Renaissance News. On page 19 appeared an ad headlined "TV? TS? DOMINANT/SUBMISSIVE?". The ad went on to mention support groups and counseling, but also concluded with the phrase "fantasy conversation," which, as I suspected, was the primary nature of the ad. For \$110/hr. one can get phone sex from any one of several ladies listed. Or for "much higher rates" one can speak to more than one lady at a time or to Ms. Nancy Ava Miller herself! Wow!

I confess to some interest in the subject matter of the ad, but I thought that perhaps if the ad appeared in Renaissance News it was placed by an organization such as Til Eulenspiegel in New York City or The Black Rose in D.C., both of which are supportive, not exploitive organizations. Instead, it was just another phone sex ad.

No, I don't know just where we should draw the line concerning advertising, nor do I know how I expect my editors to investigate the nature of each proposed ad. But this ad exceeded the bounds of taste which I expect to govern the screening of ads submitted for publication in Renaissance News. This publication is our public face, and the inclusion of ads such as this does not comport with the face which I would like us to present to the public. Nor is it the face of Renaissance which I would like mirrored to me.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Reid

Dear Caroline,

We live in a world where anything can be had for a price. Even an ad in the Renaissance News. I spoke with Ms. Miller when she proposed her ad (I didn't have to pay higher rates.) and since she, like our other advertisers is offering a service or product that I believed would be of interest to some of

our readers I accepted the ad. I apologize if you find the ad offensive. Nothing in the Renaissance News is meant to be offensive. This month we changed the title of this publication by adding "& Views." That's what we're all about. Different views, other perspectives. I don't personally have any use for Ms. Miller's services, therefore, I don't call. I think anyone who spends \$110 for an hour of phone sex is very foolish. (That's \$1.83 per minute by the way.) But to paraphrase some old French guy, I may not use phone sex myself but I defend to the death another's right to dial.

I hope we can continue to count on your support and I encourage you, and others, to fire up the word processor and let us know what you think.

Sincerely,  
Angela Gardner  
Editor in Chief

[Here's a letter about a man who has been mentioned in these pages before.]

December 5, 1993  
Dear Editor(ess),

The November 29, 1993 Maury Povich talk show on NBC-TV had a married couple who lived for a week in reversed

gender roles. They were NOT crossdressers. The Ladies Home Journal sponsored the stunt and features a story about it in their January issue.

The LHJ put out a "casting call" for a straight couple willing to try this performance. They had a makeup artist do the transformations including all the padding in the right places (for both members). The couple they picked had acting experience. (No doubt the casting call was read by the right people.)

The spokesperson for LHJ said that she thought the couple they picked would be "easy" to transform. It turned out to be hard! They even had Tony Curtis (Some Like It Hot) coach in the ways of walking like a woman.

As part of the experience, the "woman" shopped for clothes, went to a beauty salon and had lunch with the girls (GGs). The "man" went with the boys to a strip joint and a hockey game. Each used the appropriate rest rooms.

The "woman" said the hardest part was the "vulnerability," but the cat-calls produced both good and bad feelings.

Even though one member of the studio audience invoked Dan Quayle and family values, it is interesting to see how open all this is becoming and how tolerant (and empathetic?) the studio audience was.

Love,  
Stella Bamvil

Dear Stella,

Like the services of Nancy Ava Miller, I have little use for shows hosted by Maury Povich. Tailspin and the Jetsons are on opposite his show in this market so I had my video tuned somewhere else. Thanks for letting me know about it. If anyone out there has the show on tape, think about donating a copy to the Renaissance Library. We could view it at a meeting and have a discussion group. Now that's education for ya!

Angela Gardner  
Editor in Chief

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# News Beat...

Maria Hart Club at 41 Ingleby Gardens, Farndale, Wolverhampton, WV6 0TH. Don't forget to use the country code if you try to call them. The number is 0902 742369 or 0902 786293. I won't be there. I'm selling dresses to pay the credit card bills from the last trip.

The Sunshine Club in Hadley, Mass., is having a Second Anniversary Banquet and you're invited. They sent us a special bulletin with all the details. You've got to get your registration in by March twelfth and the event occurs on March twenty sixth at Bricker's in Greenfield. If you'd like the special bulletin with all the details write them at: Sunshine Club (AB-94), PO Box 149, Hadley, MA 011035-0149. Have a happy one girls!

The Mamas and Papas sang it; you can live it. California Dreamin' in beautiful, downtown Burbank, April twenty-seventh through May first at the Burbank Holiday Inn. I think they have more things to fill out on their registration form than the T Party so get started soon. Write; *California Dreamin'*, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, (is there a TV anywhere named Linda Yorba?) CA 92686. You can call them at 714-779-9013 from 9 AM to 9 PM Pacific time. They have all kinds of wild stuff planned and if it gets boring you can always take the Universal tour.

In June we careen back to Pennsylvania, Land of the Bionic Governor for the Twelfth Annual Be All '94 in beautiful downtown Pittsburgh. Transpitt will be hosting the festivities from the eight through the twelfth. Write for info; Transpitt, PO Box 3214, Pittsburgh, PA 15230.

Is that enough for now on events and stuff? Give me another month. I'll come up with more.

## GIANT HUMOR FILLED WRAP UP SECTION

That about wraps up Reminder Beat for this month. I've chipped my flawless manicure on these nasty old word processor keys. I really must go to my nail salon now. Let me just close with two pieces of humor sent in by Elsa Larson and a quote from my friend Jayne.

Elsa sent a page from a desk calendar by P.J. O'Rourke. The calendar is "Modern Manners, Etiquette For Rude People." On the October 6th page it says, "The only really firm rule of taste about cross-dressing is that neither sex should ever wear anything they haven't yet figured out how to go to the bathroom in."

Piece of humor number two is a one panel cartoon called Farcus. In it a man in a dress (who does about as good a job of passing as the "ladies" in that ladies night beer commercial) is standing in front of a desk that's labeled "Affirmative Action." The woman behind the desk is saying,

"Hey, wait a minute... only a man would wear green pumps with a blue chiffon dress!"

This closing quote is from my friend Jayne, a woman who knows fashion. "God didn't create human beings without clothes for them to dress without imagination."

There's your topic. I'm a little vakleempt. Talk amongst yourselves. Ta ta!

[If you have an item that you'd like Ms. Gardner to mention in her column, please send it along to her at PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020.]

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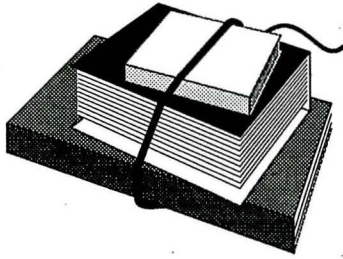
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# BOOK NOOK

*If you're going out to explore that strange country called Femininity then you should try to find a road map. Here's one source of information reviewed by Erica who is running for president of the group Long Island Feminine Expression (LIFE).*

**The Feminization Of America:**

Elinor Lenz & Barbara Myerhoff, J.P. Tarcher Inc., publisher, Los Angeles CA, 1985, 276 pages, hardcover.

Elinor Lenz (Former Director of UCLA's Extension of Western Humanities Center, educational consultant/author) and Barbara Myerhoff Ph.D. (author and former USC professor) collaborated on a highly interesting book that is available in many public libraries. *The Feminization Of America* traces the influences of women and the feminine role as it has evolved and expanded over the course of the twentieth century to gradually change life for the better in America.

Historic roles: Masculine—the hunter, protector, warrior and; Feminine—the life giver, nurturer, caretaker, supporter are described and contrasted. Styles of living and interacting in our society are explored.

Friendships; male-male, female-female, male-female are presented for consideration. Early on, males organize themselves in play into hierarchies of competitive dominance while girls play in pairs or clusters with disclosure, communication, loyalty and spontaneity. The authors present the case for these patterns to carry forward in individuals and how these patterns are mirrored in society as a whole.

Sure enough, close examination is offered allowing the reader to see that the workplace, government, communities and organizations with more women involved have become feminized to an extent and have improved, in that the nurturing, caretaking, supportive influences slowly but surely have blended into the cultural mix. Among examples given are statistics that show employer supported child care is growing rapidly. (The Economic Recovery Act of 1981 gave tax breaks to companies that provide child care.) Data from the Gallop Organization indicate that more fathers are actively involved in child care, feeding the baby, changing diapers and staying home while mom goes out into the work force. There has been a rising

proportion of women receiving higher academic degrees in education, law, medicine and engineering. Their influence in the professional world is beginning to erode the "old boy networks."

All in all it's an uplifting book that helps one see society in a positive way. It describes the "new woman" and "new man" of the late twentieth century and the great potential we have to achieve a balanced, humane, peaceful and healthy society in the future via the interesting process of feminization that's been here all along.

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# SHOPPING WITH JACKIE

by Jackie Thomas

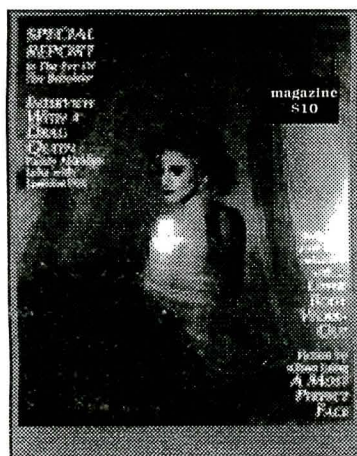
Just when you think you have seen it all, something new comes by. If you like the feel of silk and satin on your body (like I do) this may interest you: silk underwear for men and women. Short sleeve and long sleeve scoop and turtle neck tops with long pants or stirrups are available for women. Men's styles available are turtlenecks

or crew necks with briefs or boxers. Briefs are \$11.99, boxers are \$13.99 and the tops are \$23.99 each. Sizes XS to XL are available in white, black and pink. Interested? Call 800-426-8020 for an Eddie Bauer catalog. They also have a selection of street clothes and shoes (some to size 12). Nice quality, medium prices.

Jessica Brandon sent me a nice

letter about South Philly Style Shoes, 2116 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa. Their phone number is 215-468-1972. Jessica discovered the store while searching for size-12, black satin pumps for the Renaissance Holiday Party. She reports the owner assisted her (while she was in male attire) and asked if "he" wanted to try them on. A private area of the store was provided. Jessica reports she was treated just like any other customer, but with a "refreshing amount of dignity." Most

## LadyLike Magazine



Rated the #1 TV magazine by 7 out of 10 readers. Every issue of *LadyLike* is filled with fun and informative articles, plus lots of the one thing you want most, pictures. Every issue has at least one in-depth interview with a crossdresser just like you and most issues have two interviews. *LadyLike* also

gives you Personals, our Resource listings, Girl Talk advice, and more, all wrapped in a full color cover with six more color pages inside. Subscriptions: \$32 for 4 issues; Single copy: \$10, plus \$1 p&h; 48 pages; published quarterly.

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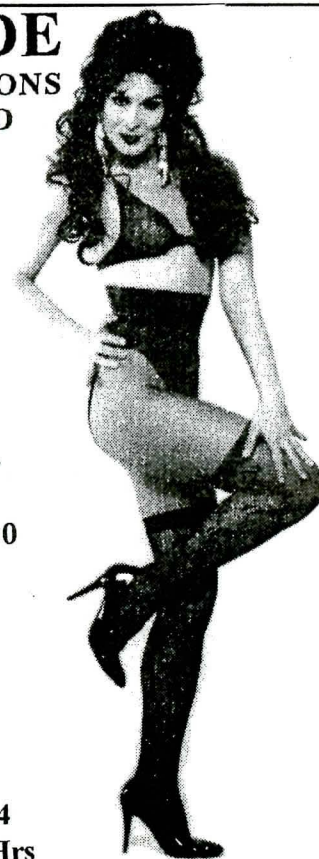
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shoes there only go to up size-10 but they do have some larger. Stop and shop ladies. More shoppers requesting larger sizes could mean larger sizes in stock.

Another letter came from G.F. concerning the VF Outlets. G.F. has shopped there for years and concurs with my own endorsement of the shops. She also informed me that Maidenform panties fit better than the VF brand panties, especially, Chantilly, a mid-cut brief with French legs, lace

panels, generous sizing and brightly flowered patterns. G.F. tells us that Maidenform also has an outlet in Reading at the new Train Station area off Spring Street. Stop and check out this new outlet if you're in town. Better hurry or I'll get all the bargains.

I loved the letters ladies. Thanks for sharing these things with me. The rest of you... share! I can't be everywhere. Drop a note to me at LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Here's a tongue-in-cheek shopping

tip: When buying for your Significant Other always buy things you like. Then when she doesn't like them you've just added to your wardrobe. (Insert laughs and chuckles here.)

Until next time HAPPY SHOPPING!

[Ed.note: Oh Jackie, there's a call for you from some ladies in the Significant Others Support group. Jackie? Jackie?? Gee, guess she left for that Maidenform outlet already.]

### ***The Gender Journey***

A small-group exploration of the various stages in the life of a crossdresser, with implications for personal identity and human relationships.

Held at the Wayne Counseling Center (where Renaissance Gr. Phila. meets) with Dr. Lee Etscovitz, Renaissance National Librarian, former Professor of Human Behavior at Drexel University, and currently Director of Human Dimensions, an organization specializing in gender education. \$25 per person per two-hour session. Meeting times flexibly arranged. Write: Human Dimensions, PO Box 471, Willow Grove, PA 19090 or call 215-657-1560.

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