

The Femme Mirror

Volume 23 Issue 3

Fall 1998



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE SECOND SELF, INC.

The Femme Mirror

The Femme Mirror is the quarterly journal of The Society for the Second Self, Inc., a non-profit 501c(3) corporation. Address: The Society for the Second Self, Inc., 8880 Bellaire B2 Ste.104, Houston TX 77036. Submissions to *The Femme Mirror* should be sent to: **The Femme Mirror, 8880 Bellaire B2 Ste.104, Houston, TX 77036.** Letters to the Editor may be directed to Frances Fairfax in care of *The Femme Mirror*.

Submissions of letters, manuscripts, photographs and art work implies the right of the Editor to edit and publish the material. True names and street addresses will not be published unless the Editor is specifically instructed by the author to do so. **Submission of materials on computer disks is encouraged. We are able to accept macintosh, ms-dos and windows formatted material, both 3.5" diskettes and 5.25" floppies.** ASCII text files preferred. When preparing text files, please strip all hard carriage returns and line feed commands from MS-DOS generated documents. Add one hard carriage return between paragraphs. We use PageMaker 6.1 to design pages, do all the formatting, and prepare the material for camera ready prints on PC DeskTop Publishing system. **Files may also be sent by email to: JEFTRIS@aol.com.** Articles are available to other transgender community publications on magnetic media if requested by specific article and issue. From time to time *The Femme Mirror* is asked for permission to reprint our articles in other community publications. If you do not wish to be published elsewhere, please so indicate when you submit your material.

Newsletter Editors: Please send a copy of each edition of your newsletter directly to *The Femme Mirror*, c/o Frances Fairfax, 8880 Bellaire B2, Ste. 104, Houston, TX 77036. We would like permission to reprint letters and articles from your publication which are of interest and significance to our readers. We promise to give proper credit for anything we print

Editorial Policy: The *Femme Mirror* will not publish any material that bashes any transgendered person or support organization, nor will it publish any ad hominem argument. The opinions and views expressed in *The Femme Mirror* are those of the respective contributors and do not necessarily represent the views or official policies of The Society for the Second Self, Inc., its Officers or Board Members.

The Femme Mirror is absolutely committed to protecting the security and confidentiality of all Tri-Ess members. In order to ensure this protection, the *Mirror* conforms to the following editorial policy:

1. *The Femme Mirror* will not publish the last name of any Tri-Ess member without the expressed written consent of the member, unless the surname is known to be a pseudonym.
2. We encourage all contributors to the *Mirror* to adopt a pseudonym when submitting articles and letters for publication. We request that you place the surname in quotation marks so that we will know it is a pseudonym.
3. We request that each contributor include her Tri-Ess number on all material.
4. Contributors should avoid use of true last names in letters or articles, and particularly in accounts of chapter activities and other events. We reserve the right to edit such material to remove surnames or other potentially compromising information.

Please help us to serve you in a professional manner.

Thank you, Frances Fairfax

The *Femme Mirror*, Fall, 1998 - Copyright 1998. All rights reserved.

Are You Moving?

Please Notify Membership Director
Donna Martin
P.O. Box 597859
Chicago, IL 60659

A Note of Thanks

A note of thanks from your *Mirror* Staff to all of you who contribute your articles, photos, cartoons, poems, as well as your typing and envelope-stuffing skills. Your service is enriching the lives of all your sisters. This is YOUR journal. You, the readers, are the source of its contents and the reason for its existence. Ya'll are doing GREAT! Just keep it coming now, hear?

Contents

Executive Director's Message	4
To Be a Real Lady	6
Letters to the Editor	7
Just a Transvestite	8
My Uncle	9
The Male Side	11
Pruning	12
Confronting Shame and Anger	13
Crossdressing on the Airwaves!	14
Yes, But!	15
Do You Know an Empathetic Clergy Person?	16
Become a Tri-Ess Life Member Today!	16
Crossdressing	17
Hey, Good Looking!	18
Bra History	19
Determining Your Bra Size	20
Stay Balanced	21
A Chapter Outreach Project	21
Board of Directors & Officers	24
How To Choose a Therapist	25
An Opportunity for Wives, Significant Others, and Family Members of Transgendered Persons	26
Pauline	27
Ask Your Local Police	28
Brest Forms	29
Star Trek	30
The Push-Ups	31
Telling the Kids	32
My Visit to San Antonio, Texas	33
Hey, Good Looking!	34
Tolerance From A Distance	35
Tri-Ess Pen Pals	36
List of Pen Pals	36
Book Review Cloister Walk	37
Tri-Ess Membership Categories	39
A Fantasy Come True	40
TRI-ESS Chapters and Forming Chapters	42
Tri-Ess-Sponsored CDSO Online Forum for Spouses and Partners of Crossdressers Signs 50th Subscriber!	44
Tri-Ess World Wide Web Sites	45
NEW! CDTRIESS Online Forum for Tri-Ess Member Crossdressers	45
The Internet & The Transgender Jungle	46
Press Release for 1999 En Femme Golf Outing. En Femme Golfing 1999	46
What Is In A Name?	47
Big Sister Report	48
How to Contribute to Your Chapter Newsletter and your Mirror	49
Poet's Corner	49
"Georgia Needs Our Help!"	50
Dateline: New Orleans	51
It's Time Tri-Ess, Time To Get Your Chapter Cyberized	52
The Evolution of Frances Ann or Step Out and Smell the Roses	53
The Pink Triangle and Related Symbols	54
Our Gender Family #12 - July, 1998 Boom, Boom, Boom	57
The Dash	58
<i>The Wedding Present</i> A Play about Crossdressing	59
A Family Outing	61
Calendar of of Upcoming Events	63
SPICE VI	64
About Our Cover Girl	65
Highlights of the Winter Board Meeting	66
Library Project Report	66
A Weekend at Camp	67
Classroom Presentations	72

See Page 65 for *About Our Cover Girl*



Executive Director's Message

By Carol Beecroft

One thing that I have learned after talking to "brand-new" crossdressers is that you shouldn't assume anything about them. I have come to realize that regardless how much I now know about crossdressing, many of the crossdressers who call me are completely ignorant of just about everything that I have gleaned over the last 29 years.

An example of the above are several calls that I've received this last week. Both individuals admitted - hesitantly - to being crossdressers, but admitted that they knew very little concerning why they did it. Initially, it was hard to believe that these callers could be so ignorant concerning crossdressing, but then I realized that just because I was so involved in the crossdressing community, it didn't mean that these persons were similarly informed in any way whatsoever.

We take for granted that the world is quite aware about the world of crossdressing. We assume that people should be knowledgeable, at least superficially, about "what we do." But, time after time I have been brought to my common senses to realize that thousands of crossdressers, who finally get hold of our telephone number, do not know anything(!) about why we need to crossdress. It is most humbling to talk to these individuals only to realize that they are like young children who first enter the first grade, knowing very little, if anything, about the subject matter there. I am

made to remember how ignorant - and I mean IGNORANT - I was when I first contacted Virginia Prince in 1969. It's good to reflect back to those early days because it keeps you humble when talking to people who now are in a similar situation 29 years later.

That's why we need to make it easier for crossdressers, including wives, to learn more about the subject matter in the year 1998. Of course, one of those ways to educate people is the contribution of books to libraries throughout the United States. I certainly remember going to library after library for an explanation of why I was dressing. I can even remember way back in 1947 when I was in college and was even going into book stores looking for help. I did find one book that used the word EONISM and gave several examples of men who dressed in women's clothing, but no real explanation and no reference to an organization that could help me. At least I had a name, but I could not find any further information about the subject in libraries. *Nothing!*

Unfortunately, most "virgin" crossdressers don't even have the very limited information that I had in 1947, or for that matter, in the 60's. They wander from library to library and usually find NOTHING about crossdressing or TRI ESS. We assume too much. We think that people have adequate information about the phenomena, due to television programs and the like. But thousands of men work

during the daytime and do not see the television shows that others observe. They just don't know! They tell me how frustrating it has been. I can certainly understand their dilemma.

At least now we are doing something about the lack of information available to crossdressers and wives (who also, in many cases, are ignorant because they, too, work during the day). We now have covered about 39 libraries with our book donations. That's not a lot but it is a good start for the future.

You can help fill in the blank spaces for crossdressers out there who are searching for information. And don't forget the wives who, equally, are in need of information to help them cope. I would especially like to hear from any of our readers who have found us through the books that we have donated to libraries. Do remember that in the rear of each book we paste a special sticker with our name and address? I can imagine the joy that crossdressers will feel when they see that sticker. Perhaps I'll get a call or two this week from those who have found us through a donated book. All of the above leads me to the question, "What are you doing to help someone to locate us?"

Some of you probably found us in easy ways but judging from the phone calls that I get from time to time, there are plenty of crossdressers and wives out there who are finding it difficult to locate help. I bet you that there will be people, TODAY, going to a library someplace to find help. Whether they find it will depend on whether YOU did your part in getting books into that particular library.

You can make it easy for people to locate us by donating a set of books to a nearby library of your choice. TRI ESS will match your gift through a donation to another library of your choice when you make your donation of \$30 for the four book packet.

Contact the TRI ESS office here in Tulare and we will help you get started.

Before I forget, I want to thank the many sisters and chapters who sent me get-well cards after my heart attack. I'm in good shape now although a lot wiser. I have changed my eating habits completely and exercise each day. One heart attack and time in the hospital is enough! I do appreciate the outpouring of sympathy and wishes of well being.

Tri-Ess Helpline!

Do you have a question about Tri-Ess? Do you need help regarding media outreach in your area? Tri-Ess Executive Director Carol Beecroft may be reached at the Tri-Ess National Office in Tulare, California at:

(209) 688-6386

Carol is often available to speak to radio audiences via long-distance telephone hook-up, and she is compiling a list of members who are able to appear on radio or television, or speak before college classes.

Do you have a question about the Femme Mirror or other Tri-Ess publications and services? Tri-Ess Chair of the Board Jane Ellen Fairfax and Mirror Editor Frances Fairfax may be reached at:

(713) 349-8969

Are you interested in starting a Tri-Ess chapter? The new Tri-Ess Liaison for Chapter Support and Services, Judy Daniels, may be reached at:

(580) 226-9644

Does your local chapter have a Helpline? Ideally, each Tri-Ess chapter should operate a Helpline and list the number with the local Crisis Hotline, Gay Switchboard, Mental Health Clinics, etc. The expenses involved would vary with local phone rates and installation charges. As a second, unlisted line in a sister's home, a Helpline does not take a lot of money. What it does take is considerable dedication on the part of the sister volunteering to answer the Helpline. How about it, ladies? Does your chapter have a Helpline yet?

To Be a Real Lady

by Jane Ellen Fairfax

In the historical novel "The Shepherd of the Hills," the young heroine Sammy asks the Shepherd what she must do to become "a real, sure enough lady." The Shepherd's answer is one that should inspire us all, for we, like Sammy, have "a heap to learn."

"Now a real lady," advises the Shepherd, "is a lady in three ways:

First, in her heart; I mean just to herself, in the things no one but she can ever know. A sure enough lady does not pretend to be; she is." Whether looking out over the panorama of the Ozarks, or marveling at the beauty of a rose, she lives in harmony with God's creation. Not for her the striving to become, the all out driving to win, the pretending in order to persuade the world she is something she is not. She is one with her world, and happy to be a part of life.

Her lady heart also makes her sensitive to the feelings of those around her. One thing of her wiping away a child's tear, smoothing a kitten's fur, soothing her mate after a hard day. She is a nurturer, and all "critters" are just naturally drawn to her. For her it is not necessary that every project be done now; she has time to love. Seldom is she too busy to listen to a sorrow, or extend a kindly hand to anyone who reaches out to her. Among her friends and neighbors she is known for her hospitality. She always seems to have a gracious word for everyone who enters her day. Somehow she has a way of making even the unlovable fee special. Wallflowers do not cluster in the corners of her house; she draws everyone into the lambent rays of her own personal sunshine.

"Next," teaches the Shepherd, "the sure enough lady must have a lady mind. She must know how to think and talk about the things that really matter. All the fine dresses and jewels in the world can't make a real lady if she does not think, or if she thinks only of things that are of no value." As E. Fenton would put it, "Please don't be an airhead." Now this is not to disparage girl-talk, which both crossdressers and genetic women enjoy. But, oh, what wonders open before her who has a lady mind! Art, music, theater, sports, history and science bedeck her with their jewels. Her natural curiosity leads her to explore any wholesome interest. Always she seems to be broadening her horizons.

To her of the lady mind, people are a rich panoply, a multicolored tapestry she never tires of observing. Because she is a

listener, she is able to relate her knowledge and experience to that of others, and people account her wise. Free to discuss her feelings, she is not afraid to be vulnerable. Seldom do her ego needs dominate her interpersonal relationships. Because she is interested in people, people find her interesting.

According to the Shepherd, "A lady will keep her body as strong and beautiful as she can, for this is the way that she expresses her heart and mind." A "sure enough lady" takes care of her appearance, and comports herself with dignity at all times. To keep her body fit, she exercises and screens herself from the ravages of the sun. She dresses her age, and makes herself up appropriate to the occasion. Like her body, her clothes are in good condition. By her choices of colors and accessories, she creatively tells the world who she is. It does not matter whether she is glowing on the tennis court or sitting quietly in church. When the world views her, it sees a lady.

Crossdressers spend a lot of time on dress, makeup and mannerisms. This is only natural, since they were not raised in the feminine gender. As they learn the outer trappings of feminine expression, they need mutual support and positive reinforcement. But real femininity runs much deeper than its delicate wrappings. With a credible feminine image comes satisfaction. With a lady mind comes contentment. With a lady heart comes true bliss.

It is not for us, created male, to be women. But there is no reason why we cannot become real, sure enough ladies.

Editorial Policy

The FEMME MIRROR will not publish any material that bashes any crossgendered person or support organization, nor will it publish any ad hominem argument

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Enclosed are photographs of the license plate on my Mustang. The plate was installed April 20. Since this is my "toy" car it has not had much street exposure. The plate photo will be run in the July "Southern Belle" with a "Guess Who?" caption. So far the only reaction I have had was from a young couple I didn't recognize. They tooted their horn and gave the OK sign.

Hope you can use them.

Brenda T. GA-3830-G



Dear Editor,

It seems that too few people have the time or aptitude to try to rationalize their problems. Then when they attempt professional counseling they wind up with another major problem - having a lot less money than before.

Naturally this is just another opportunity for those who can figure how to take advantage of these people. This is just the beginning of all the finagling that constitutes abuses and strife for so many people, while putting much money into those greedy unprincipled pockets.

I believe that if we can stay as near as possible to all those things that can be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, we have a much better chance of survival.

I think that we can all play our fantasy games, but it is very necessary to keep our innate faculties acclimated to the proven and substantiated, or facts!

History has proven thousands of times over that as soon as

people and societies lose contact with reality, they inevitably perish!

So have fun and frolic, but always keep the truth deep inside your mind a reality alive and strong!

Sincerely, Delvia TX-4736-V

(Ed.Note: The following letter is just one of the many that pour into our Tri-Ess mailboxes. I think we can all identify with this cry for help. There are a lot of sisters out there who really need us. Helping sisters like this is what Tri-Ess is all about.)

To Whom It May Concern:

You have probably received hundreds, maybe even thousands of letters from people like me. I'm not even 100% certain why I am writing to you. I found your name in a magazine I read and want to know if there is anyone I can speak to personally, one-on-one, about my desire to wear lingerie and even to be a woman. I'm extremely hesitant about this for more reasons than I can think of at the moment. However, this desire never seems to leave me. It is with me day and night and has been so for more than 4 years now. I think I've gotten to the point where I need to know whether this will drive me nuts or not.

I'm a married white male in my mid-forties, whose wife does not know to what extent I am plagued by this. Further, I have 3 teenage children, one of whom is in college. There are times when I just want to get all this out in the open, but when saner thoughts occur, I realize that isn't possible. Not only is my family very important to me, but so is my faith and religion, and that is a real issue, too! At any rate, I seem to be caught in a kind of twilight zone, secretly afraid of getting caught wearing sexy lingerie, and at the same time hoping to be caught, loved, understood, supported and encouraged by my wife (which I believe will never happen) or another woman. Finally, I do not believe I am interested in any type of homosexual activity. In fact, if anything, I am really only interested in being with women. All of my life I feel I have been better able to relate to women than man, so as a result, I have no desire to be with a man at all.

Like I said, I'm certain none of this is new to you, but if there is any way in which you could help or suggest someone with whom I could speak privately and with discretion, I sure would appreciate knowing about her. There is a ton of stuff I could share, but I'm sure you have the picture by now. I look forward to hearing from you when you are able.

Sincerely, A Secret Sister

Just a Transvestite

by Melanie Yarborough

"Just" a transvestite. "Only" likes to dress up. "Merely" wants to play-act at being a woman. How often do we hear these words condescendingly used by someone within our own community?

In the past, the word Transvestite was used for any male who enjoyed wearing women's clothing, period. However, since such people were usually scorned and ridiculed, a sleight-of-hand turned them into something else: Crossdressers. This is the same sleight-of-hand that turned the Handicapped into the "Physically Challenged" or the Hyperactive into "Sufferers of Attention Deficit Disorder". Same thing, just a different word; the ploy is to get people to think it's something else less offensive.

Recently, I heard a really ludicrous distinction. Someone said that a transvestite was someone who merely dressed for sexual arousal, while a crossdresser was someone who more genuinely presented themselves in public as female. As twisted logic, it was pretty stupid. But as an idea, it was much more sinister. What should have been nothing more than a semantic difference became another Us versus Them.

The words "just", "merely" or "only" imply We're-better-than-you, you're not as involved and therefore can't be taken as seriously. Even worse, some buy into it. The less active and more closeted transgendered feel in the shadows of those who are more presentable or involved. They themselves use the words "just", "merely" and "only" to describe themselves. Now it's not enough for them to feel ashamed before the straight world for even being transgendered: now, some feel ashamed before the transgender community for not being as transgendered.

The Transgender community is not about labels, or at least it shouldn't be. It's supposed to be about empowerment and accepting diversity. We often demand the Straight World accept us as different but equal. But how can we make this demand of the world when we ourselves can't accept differences within our own ranks?

MAKEOVERS EXCLUSIVELY FOR CROSSDRESSERS

Simplified lessons for
applying your make-up perfectly.

STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS ON MEN.

Have the look you dream of
and the assurance
you've done it right.

Two hours of
easy to apply techniques.

Order your
"Men to Women"
make-over video today!

Send \$40 Cashier Check/Money Order to:

Marty Ruffin
P.O. Box 7315
Marietta GA 30065

My Uncle

by Brandi Ann Welch

The phone call came from my Mom. She asked if Dad had gotten a hold of me. I said, "No, the cats knocked my bedroom phone off the hook." She told me my uncle had died the previous day about 4PM. I cried. I know that he is okay now and feeling no pain in Heaven. I cried not for that, but for me.

You see, while I was growing up we never went on a real vacation. We would travel back to my Dad's homeplace and stay a week with my Dad's Dad and Mom. My uncle lived in town a mile away. The day after we arrived at the farm, my brother and I would finagle a ride into town and go to my uncle's boot shop. There we would help my uncle and get hand made boots and belts in return. I would watch my uncle for hours and listen to him while he repaired boots and saddles, and made new boots and saddles. I was fascinated by the machinery he used while he did this. Being left handed like me, he showed me his techniques and tools.

When I asked my Dad to show me how to throw a lasso, he would, but I could not reverse his movements. (I guess this fits our lives, as we are reversed in our gender!) He would finally give up and say, "Go ask your Uncle Woody!" I did and learned how to throw a lasso, and how to shoot left handed with a right handed rifle or shotgun. He was like a father to me, a left handed father. But most of all I learned about life and how this WWII Navy veteran could settle down and be so soft spoken, but stand firm in his beliefs.

I know that comes from a life on the farm, as after my Grandpa died, he bought the farm from my aunts and Dad and other uncle and continued the family tradition. This was something I loved, but knew I could not do, since I was raised near the big city and loved aviation so much. Anyway, a lot of my growing up experiences happened on that farm, boot shop, and pasture. That's where I went through that boyhood rite of passage, learning how to use and hunt with your very own shotgun. I remember the hours and hours spent on dove and quail hunts with my relatives.

I remember the hours of solitude I had walking alone and meditating on those 580 acres. The cemetery where my Grandparents are buried is one-half mile from the farm toward town. Anywhere from the south side of the farm you can look out and see the place where my beloved Grandparents are. Now my

uncle will join them there under the cedar trees with wheat fields all around them. As you can tell, I truly love this place and it and the people there are very dear in my heart. Every time I have left there to come home, I have cried for miles.

Funerals have always been a way of paying last respects to the deceased and his/her family. It is more than that to Dad's family. It is more like a family reunion. I went expecting to cry. I knew full well that the hormones would kick into high gear, and they did. I didn't sob, but I did everything else. (Thanks in no small part to the 30-40mph steady wind blowing - remember, this is the High Plains of America - throwing my sinuses into a frenzy and drying out my contacts!)

The farm house was full (no room at the inn) when we got there, so we drove 18 miles into Oklahoma and spent the night with my Dad's youngest brother. Tuesday morning we backtracked to the farm. Past tradition called for us to stop at the state line and take pictures on the gigantic Texas-shaped state line marker. I thought to myself, "Not with a tie on!" We'll do it tomorrow.

I saw the farm and the cemetery. I had forgotten how close the state line, farm and cemetery are to each other. Cars were everywhere in front of the house. I parked in back, near my Dad's birth house. I couldn't imagine family parking anywhere else. Childhood and early adult memories came flowing back to me. I was misty eyed before my kids slammed the rented Jeep's doors shut.

I got out, thinking about all the hugs I was about to get, and knowing full well that everyone who would hug me would feel the sports bra I was wearing. The only comments I got the whole stay were several versions of "Timmy has long hair." Well, add to that, "You've lost weight," and the wind exposing my silver ear studs.

Remember, I was deep in the heart of farm country, America's bread basket, and Tornado Alley. The only thing I had going for me was that I was also in God's Country and the Bible Belt. By that, I mean there are no "BUBBA'S." In that slow evolving part of the planet, everybody has TIME to think every thought out. They don't want to beat someone up because they are different. Everybody I passed in Oklahoma waved as I had Texas plates, just being neighborly. Well, you can understand some of the

way I felt. These were the MOST mixed-up feelings I had had to deal with, PERIOD!

All my fears were unfounded, though. As soon as I walked into the house and ONCE AGAIN felt the WARMTH AND CARING, I was my easy going self. Lunch in the church basement and back to the farm for family photos was fun, the calm before the storm.

The church was packed, including the basement. In those parts, my uncle was well known. He had made boots for Dan Blocker (Hoss" on Bonanza), and for his Kiowa Indian father-in-law. There were well over 120 people. That says a lot for a town of less than 500 people! All the family vehicles were parked in rows, blocking off one side of Main Street. All the family was told to sit packed close together. One of my second cousins sat next to me, already sobbing. Sadness needs company. I started crying.

The preacher talked about my uncle and recited a poem about cowboys and where they worshipped, out on the range. It reminded me of where the Indians worshipped. Are we really different in our souls, I wondered? I remembered why I always wore boots, and now I know where that inner Indian Princess spirit came from. I have always had it in the tie-clasp that I had on, a small Indian arrowhead made from ivory. This country has had my spirit firmly in its grasp for as long as I can remember.

You can take the boy out of the country, but this time the girl returned. What a warm feeling! After friends of the family filed out and we viewed my uncle's body for the last time and sat down again, the preacher added that it was okay to cry, as crying cleanses the soul. That really made me feel good.

The grave side service was uneventful, except the wind almost blew us away! We gathered back at the house, just off in the distance. I removed the tie and clasp and monkey shirt. After I changed shirts, Luke, Rebecca, and I headed out to where we could truly find solitude, the fenced in range. I remember as a child watching the clouds' shadows glide over the rolling hills. We drove out to the north windmill where solitude can be a friend or make you lonely. I paused and thought how far away crossdressing seemed at that moment, but knowing to the depth of my soul it was the next second away. I sighed, thinking how simple, yet how complicated life is.

Luke and Rebecca felt my longing, longing for my uncle, longing for the peacefulness of this land, knowing that we had to go back to our established lives the next day. I heard over my thoughts, "I don't want to go home!" from BOTH of them. I told them I didn't, either! We headed back to the farm house, vowing to return this summer. What draws a person to thoughts like this? My Dad gave it all up after World War II, but he returned

every year until my Mom didn't want to travel anymore! The mystery of this land is as apparent as what causes our need to crossdress. It is a part bigger than life itself. I think I will leave it at that.

My uncle's family and friends gathered in the church basement for supper, and we returned to the farm for family bonding. I call it bonding because that is what families have forgotten how to do. I saw it first hand that evening. Later, as we traveled back to my other uncle's house across the state line, I let Luke drive. While going around the front of the Jeep, something or someone stirred me to look up. I marveled at the clear night sky full of bright crisp stars and mumbled, "Good night! LORD, you're in good company now"!

We left Oklahoma the next morning and stopped at the state line marker. We got our traditional pictures in the strong blasts of wind. Then we stopped by the cemetery and said good bye to Uncle Woody, visited Grandma and Grandpa's grave, and took a few pictures from there of the farm. At the farm we said goodbye to my aunt, her sister and both of her daughters. My aunt asked if I could feed the calf in the barnyard. I did it, and returned to hear her ask, "Can you crank up the tractor and take a round bale of hay to the cows?" Sadly, I said No, as Dad had informed me about the storm brewing back home. She told us to come back this summer. I said we would, as my voice broke.

I drove down that long, dusty road, knowing that I would not cry, as I was crying in my heart for what I lost, what I found, what I have and what I will never have. Dad got me home (my car was still in the repair shop) after dark. I fed the dogs and got the mail. I happened to look up again and made a note of the clear crisp night. You see, that thunderstorm that was supposed to blow in around sundown, waited until I retrieved my mail. It's four A.M. as I write this and it is still raining. It has taken me over four hours to write this. It is long and I apologize for that, but not for its content.

May your waters flow forever and your grass stay green forever. For you-all in the city, take time and go for a drive in the country at night and breathe some fresh air. I hope these words help you and others you share them with find some peace in reading them, as I feel peaceful and rested in writing them. May GOD bless you, until our trails meet again!

A humble Indian Princess,

Brandi



The Male Side

by Lee

I wanted to start by say that I have a great deal of respect and admiration for the sisters of Kappa Beta and what they go through to achieve that fabulously femme look. However, I thought it would be interesting to introduce a different perspective and shed a little light on what it takes to be a guy. To do this I thought I would bet you all in on a little background information.

Being born female, I have been taught throughout life such things as how to be ladylike, applying makeup, and, as I got older, how to treat my man! I will be the first to tell you that this stuff just did NOT sit well with me. I got in the only physical fight of my life when I was 7 years old. I punched out a boy after he hit me for refusing to be the wife when playing house! I believe it was around this time that my masculine interests and form of dress started becoming apparent.

Then there was the time when I was 9 and I had been invited to a friend's birthday party. There was one hitch. I had to come dressed as Miss Piggy. I put up such a protest because I was determined that if I was going, I was going to be dressed as Kermit. Mom gave in and so did my friend!

I spent the better part of my youth in a private school where there was a strict dress code and I had to wear a skirt every day. I know you all would've loved that one! It was at this school that I was subjected to a junior high "charm class." This was where we were supposed to learn (if we hadn't learned yet!) how to look and act feminine. I may have been the only failure in that class! (I'm just kidding!)

As you can tell, all my life I have been expected to conform to the ways of being female and all my life I have rebelled! One of the things I started wondering as my crossdressing became a big part of my life was just because I couldn't conform to my predetermined female role, did that mean I could automatically slip into a convincing male one? The answer to that is "No," because while a lot of masculine things were natural for me, there were a lot of things that could only come from learning them.

.....I dress like a man, I sit like a man, and I have even been told I think like a man (go figure that one!), but to this day, I still can't walk like a man! I never realized how difficult it could be to walk a mile in a man's shoes - especially when you have 2-1/2 inch lifts inside them! I feel as if I am walking in pumps all over again!

One of the things I have found truly ironic on this little journey of mine is that some of the very things I have to use to help me look masculine were made for women! I use sports bras or pantyhose to bind my chest and control briefs to create a flatter stomach and slimmer hips! And so goes the saying, "Strong enough for a man, but made for a woman."

I have learned some very important things, though. Passing is at least 90% attitude. It's how you see yourself when you look in the mirror. It is also important not think that you have to adopt every mannerism of the gender you are trying to portray. If you have a genuine femininity (or masculinity in my case), then that will just come out of you naturally. The rest can always be worked on and improved upon!

Most important of all is just to love yourself. Learning to love and accept "Lee" has helped me be a better woman and being around all of the Kappa Beta sisters has helped me become a better man! Thank you!

(Ed.Note: Lee is a female-to-male crossdresser and a member of Kappa Beta Chapter in Charlotte. Her article originally appeared in the Kappa Beta newsletter, "The Pink Slip."

Amanda Lynn presents an album of...

Music for the Engendered Species 

Thirteen original songs expressing the joy, humor, beauty and fantasy of being transgendered.

GO LITE ON THE DRESSIN'

Enjoy a musical lift as you start your girl's day. Listen on your walk-woman or play it in your car with the volume up and the windows down.

Available on cassette only. Order direct from
Amanda Lynn Richards - P.O. Box 426
Western Springs, IL 60558
\$9.00 + \$1.00 shipping.
Checks & money orders only. No charges.



Pruning

by Cindy N.

According to a very knowledgeable and respected source, "God has a way of pruning the bush." It's amazing how such a seemingly simple statement can be so profound.

Spring is finally here and many trees have survived the winter freezes but may have lost branches during the windstorms. Dead limbs have been blown away, and some of the lower lying limbs have been devoured by jackrabbits, deer, and other animals. The dead branches that have fallen to the ground are now being changed in form to be recycled again as nutrients for new growth. Seeds have been scattered by the wind and the animals, and new growth has started, sometimes far from the mother tree.

With spring here, the smell of orange blossoms fills the air, and soon we will have another crop of oranges.

We have done our share of pruning at our home too. We have removed a lot of dead branches, we have trimmed off the divergent lower lying branches which have grown far away from the main tree trunks and were scraping on the ground. We have removed many clumps of mistletoe. Yes, it looks green and is steeped in Christmas tradition, but it is really a parasite. It attaches itself to the host tree and saps the life out of it until the tree dies, then it too dies when the host can no longer support it.

It's really amazing. We can trim off many branches but as long as the roots and main tree trunk remain healthy, the tree seems to bounce back with even more vitality. By careful pruning and shaping we now have many beautiful trees.

What does that have to do with Alpha Zeta you ask?

Dues are coming up soon, July to be exact. This year, as always, I expect to see the normal 15% or so attrition. People move, die, lose interest, become disenchanted with the leadership or direction of the group, and few change their ways due to family or other pressures.

As members fall away from, or leave the group, they make room for new growth. With this natural pruning, the group grows even healthier just like the tree. The older healthy branches remain to support the new buds and help them flourish.

So it is with many organizations. Quite often as members realize that they are getting nothing from the organization, and contributing nothing to its growth, they become the dead branches and leave the fold. Some of them may even carry with them the seeds to start a new tree in another area.

The mistletoe of the group? For this we have our "Orientation" process. hopefully, this keeps the parasites from getting a foothold on the host plant.

Those low lying divergent branches are the ones who have deviated far from the growth pattern of the group. Yes, we do have a variety of interests in Alpha Zeta, just like the many branches of a tree growing in different directions. But we try to maintain our growth pattern in a generally upward direction and stay clear of the dirt.

Our principals, our roots, go very deep. Back to when Carol Beecroft and Virginia Prince started Tri-Ess, and even before them. Our leadership, our trunk, is fed by this deep root system and acts as a conduit to feed all the branches. The branches support the smaller twigs and feed the lifeblood to all the flowers and leaves. As long as this system is strong, it will continue to grow and flourish.

Alpha Zeta and Tri-Ess have weathered many storms over the years, and we will continue to grow with the help of all the good members in the group.

(Ed.Note: Cindy is the First Lady of Alpha Zeta Chapter. Her column is reprinted from The Cactus Flower newsletter.)

Disclaimer

The opinions and views expressed in the Femme Mirror are those of the respective contributors and do not necessarily represent the views or official policies of The Society for the Second Self, Inc., its Officers or Board Members.

Confronting Shame and Anger

by Sharon J. Overby MN-4041-O

Through my teenage years and early twenties, I carried around a lot of guilt because of my crossdressing. When dressed, this guilt and shame increased enormously. As Steve, I feared that my secret "stash" would be found, that my secret would be revealed, and I would be forever disgraced. As Sharon, my fear was much more intense, since now I was actually wearing women's clothing, and discovery would result in the ultimate embarrassment, followed by verbal abuse, and possibly even physical violence visited onto my person.

In my late twenties, I discovered the miracle of modern psychotherapy; the opportunity to obtain forgiveness and redemption for all my sins simply by confessing them to a sympathetic person, who reluctantly accepted financial compensation for the use of his/her time and personal space. By the time I had progressed to the third member of a seemingly infinite series of gurus (guri?), I realized that maybe there really was something to this therapy business after all, but only if I was willing to do the work. I threw myself into the task in earnest, labored diligently, and received my reward. Self Confidence. A glorious measure of self esteem that would have blinded Bill Gates when he first realized IBM was now adapting its corporate planning to conform to the whims of his project teams. Success!

But wait, something's wrong. Steve achieved this, but neglected to bring Sharon along, or even tell her that he had remodeled his psyche. More importantly, Steve didn't share his newfound Self-Esteem with Sharon.

Sharon did get something out of this. Steve bought her all the clothes, makeup, and accessories she wanted. She learned she could go out in public, even pass unnoticed on more and more frequent occasions. Unfortunately, Sharon was still ashamed. What will happen to Steve if Sharon is exposed publicly? Will he disavow all knowledge of her existence? Blame her on his mother's actions when he was still a child? Or just ignore her and hope nobody notices? Sharon was now the bearer of Steve's shame.

Things went on like this for another decade or so. Then, Steve discovered, via computer bulletin boards and various on-line services, that Sharon was not alone. He allowed Sharon to go on-line and talk with her peers, with the condition that she never mention Steve, his whereabouts, or anything that might connect the two of them. Sharon eventually came into contact

with a group called Tri-Ess and obtained Steve's permission to contact them. Again, of course, only on condition that Steve's name, rank, and/or serial number never be mentioned.

So Sharon talked with Beta Gamma. She liked what she saw and heard, and Steve, listening in from a remote location, agreed with her assessment. Soon after, Sharon met Sofronia Anne. By now, Sharon's confidence level was growing, and her Self-Esteem along with it.

Sharon wanted to pursue the relationship with Tri-Ess, but Steve was reluctant and fearful. What if these people find out about ME? What will they make me DO? Go out in public and acknowledge that the person in that dress is ME and not Sharon? I don't theenk so. Sharon finally dragged Steve to a chapter meeting, even though he didn't show himself. He watched and listened, though. After a few months, he agreed with Sharon that these people were, in fact, all right, and even appeared in public with them on occasion. One thing led to another and one day someone (You did it! No! YOU did it!) made a commitment to attend the Holiday En Femme in Chicago.

The time approached. Steve pretended it wasn't until sometime next year, until the date was so close that actions had to be taken. Significant Others were informed, outfits purchased, reservations made, things packed, and the trip undertaken.

At the Hyatt Lisle, a curious thing happened. Although only Sharon put in an actual appearance, Steve got tired of being left out and stepped out from behind the screen once or twice. And an amazing thing happened. It didn't seem to make any difference. People accepted Steve. People accepted Sharon. Suddenly these two began to get along much better. Steve was not put off by Sharon's appearance while she transformed Steve's features into Sharon's. Steve didn't seize control and rush off in an explo-

Time Out!

"A lonely crossdresser told the computer dating service that he wanted a female who was small, liked water sports and formal dress, and didn't talk too much. He was matched with a penguin."

sion of rediscovered masculinity when he got his body back from Sharon, stripped of feminine accouterment. They were getting along just fine.

Except for one thing. Steve still wasn't sharing all of the couple's emotions with Sharon. Sharon could laugh, cry, be happy, sad, even loving. She could be everything except angry. She could do anything except behave aggressively in public. She could go out, talk to anyone, wear what she pleased, but some things were forbidden to her. Steve didn't know it, but that was beginning to make Sharon angry.

The Holiday ended, Sharon packed up her things and got ready to drive them home. Steve decided it was time to wind this down, take control again, and go back to being Normal. Sharon wasn't quite ready to relinquish control yet, though. She convinced Steve that it would be all right to stop on the way and see a movie. Just one more chance to do something in the real world, before being relegated to the closet. The movie? "First Wives' Club," Diane Keaton's character in particular.

At the end of the movie, just before the credits appeared and people started leaving, Steve (still in skirts, but in control now) got up and started to leave the theater, intending to return to the motel for the evening with minimal chances for discovery. As he reached the theater door, Sharon suddenly shifted her purse sharply on her shoulder and marched out to the car, head held high, shoulders back, precisely measured staccato steps straining the seams of her skirt. Like a beauty pageant finalist raging down the runway after realizing the contest was rigged when she was named second runner-up, she reached the car and opened the door, planted her ass on the drivers seat while grasping the wheel with her right hand, and simultaneously brought her head, both feet, and her left hand, still clutching her purse, into the car and slammed the door. Shaking, she drove slowly towards the exit, and waited until traffic cleared. Suddenly, pounding the steering wheel with both hands, she bellowed "I can't even go back to my own #@&*^%*&\$%# HOUSE!" and laid fifty feet of rubber on the way to 85 in a 30 zone.

Calming down slightly, she found her way back to the freeway, and drove. And drove. And drove. All the pieces went up in the air. Sharon's body. Steve's mind. Their emotions. Steve's body. Sharon's mind. Everything. Over the next hour, everything slowly came back together as Leonard Cohen sang:

*like a bird on a wire
like a drunk in a midnight choir
I have tried in my way to be free...
oh the night it is thick
my defenses are hid
in the clothes of a man I would like to forgive
in the folds of his leather
the shade of his eyes
where I have to go begging
in Beauty's disguise...*

Slowly, it all fused together. Sharon's body. Steve's anger. Sharon's anger. Steve's body. Their mind. In the driver's seat. Together at last.

(This article first appeared in "En Femme," the newsletter of Beta Gamma Chapter.)

Crossdressing on the Airwaves!

Hollywood, California

Once again, make up artist extraordinaire Jim Bridges and his marketing director Gina Lance took to the airwaves of Southern California this past June 16th. After seeing an article in the LA Daily News about Ms. Lance and Mr. Bridges regarding make up and crossdressing, Jason Insalaco, producer of the #1 rated evening FM radio talk show in Los Angeles, "The Conway and Steckler Show," invited the pair on.

The airwaves of KLSX 97.1 /CBS Radio were buzzing in a decidedly transgendered frequency for two hours as Jim and Gina discussed crossdressing and the transgendered community with co-hosts Tim Conway Jr. and Doug Steckler.



Yes, But!

by Rachel Miller

At times it seems that the favorite words of many cross-dressers are "Yes, but." Yes, I'd like to be accepted as I am, but that will never happen in today's society. Yes, I want to be free to dress as a woman, but I would lose my job if I did. Yes, I'd like to help others, but I just don't have the time. Yes, I'd like to assist my local organization, but I don't have any skills. Yes, I agree, but I can't. As long as we continue to follow the yes/but formula, nothing will change and we will be the losers. Society certainly doesn't care if we remain repressed so we must run out of excuses and scapegoats and take responsibility for our destiny if our conditions are to improve.

There is an element of truth in each of the yes/but statements, but the problem is that the statements are being used as an excuse for our inaction. Instead of continuing in the yes/but mode, why not try a more constructive approach. Try thinking and saying, "I can do that if..." or "I can't do that, but I can do this if..." From the can/if perspective, new choices of action become possible. Instead of focusing on why we can't do something, we begin to focus on steps we can take that make a difference.

We begin to change things when we initiate positive actions and treat others the way we want to be treated. We must act first because waiting for others to change is like the old Pennsylvania railroad law—if two trains approach on intersecting tracks, both shall stop and neither shall proceed until the track is clear. I can envision two trains that reached an intersection in 1898 and, since neither can move until the track is clear, are both still waiting for the other to move. There is no value in waiting for society's train to take the action we desire.

Our gender community has an interesting parallel in the plight of the Black community. They feel the impact of discrimination and often despair because there is no lasting solution in sight; however, there are a growing number of leaders who advocate individual effort within the mainstream to change society. We too can rely on our individual effort to change society rather than complaining about its shortcomings.

Those same leaders advocate creating a collective identity while retaining diversity. They seek an end of repression based on race and see personal development as their highest challenge. We too can establish a collective identity and encourage diversity at the same time. We too can work to end repression

based on gender stereotypes while developing ourselves.

While admitting that beneath surface acceptance there remains a pool of residual racism, progressive leaders point out the enormous range of opportunities. They urge taking advantage of these opportunities to create a new society where they can enjoy equal membership. While admitting the existence of prejudice we too can create a new inclusive society.

We can make all those improvements and there is no better place to start than within our own gender community. When you consider how we put each other down, it's clear that we need improving. Some of us don't accept those who dress or act differently. Some don't accept those who dress in a sexually explicit fashion. Some cross-dressers don't accept homosexuals. Some transsexuals don't accept transvestites. Some organizations don't accept members with different views. Some leaders don't accept the leaders of other organizations. Far too often we treat each other worse than society treats us. This prejudicial behavior isn't true of everyone but it is far too prevalent to ignore. How can we expect the rest of society to treat us well if we don't treat each other well? All they have to do to justify rejecting us is to follow our own provincial actions. If we are intolerant of those who don't meet our expectations, how can we possibly hope that mainstream society will be tolerant of us when we most certainly don't meet their expectations.

The strangest thing is that we have so much in common, yet we tend to focus on those aspects that differentiate the other person from ourselves. We belong to the gender community and that fact alone should be enough to unite us, yet our common bonds run far deeper than that. We live in the same political system and enjoy religious freedom. We work in the same economic environment and share similar dreams, aspirations, doubts and fears for ourselves and our children. We even share the same fast foods, television sitcoms and bad jokes. With all of that in common, our differences don't seem quite as significant.

As we set out to improve ourselves, we need to set reasonable expectations. Most of us want any problems resolved by this afternoon so everything will be wonderful by dinner time. I would love to say that we could achieve our goals quickly, but our rate of progress is much more likely to be slow and steady like a waddling turtle. Quick fixes are generally quick but are

Do You Know an Empathetic Clergy Person?

by Diane A. Zahn

I am working to assemble a list of empathetic churches/pastors/religious organizations by geographic areas and religious affiliations (OF ALL FAITHS) willing to talk with the transgender community. This list is to be provided to the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE). It is intended to support the IFGE service of providing referral lists of organizations and health care providers around the world to assist individuals in making contact with others in their own area, and as a support resource for the IFGE telephone hotline.

Nancy Nangeroni, the IFGE director, has requested that I act as a single focal point of contact as this information is gathered. Nancy notes that she is already struggling with an abundance of other IFGE correspondence, and would really prefer to have this added mail route through me as the referral list is compiled. I would therefore appreciate it if you can forward any contact information directly to me.

I would appreciate it if you could help me compile this list. If you know people or organizations at least willing to keep an open mind in their spiritual counsel, and can verify they are willing to participate in such a network of support, can you forward contact information to me so that I might include them on the list or write to them and contact them myself? You can contact me by e-mail at: damz@sprynet.com or surface mail at

D.A. Zahn
P.O. Box 2176
Monroe, MI 48161

If you have any questions or concerns about the IFGE's usage of this information, you can contact them at their mailing address:

International Foundation for Gender Education
PO Box 229
Waltham MA 02254-0229

Thank you for your support. If you feel so led, I would appreciate your prayers that this effort give glory to our Lord.

Become a Tri-Ess Life Member Today!

Any person eligible for full membership in Tri-Ess (including Wives/Partners) may become a Life Member upon acceptance of an application, and fee payment as specified below. You will never pay annual renewal 'dues' again.

Included with Life Membership is a lifetime subscription to the Femme Mirror, Membership Directories, and all other material published by the National Organization. Payment may be made by check, money order, or credit card (Visa, Mastercard, or American Express). And, if you are associated with a local Chapter, they will cease 'bugging' you about your annual National renewal (although you will still be responsible for local annual Chapter membership/association fees).

Or, you can take advantage of the Life Membership 'Installment Plan' offered by National. This interest-free program allows the Life Membership fee to be spread over four payments within a 12-month period. An initial installment (one-fourth of the total fee) must be forwarded with your application. You will then be billed for the remaining payments at three-month intervals. (Credit cards may NOT be used for installment payments).

The one-time Life Membership fees are:

- \$500.00 Individual Crossdresser only.**
- \$700.00 Couple (Crossdresser with Wife/Partner).**
- \$200.00 Separate (Wife/Partner only, who is widowed/divorced, etc.).**

"The opportunity of a lifetime!" Enroll now, join with all the other Tri-Ess Life Members in support of our wonderful Support Organization, and demonstrate your commitment. How about it?

Donna Martin
National Membership Director

Crossdressing

By Donna

From the IXE (Indianapolis) Newsletter

I am a crossdresser. This means that I wear articles of clothing intended for members of the opposite sex: panties, bras, slips, camisoles, dresses, skirts, pants, blouses, skirts, sweaters, pantyhose, pumps and boots. I choose the term crossdresser over transvestite because, although there is a sexual component to my dressing, at this point in my life, it is really more an integral part of my persona than something I do for thrills. The many and varied reasons for this can be reduced down to a prime motivating factor: It gives me a more complete sense of self. (Don't get me wrong, there is a definite sensual aspect to cross-dressing. I like the way women's clothes feel: a flowing skirt against stocking legs, a silk blouse... it's very sensual. Let's be real, men's clothing just isn't sensual. Functional? Yes. Comfortable? Usually. Sensual? Hardly! But I digress ...)

Men's clothing is pretty boring: pants and a shirt, and for business - a suit. The stereotypical business attire: blue suit, white shirt, red tie and black wing tips, and if it's raining- a tan trench coat. It looks like a bunch of clones walking down the street. Women, on the other hand, have a flexibility in dressing, of which, to be honest, I am quite envious. With choices of fabrics, color, style and accessories, women's clothing is just more fun. It allows a freedom of self expression men just do not have. My crossdressing, to whatever extent it may be, helps fill that void.

There is nothing inherently male or female about any one article of clothing. The design of a piece of clothing may favor one or the other (a bra definitely fits a woman better than a man) but it remains nothing more than a specific configuration of cloth, metal, plastic, etc. As a culture, we have chosen to associate certain types and styles of clothing with either men or women. Men used to wear tunics with tights, knickers, ruffled shirts, wigs, heels... the list goes on and on. Try putting on a tunic length top and leggings today... You get the idea.

Interestingly, though, items such as sarongs and kilts are all right, (in certain settings.) Prince Charles has appeared on TV (how appropriate) sporting his kilt while out with his sons. Women crossdress all the time. They buy men's jeans, shirts and sneakers... even underwear, and they do it without shame or ridicule. In fact, the female crossdresser is considered fashionable. I have read many articles in fashion magazines about how to liven up one's wardrobe by borrowing clothes from your boyfriend, husband, etc. Women's fashions have even copied men's; tuxedo shirts and jackets, boxer shorts, and sport coats are just a few items that have been feminized. It seems clear that women wearing men's clothing (female crossdressing) is socially acceptable.

Men, on the other hand, do not have this freedom. The wearing of

clothing associated with women is frowned upon by society. Men wearing women's clothing is not socially acceptable, and the male crossdresser opens himself to scorn and ridicule almost beyond belief. We are tagged as freaks and misfits; deviants to be avoided. It is immediately assumed that we are either gay (not to insinuate that any of the above labels apply to either the gay or transgendered community as a whole), which is false more times than not, or that we are just mentally disturbed. The repression of feelings is not a good thing, and women who want to express their masculine side are, in general, encouraged to do so.

Society as a whole has no problem with women exploring the stereotypically masculine world. Men, on the other hand, are not supposed to have a feminine side. Any man who shows interest in stereotypically feminine interests runs the risk of being pigeonholed as above. Male crossdressers tend to have a strong feminine side that wants, no, needs to express itself. Whether crossdressed or not, this feminine side is still there, fighting to be heard; although society would rather that it not exist at all.

Can you say Double Standard? Welcome to the life of a crossdresser. The simple fact is that the majority of male crossdressers are really no different from any other men. They work, have families and basically live like everyone else except they like women's clothes. Ah, I can hear it now. "That's not like everyone else!" Allow me to ask, "How do you know?" Many crossdressers never venture into public. Some who do are better looking than some real women are! Many wear women's underwear on a regular basis. The fact is, if no one told you, you would probably never know. He could be anyone: a drinking buddy, an employee or even your boss.

Anyone, put under close enough scrutiny, would probably reveal something, which could be construed as not fitting in with the societal norm. Yet, we all go about our business not really thinking twice about the person next to us. We are all different, and at the same time similar. The diversity of Mankind is something as yet unsurpassed in the animal kingdom, and is something to be embraced and celebrated. It is our differences which define us, not our similarities. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Nowhere is this more true than in the case of the male crossdresser. We are so much more than what we wear. It has taken me a long time become comfortable with who I am. I am a crossdresser. And even with all the baggage that comes along with that statement, I wouldn't want change who I am for anything.

Visit my web site at: <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Village/2001/>

Hey, Good Looking!

Bra Biz Booming

by Ricky Hunt, AKA "The Bearded Lady"

I hate Philadelphia. Well, maybe that's a bit too harsh. I hate living in Philadelphia. I took a job that made me move to Philadelphia once and lasted precisely one and a half weeks before I ran screaming back to my rural home and continued unemployment. But perhaps I was a bit hasty, for now it seems the enlightened curators of the Museum of Art there have declared my favorite fetish to be a legitimate subject of cultural study. They now have an exhibit of brassieres in their costume and textiles section. Not only that but they have one Kristina Haughland as resident lingerie expert, who has made an anthropological study of female undergarments. How do people get jobs like this? I'm unemployed right now. Why won't someone pay me to fondle feminine fashions?

It seems that currently the bra biz is booming. On one hand (breast?) there is a growing market for the reinforced, action oriented "sports bra," and at the other end of the spectrum sales of lacy nothings trailing ribbons and bows are going through the roof. I can just see it now, some poor woman goes shopping and spends hours choosing the right combinations of sneakers, pardon me - that's canvas foot support systems, so she is properly shod for every conceivable occasion, and then has to spend another day and a half purchasing the proper brassiere to go with each foot support system. If American industry can pull this one off we'll be out of the recession before you can snap the hooks on your own personal breast support system. Now if I can only find a way to market special occasion panties I'll be rich!

"It's confusion over women's roles,," says Ms. Haughland. "Women are expected to be everything - athlete in the morning, business woman by day and sex goddess at night. And there's a bra for every occasion." How true that is! I've been confused over women's roles for years, and I'm glad I'm not alone. Why the Intimate Apparel Council of NY, NY (I'll bet you never knew they existed - did you?) says that sports bras account for 9 percent of bra sales and underwires take 38 percent of the tally. There was, sadly, no accounting of how many of those bras were sold for use by women, so we may never know how large our share of the

Intimate Apparel market is.

.....There have been an interesting evolution of the brassiere over the years.

The bra as we know it first appeared around the turn of the century as hoop skirts, super tight corsets and such began to loose popularity. Oddly enough, women considered the long-line boned and reinforced brassieres liberating when compared to their predecessors. By the '20s designers were advising fashionable women to throw away their bras and adopt the boyish look of simple breastbands. (Glad I wasn't around then!) The '30s saw the breasts part company, and women, or at least bra wearers of whatever sex, could be discerned to have two distinct globes instead of a single rounded mass mounted on the chest. The '40s and '50s saw the advent of the "torpedo" or "snow cone" bra, with it's myriad stitched circles, the kind I first snatched from my mother and filled with washcloths.

The sixties were trying times for the manufacturers of bras, what with the bra burners and free lovers who had no use for intimate apparel, as they were cavorting naked in fields of flowers and doing things that scandalized their parents. But American Ingenuity was up to the challenge, and the no-bra look became the standard in bras. Padded, seamless cups enhanced the figure without those lines on the sheer blouse. And someone discovered color. Of course you had to have the right color bra under your clothes or you were terribly out of fashion. And don't forget patterns of delicate pink roses on the fabric of the cup and the blue rose where the cups join. The Intimate Apparel Council says American women (how can they prove their sex, I ask you?) bought 292 million bras last year.

.....So what's in the future? A spokesman for Maidenform, which has its own bra museum in NY City, predicts bras in lush fabrics like satin, and bold patterns in deeper hues. Maybe even paisley or mosaic prints. We face a bright future under our blouses, no doubt about it.

(Ed. Note: This article originally appeared in CrossTalk Magazine, which is now, unfortunately, out of business [We miss you, Kymberleigh!], and is reprinted here courtesy of the author.)

Bra History

By Lori Moody, Los Angeles Daily News

(An uplifting tale submitted by Phyllis)

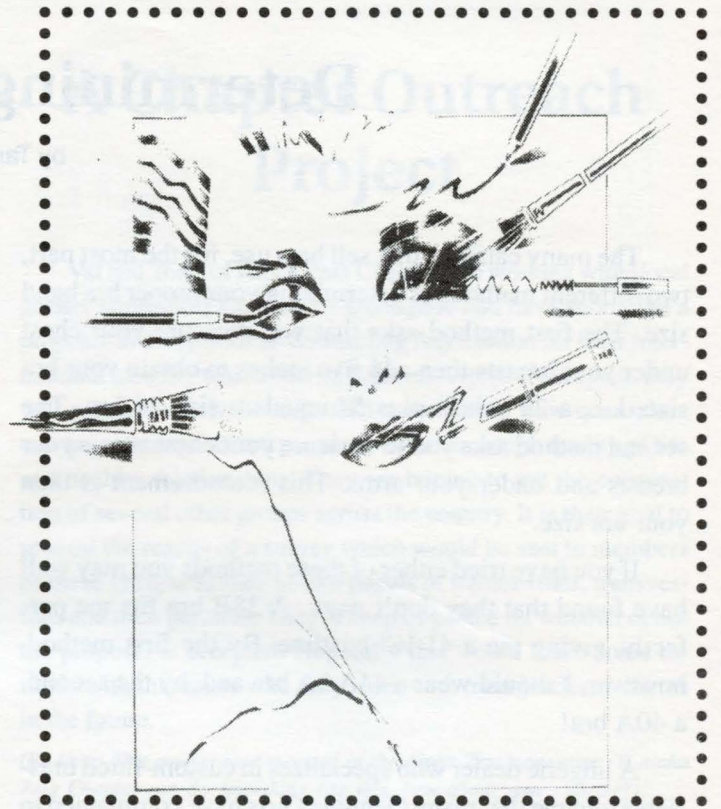
The bra has roots in ancient history. Egyptian women wore a narrow, tight band to support the breasts, while Greek and Roman women bound their breasts with a woolen cloth or other undergarment. In medieval times, women went without support. In the 13th century, laced outer garments were introduced to provide support for horseback riding, and these later evolved into corsets.

The earliest modern bra on record was made by Parisian corset maker Herminie Cadolle, who introduced the "Well-being," a more comfortable alternative to the corset. Caress Crosby claimed, to have invented the bra in 1913 by sewing two handkerchiefs together with ribbon straps. The Patent was sold to Warner's for \$1,500 and was later valued at \$15 million.

It wasn't until the 1920's that the bra caught on with the masses, driven by the boyish slim look of the flappers, who wore a flattening bandeau of silk or cotton. Other contributing factors were the suffragette movement and the entry of women into the work force and sports. In 1927, William Rosenthal, Maidenform's president and chief designer until he died in 1958, received a patent for the "original uplift brassieres" which was meant to support the bust in a natural position instead of flattening it.

Curves returned with the Great Depression, and, in 1929, bras were introduced that lifted the bust. Silk, cotton and satin were used with newly invented two-way stretch fabrics. In 1935, Warner's introduced cup sizes that improved fit. Wartime restrictions on cotton and rubber produced new synthetics including Dupont's nylon. The "sweater girl" pin-ups brought about new bras constructed as truncated rounded cones. Howard Hughes's fixation with actress Jane Russell's breasts was evident in the 1943 film *The Outlaw*.

Hughes designed a bra for Russell, but she opted to wear her own without his knowledge. Said Russell: "I never wore I his bra and believe, me, he could design planes, but a Mr. Playtex he wasn't"



The hourglass shape returned in the late 1940's resulting in underwired and hammock shaped bras. The bust became higher still in the 1950's. Bras were stiffly tailored in a geometrical cone shape, which thrust the breasts up and forward. Frederick Mellinger, founder of Fredericks of Hollywood developed a "Rising Star," a wired and padded prototype, in 1948. The company whose name is synonymous with lingerie went on to open a museum at its Hollywood store in 1986, including such items as a feather trimmed dressing gown-worn by Mae West, the pantaloons Ava Gardner donned in "Showboat" and one of Madonna's bustiers.

The 1960's brought on the women's liberation movement, bralessness, and the call to "burn the bra." Lingerie turned sexy in the 70's. Coordinating foundations and underwear made with the introduction of Lycra tricot that looked like satin. Sports bras came into being in the 1980's in response to the fitness trend. The 1980's and 90's have seen a renewed interest in curves, with stars such as Madonna giving birth to the trend of lingerie as outerwear.

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

STAY BALANCED

by Melanie Yarborough

Transgenderism isn't just another addiction like alcoholism or compulsive gambling. It's part and parcel of our own sexual orientation, rooted in our psyche and maybe even biology. It's not something you can readily cure. It would be like trying to "cure" somebody from having five fingers per hand, or from being Chinese, or from being heterosexual.

It's a hard reality to face: we probably never stop being transgendered. However, it's something we can learn to keep in balance with the other parts of our lives.

Several years ago, I read an article in the Tri-Ess "Femme Mirror", which was highly critical of crossdressers. The author blasted many Crossdressers as too focused on their dressing to the exclusion of all else. Outside of work, family, and crossdressing, they didn't have time for much else. At the time, I dismissed this comment as coming from a would-be purger. But over the last few years, I've seen it first hand: many of us really do make this the totality of our lives. "I dress, therefore I am."

Balance means taking into account how crossdressing affects those around us: spouses, children, family and friends. Balance means the fiscal responsibility to not spend sums of money we can't afford on dresses and makeup. And yes, balance means having interests and hobbies outside of the gender community.

Balance means exercising self-control and restraint once in a while. As our sister Theonie once pointed out to me, control over drives and passions is what distinguishes people as "Civilized." Assuming a female role can be one of these drives and passions. It's all too easy to submerge oneself into it or even make it a crutch. Addiction is never pretty.

We don't have to substitute "Transgender" for having a personality. We can integrate transgenderism into our lives, as just one part among many. It can be a periodic expression of softness, sensitivity, our feminine half. Or, it can be a Walk On The Wild Side into a glamorous world denied to most men. It can be a whole lot of fun; it doesn't have to be a consuming be-all and end-all.

A Chapter Outreach Project

Val and Toni [of Alpha Zeta Chapter] are working with [local gender counselor] Dr. Judy O'Donoghue and have submitted a proposal to the American Counseling Association for their International meeting which will be held next April. If accepted, they will present a three hour session surrounding how counselors can assist transgendered people to maintain a high quality of life and healthy relationships. They are hoping to get the cooperation of several other groups across the country. It is their goal to present the results of a survey which would be sent to members of these groups, as well as two panels of transsexuals, transvestites and their partners. They'll keep us posted on whether or not the proposal is accepted. Hopefully this would make some inroads with therapists who may work with transgendered clients in the future.

(Ed.Note: This project was reported in the Alpha Zeta newsletter. If Alpha Zeta Chapter can do something like this, how about your chapter?)

Tanya Brown's Prosthesis Emporium



Name Brand
Breast Protheses
At 25% Off Retail

Send \$1.00 to:
Tanya Brown
P.O. Box 257
Windsor, OH 44099

A Tri-Ess Member Serving Her Sisters Since 1988

START YOUR OWN HERBAL BUSINESS

with the assistance of Carol Beecroft.

**Help others with their health problems.
25-yr-old firm with over 400 herbal formulas.**

Write Carol at:

Box 1686 Tulare CA 93275

Determining Your Bra Size

by Tanya Brown

The many catalogs that sell bras use, for the most part, two different methods of determining your proper bra band size. The first method asks that you measure your chest under your breasts then add five inches to obtain your bra size, i.e., a 29" chest plus 5" equals a size 34 bra. The second method asks you to measure your chest above your breasts and under your arms. This measurement is then your bra size.

If you have tried either of these methods you may well have found that they don't work. A 38B bra fits me perfectly, giving me a 41 1/2" bustline. By the first method, however, I should wear a 44AAA bra and, by the second, a 40A bra!

A lingerie dealer who specializes in custom-fitted bras-tieres told me that many Genuine Girls have complained to her that those methods don't work for them either! She has no idea where the catalogs came up with such screwy measuring systems. She advised that professional bra-fitters use the following method to determine band size:

1. Measure your chest under your breasts (where the bottom band of a bra normally sits on your chest).
2. Measure your chest above your breasts and below your armpits.
3. If the difference between the two measurements is two inches or less, the under breast measurement (#1) is your bra size. If the difference is over two inches, you may want to try one size larger for comfort.
4. If the under breast measurement is an odd number, go to the nearest even bra size. Now that was simple, wasn't it? Well, almost.

Now we must determine what cup size is right for you. The catalogs, in conjunction with the bogus information they provide on determining your band size, provide charts to compare the band size with your actual bustline, thereby

determining your cup size. Great, but we don't have bustlines to compare! That's what we are trying to create!

At this point, my personal experience must take over. Even the professional fitter couldn't help me that much as she was not experienced with crossdressers. You can determine a close approximation of your proper cup size using the method shown below.

You may find that, after trying a bra, you would like your breasts and your bustline to be slightly larger or smaller. If the bra fits well otherwise, stay with the same band size and go up or down in cup size.

BRA SIZE	BUILD		
	Slender	Average	Heavier
32 to 38	A	B	C
40 to 42		B	C to D
44 to 46		C	D to DD

Please note that, when I speak of "build", I am speaking in terms of your male build. Personal preference will, of course, also play a part.

Remember, when trying a new size bra, pad the cups with tissue paper until they are 1/8 to 1/4 inch off the chest. I cannot emphasize this enough! (NOTE: This method of testing a bra will work with BACK-HOOK UNDERWIRE BRAS ONLY! Soft-cup bras vary too much in shape to obtain an accurate measurement. Also, underwire bras are FAR superior to wear with any breast prosthesis.

(Ed.Note: Tanya is a long time member of Tri-Ess and a three-term Vice President of Alpha Omega chapter in Cleveland. Tanya Brown can be reached at P.O. Box 257, Windsor, Ohio 44099. Her e-mail address is tanya@ruralamerica.net.)

DIGNITY CRUISE #10

HOLIDAY AT SEA

WITH PEGGY RUDD AND THE GENDER GIFTED

aboard Royal Caribbean's
SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS

November 8 - 13, 1998

Roundtrip from Miami: Visit Key West, CoCoCay and Nassau, Bahamas

**Fine Dining, Pampered Service, Spectacular Scenery Plus The Freedom To Express
Yourself With Other Members Of The Gender-gifted Community**

Rates (Cruise Only, Per Person, Double occupancy)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Group Rate</u>	<u>Port Chgs.</u>	<u>Total</u>
L/Inside Cabin	\$400.00	\$ 82.00	\$482.00
K/Inside Cabin	410.00	\$ 82.00	\$492.00
G/Outside Cabin	460.00	\$ 82.00	\$542.00
F/Outside Cabin	475.00	\$82.00	\$557.00

UPGRADES AVAILABLE. ASK FOR SUPERIOR, OR SUITE.

Single Occupancy 150% of selected category, plus port charges.

Also available: Low cost air fare and pre-cruise package, \$59.00 pp, including transfer to the ship.

LIMITED SPACE - CALL TODAY

TERMS

\$200 per person deposit with reservation secures cabin and rate. Balance due 2 months prior to departure.

Payment can be made by check made payable to CRUISES, INC, or by
VISA, MASTER CARD, DISCOVER, or AMERICAN EXPRESS.

CANCELLATION CLAUSE

\$25 charge on any cancellation after the deposit is made.

Additional penalties apply 60 days prior to sailing.

Optional cancellation insurance available.

For Reservations or information call CRUISES, INC. TOLL FREE

Mike Sinn 1-800-818-7830 or Barbara Arendt 1-800-621-6699



Minneapolis, MN
JULY 14-18, 1999

Feeling up the creek? Lost your paddle? Not even sure you have a canoe? Come to S.P.I.C.E. VII, outfitters supreme for CDSO's on the journey of their life. . .

A Wilderness Adventure

Discovering that one's husband/partner is a cross-dresser is somewhat similar to being cast unexpectedly into the wilderness and made to navigate oneself back to the normal and ordinary place one had always been, but in an unsteady vessel you don't know how to operate, over un-known waters in uncertain weather, ill equipped and quite unprepared for such a wilderness adventure.

Metaphorically, the discovery of his crossdressing is somewhat like finding yourself in the middle of a Boundary [less] Wilderness without a paddle or a guide.

At S.P.I.C.E. VII, you will find yourself in the company of experienced guides who will help you find your way through your wilderness adventure. They will help you learn to paddle, to find the portages, how to shelter yourself in the storms and how to navigate your way back to civilization.

If you have found yourself on such a wilderness adventure without a guide, come to S.P.I.C.E. VII and learn how to make your experience benefit your life and relationships.

Sheraton Inn
Minneapolis Airport

A "Wilderness" Adventure

ADD



TO YOUR LIFE!

*is a program of the Society
for the Second Self (Tri-Ess).
All contributions are tax deductible*

Board of Directors & Officers

The Society for the Second Self, Inc.
Fall, 1998

Executive Director

Carol Beecroft
P.O. Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275

Director, Investments

Virginia Prince
P.O. 36091, Los Angeles, CA 90036

Chair of the Board

Jane Ellen Fairfax
8880 Bellaire B2, Ste. 104, Houston, TX 77036

Vice-Chair of the Board

Naomi Owen
P.O. Box 40
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Director, Membership

Donna Martin
P.O. Box 597859, Chicago, IL 60659

Secretary

Frances Fairfax
8880 Bellaire B2, Ste. 104, Houston, TX 77036

Treasurer

Samantha Walls
8880 Bellaire B2, Ste. 104, Houston TX 77036

Director, Chapter Development, Big Sister Program

Marlene
P.O. Box 4067, Visalia, CA 93278

Director, Spouses & Partners Support

Peggy.Rudd
P.O. Box 5304, Katy, TX 77491

Director, Finance

Melanie Rudd
P.O. Box 5304
Katy, Texas 77491-5304

Director

Lynda Frank
P.O. Box 9192, Morristown, NJ 07960

Director

Deanna Johns
P.O. Box 40, Wood Dale, IL 60191

Director, Nominations

Robin K.
P.O. Box 11254, Memphis, TN 38111

Director

Fran Estes
P.O. Box 346, Averill Park, NY 12018

Director, Chapter Networking & Support

Judy Daniels
P.O. Box 2502 #298, Springfield, MO 65801

Director, Membership Directory

Denise Peters
P.O. Box 1138, Lake Zurich, IL 60047-1138

Advisor, Fund-Raising

Kathy Helms
Box 411352, Los Angeles, CA 90041

Moderator, CDSO Forum

Beverly R.
P.O. Box 307, Creole LA 70632
crencher@camtel.net

Moderator, CDTRIESS Forum

Sofronia Ann Strong
P.O. Box 8591, Minneapolis MN 55408
sas@tri-ess.com

Tri-Ess Internet Coordinator

Molly Brown: mollynj@hotmail.com

How To Choose a Therapist

by Erin MI-4708-T

During the course of reading about therapy in connection with gender issues, I have occasionally come across commentaries about how best to choose a therapist. I'd like to submit the tentative recommendations and thoughts below in hopes of eliciting commentary about whether it would be useful for us to have information on therapists beforehand, whether they would bother to provide it, and what information would be most helpful to have. Any opinions on whether the criteria below would be of value in choosing a gender therapist, or would you suggest any others? Any opinions to offer as to how we can best select a prospective therapist for gender issues?

If prospective therapists were to provide qualifications, might the following be useful in selection, prior to an interview, and how would professionals vs transgendered persons rank the value of each of these criteria in selecting a therapist, prior to interview?

- Number of gender patients seen in the last 5 years.
- Estimated patient hours spent on gender cases in the last 5 years.
- number of continuing education credits in the last 5 years pertinent to gender issues.
- Number of gender community meetings/events attended in the last 5 years. Percent of practice (measured as contact hours, income, or patients - specify) derived from gender patients.
- Articles published in the gender field.
- Books/chapters published in the gender field.
- Posts held in gender pertinent offices (reviewer for journal, society officer, etc.).
- Stated philosophy regarding management of gender patients: mental disorder vs. condition vs. lifestyle? (offer reference article.) nature vs. nurture? criteria for successful management (acceptance vs cure vs other?).
- Predominant patient profile.
- Heterosexual crossdressers, Bisexual crossdressers, Homosexual crossdressers, Transsexuals, & Others.
- Percent male-to-female vs. female-to-male.
- Results with gender patients
- Average number of visits per patient, Average number of years gender patients are seen.
- Percent to Sexual Reassignment Surgery.
- Percent to poor result.
- Percent dropping therapist after 3 months.
- Percent to hormones.
- Percent improved (state criteria). stabilized (state criteria), or self destructive acts during therapy.
- Group and/or individual therapy employed.
- Hormones offered.
- Other qualifications/Credentials.

(Ed. Note: Send your suggestions to Erin through the Mail Forwarding Service.)

An Opportunity for Wives, Significant Others, and Family Members of Transgendered Persons

by Mary Boenke

Dear Friends:

I am the proud mother of an FTM son, Co-chair of PFLAG's Transgender Network, involved with the recent publication of our booklet "Our Trans Children", and active with trans issues in many ways.

I am planning to edit and publish a book of collected writings by parents, siblings, children, partners and other relatives of trans persons. More than one family member, close friends and employers are also invited. It will be similar to "Different Daughters", ed. Louise Rafkin, a book by mothers of lesbian daughters and very successful in that community. My working title is "Our Trans Loved Ones". There is no such book available for trans families.

Submissions should be positive and accepting of your loved one's trans nature, but may describe the journey getting to that place of acceptance. Writings may cover anecdotes about family reactions, the struggle to learn about and understand trans issues, your emotional reactions, dealing with other family members and friends. Families of TG, TS, CD, inter-sexed and all variations of gender benders are included.

Submissions should NOT be by trans persons, themselves, though they may assist and coach others. Submissions should be approximately 1000 - 2000 words. Poems and others lengths also considered. Prior writing experience is not required; we will assist.

Send by e-mail to maryboenke@aol.com or surface mail to:

Mary Boenke
180 Bailey Blvd.
Hardy, VA 24101

Inquiries invited. Please call to discuss at 540-890-3957.



Grace and Lace Letter

A Christian Publication
for the
Transgendered Community

Jane Ellen and Frances Fairfax
Publishers

8880 Bellaire B2 Ste.104
Houston TX 77036

For Sample Copies
E-Mail: LoveLettr1@aol.com
For Information
E-Mail: G n L News@aol.com



REPARTEE is fun magazine which encourages the view that transvestism is something positive to be enjoyed, presenting a well balanced view of all aspects of cross-dressing, including the more exotic and erotic aspect such as fetishism.

Each quarterly issue is packed with interesting, informative & entertaining features, stories, practical help and advice, reviews, news, reports on social events, readers' letters, contact ads, and lots of photos (some in full colour). **Now in A4 format.**

Please send \$10 (or 5lbs in UK) for sample copy w/ full details to:

Rose's (FM1), Roundel St,
Sheffield S9 3LE, ENGLAND



Pauline

(author unknown)

It's Saturday evening and by a rare stroke of fortune our children are all away for the night. Wonderful! For crossdressers with partners and families the chance to dress and relax in one's own home can be limited and although many crossdressers have told their partners about themselves, telling the children is another matter.

Now Paul can become Pauline for the next twenty-four hours. No sooner has the youngest child been dispatched than Paul is running the bath and starting to shave his legs. This is an aspect of his life that has never been secret as he's a keen cyclist and most racing cyclists shave their legs, in the summer anyway.

So I never thought anything about him shaving. For nearly twenty years I knew nothing about Pauline and very little about crossdressing until Paul told me ... I must admit it was a shock, though at least he told me; I didn't come upon him dressed or find a wig in the wardrobe. Like most women in this situation I found myself bewildered. I thought we had a good relationship, sex was good, we didn't argue - and now this.

How long had it been going on? Was it my fault? What did he do? What did he look like, dressed? Did he prefer men? and why was he like this? Of course Paul was no more able to provide an answer to that last question than I was. He had been equally bewildered himself when, at about the age of 12, he first found himself drawn to crossdressing. From that time on he had led a secret life, and for as long as he lived with me had been dressing in my clothes when I was at work or away from home.

Now, as he told me about himself, one or two things began to fall into place. So that was why he took such an interest in the color of my nail varnish or liked to curl up with my copy of *Cosmopolitan*! Now I realized it wasn't one of the children who was always blunting my lipsticks, but Paul! The signs had been there but I hadn't seen them. Paul had often referred to his feminine side and this side of him was something I liked and found attractive. I came to him having had enough of macho men, and I appreciated his sensitivity,

his sympathy for women, his love of children - he almost made a better mother than I did - and his involvement in the home. He didn't mind discussing color schemes or pushing around the Hoover.

At the same time he was no wimp; he was strong, practical and capable. I admired his masculine side equally. I always enjoyed the interest he took in what I wore and that he liked to come clothes shopping with me. This amazed women friends who had only experienced shopping with impatient partners. They preferred to buy clothes with a girl friend.

This was yet another clue to his true nature. I was shopping with a girlfriend - a friend who strongly influenced my dress style, encouraging me to buy lots of black, shiny, tight and sexy stuff. When I later discovered I was buying clothes that he could wear too, it wasn't surprising that he took so much interest. And it was a way of relieving his frustration before he told me about his crossdressing.

Now I had to see him dressed. As I waited for him to appear en femme I wondered nervously if what turned him on would turn me off. Finally Pauline on would turn me off. Finally Pauline presented herself - in my lacy leotard, my black mini-skirt, my fishnet tights and my make-up. She had even managed to cram her feet into a pair of my high-heeled mules.

Hesitantly she came into the room, sat down and modestly crossed her legs the skirt was rather short on her since she is much taller than I - and I looked at her more closely.

Why, she made quite a passable girl! The modern, slightly androgynous type. It was true that the make-up needed some attention and she definitely needed some other shoes but - well, it might take a bit of getting used to, but it wasn't grotesque. She didn't look bad at all with her slim figure, long legs and her hair fluffed out a bit to frame her face. I soon saw she had been practicing her movements and was as good as walking like a woman as dressing like one. I had often said to Paul that he should have been an actor. Little did I realize he had been acting for years and was especially competent at playing the part of a woman!

I also noticed that Pauline was not simply Paul dressed as a woman. Paul was quite assertive whereas Pauline was more diffident. Paul usually took a leading role where Pauline liked to be coerced, dominated even. Pauline liked kisses and cuddles, to flirt and to be seduced. She didn't just appear to be a woman but seemed to be experiencing herself as a woman. It was all a little strange - though at the same time not unexciting. Perhaps it could even become exciting

This was not something I could fight or ignore; Paul/Pauline was the same person, man or woman, that I had known and trusted all this time; there was no reason to start being distrustful now. In fact, I couldn't help admiring this person who had found himself in such a dilemma. It hadn't made for an easy life.

The next time we went shopping we bought a new pair of high-heeled sandals for Pauline as well as her own lacy leotard. I gave her a few tips on how to do make-up and bought her some ear-rings and a ring.

Now, three years later, I see how my life has been enriched by Pauline. Unlike some women, I don't feel I have lost a partner, though it's true I've lost the partner I thought I had. No, I haven't lost Paul but I've gained Pauline - and another dimension to the relationship.

The thought of a Saturday night with Pauline gives me a thrill and the fact it's a secret between us only adds to the excitement. What is she going to wear tonight? We enjoy fetishism as part of our sex-life too. Will she want me to help her dress? Perhaps she'd like to help me get ready? Straighten my seams, zip up my boots. Be my maid. Or is she going to play the slut this time?

The scenarios are endless and we enjoy investing and dressing for new ones. And as the dressing and the role playing are all part of the pleasure and can take place over several hours - Paul can't switch to Pauline instantaneously either physically or psychologically - we especially appreciate having the house to ourselves for a night But a night soon goes. Already it is Sunday evening and Paul has put away the high heels, taken off the lipstick and is back in his jeans. All the signs of a night of pleasure have been tidied away before the children return. Or have they? The youngest, a sharp little chap of eleven, has not been home long before he turns to his father and says with disarming candor and, yes, acceptance; "Dad, have you been wearing mascara?"

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter)

Ask Your Local Police

*Guest Speaker Pat Boyd of the Phoenix Police
Dept. Visits Alpha Zeta Chapter*

by Denise S.

(Alpha Zeta Second Lady and Scribe)

The first issue that Pat Boyd stated was about the public washrooms. She said that she researched it and could find no law stating that a man could not use a women's restroom. She further said that this was only in Phoenix and in some cases it was up to the company policies of various establishments. Also, the establishment has the right to ask that person to leave the premises. She suggested that if the ladies needed to use the restroom while out dressed, that they quickly go in, do their business and get out. Do not make a scene! Someone then said that there was such a law in Scottsdale. Pat then refined her statement that there was no law in Phoenix or on the State records. If an individual city makes such a law they can enforce it.

Pat was then asked what someone should do if an officer had made a stop and was getting insulting. She suggested that the person should get the officer's name and ID number, not the badge number. If the officer is still insulting, or continues to harass you, then ask for his supervisor. If the officer refuses to do this, then call 911, explain the situation and ask for a supervisor. Then Pat was asked, "What if a person called the police for something, and when the officer arrived the officer would not follow through on the matter?" Pat responded by saying the person calling the police department could file a discrimination law suit.

Pat reminded that the ladies that when an officer is not professional, they should call her at 262-7658. She said that she is in and out of her office so please leave a voice mail and she would get back as soon as possible. Pat said that the officer cannot refuse to help you. If the officer does then place a complaint against the officer.

Pat said that if an officer stops someone, the officer has to tell why he is doing so. If the officer does not inform the person of the reason for the stop, then the person should ask. She said an officer cannot stop anyone without reason; they need probable cause.

Pat concluded by saying, "You have your civil rights. Don't let them be violated. And, if you need help, please call me."

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

BREAST FORMS

What is a breast form?

A breast form is a prosthesis worn either inside a bra or attached to the body to simulate the weight, bounce, feel, movement, and especially the shape of the natural female breast. Depending on the material or shape used, these qualities can be achieved to different degrees. More expensive modern breast forms are designed by computers and can even be attached to the chest. They can be worn with strapless dresses and lingerie, while bathing, sleeping or even during strenuous activity.

The medical purpose of the breast form industry. The commercial breast form industry fills the need of supplying replacement prosthetics for breast cancer survivors. A breast prosthesis can help to restore physical symmetry and peace of mind following the devastating effects that breast cancer brings. The breast form industry produces a wide variety of prosthetics for an unfortunately large market. The range of products available to the post-mastectomy patient in order to restore the visual and physical balance between the affected breast area and the non-affected area is truly amazing.

How the transgendered community benefits. Prices for high quality breast forms can be very expensive. Most medical insurance plans allow for at least partial reimbursement for the purchase of breast forms and surgical bras each year (section 6109A of a 1974 Medicare ruling.) Unfortunately, this is limited to genetic women who have had breast surgery, and the transgendered community can not reduce the high costs for prostheses in this manner. The transgendered community can benefit from all of the work by the industry to develop materials and form shapes that resemble the natural female breast as closely as possible.

Materials Used in Commercial Breast Forms. The predominant material used in the more expensive commercial breast forms is silicone gel inside a very thin, slick plastic shell with tapered edges. Other materials such as rubber/latex, foam, or cotton batting are sometimes used as well. Here are the main qualities of each of the types of materials used to help in deciding if a certain material is right for you:

A. Silicone

Good Points: The material gives the form a comparable weight, movement and feel of a natural breast. The silicone can be colored; many forms of this type are available in a variety of shades to match skin tone. The material of this type of form warms to

your body temperature and feels very comfortable.

Bad Points: Silicone forms are expensive, ranging anywhere from \$100-\$450 U.S. per form (and sometimes even more.)

B. Rubber/Latex

Good Points: Cheaper alternative to silicone, while still retaining some of the qualities of silicone that make it so desirable.

Bad Points: While still having some of the qualities of silicone to a certain degree, rubber/latex can not dare to match the weight, feel or movement of even the cheapest silicone forms.

C. Foam

Good Points: Commercial foam forms are very cheap and can even be easily homemade.

Bad Points: Will not likely have the drape, weight or movement approximating a real breast. The primary goal of this type of form is to approach the shape of the natural breast.

D. Cotton Batting

Good points: Very cheap and easily home made. This can be a good way to estimate what cup size might fit best for your frame and body type.

Bad Points: VERY light and has no draping qualities. This type of form will not move the way a natural breast would due to its lightness.

Do I need a special bra to wear a breast form?

This depends usually on the fashions you wish to wear while using your form, but for a more seamless look, a full coverage bra will be better suited to a breast form. Most breast form manufacturers also carry special lines of bras that contain a pocket that the form can be placed in to reduce movement of the form while worn.

The more support offered, the better the fit, since there will be less chance for the form to move in the bra. Bras with underwires tend to work better than those with just elastic because they offer better support for the form (the same reasoning that applies to natural breasts.) Push-up bras, on the other hand, will generally not work with breast forms, since they need to push something FROM someplace that it is attached. Unless the form is attached to the chest, this type of bra will have no chance to create the desired effect of enhanced cleavage.

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

Star Trek

by Ricky Hunt

Space...The final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Enterprise...

If you are a Trekkie I don't have to continue any farther. You can hear Captain Kirk's voice reciting those famous lines until, without a shred of political correctness, he proclaims: "To go where no man has gone before!"

I received a report from a Star Trek convention held in Buffalo, New York, that someone, perhaps one of our sisters, brought a whole new meaning to those noble lines.

For those of you who don't go to Star Trek conventions, you will find many of the participants attired in full, Official Star Fleet Uniform. You will also find some member of the original Star Trek cast making an appearance, and in this case it was Scotty. Or actor James Doohan when out of uniform. Scotty was happily posing for pictures with those in attendance; for a fee, of course. He's no dummy and at almost over 70 had to think of retirement. So there he was, kissing the girls for the camera, when he was presented with a dilemma.

A gentleman attired in Official Star Fleet Female Uniform joined the line. Remember the female uniform was designed in the 60s, and consists of a rather low neckline, mini skirted tunic and pantyhose. Patterns and fleet specs are available in the Official Star Fleet Technical Manual published by Ballantine Books, by the way. My reporter did not indicate if the person in question was wearing an Official Star Fleet Brassiere, but there was an instant wave of speculation as to what would happen when this Trekkie TV reached the end of the line.

As I heard this story the plot for STAR TREK XXXVII - WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE popped full blown into my head, and you, lucky readers, will be the first to hear it.

We open with the standard shot of the bridge of the Starship Enterprise, but every living soul on board is garbed in the Official Female Uniform.

KIRK: Mr. Spock! (Pauses while Spock turns and does double take) Green blush, Mr. Spock?

SPOCK: I am not a human, Captain. My blood is green.

KIRK: (Recovering) Mr. Spock, I need answers. Why has the laundry computer started producing only female uniforms?

SPOCK: Captain, I have thus far been unable to obtain an answer to your query. I am attempting to run a diagnostic and will report further when it is complete.

KIRK: Very good, Mr. Spock. (Pause) Oh, and Spock...

SPOCK: Yes, Captain?

KIRK: I want to know who programmed the replicators to produce enough falsies for the entire crew of this ship on such short notice.

UHURA: Captain, I have a report of a Klingon on Deck B.

KIRK: Don't worry, that's just Sulu. He always had a fondness for leather and spikes.

(Communicator beeps.)

McCOY: Jim, I have a problem here. I have a rash of men coming into sick bay with 'female complaints.' Can't you get that pointy eared freak to do something with the blasted computers?

KIRK: We're working on it, Bones. Just be patient.

McCOY: Patient! I have too many patients! I already have 6 candidates for reassignment surgery so far this morning. Jim, I'm a doctor, but I'm not that kind of doctor!

SPOCK: Captain, I have determined the source of the programming came from outside this vessel.

KIRK: Curious. Keep working on it. *(Hits communicator button.)*

KIRK: Scotty! I need more power up here!

SCOTTY: Power Captain? We're docked in a space station for repairs. We aren't going anywhere!

KIRK: Not for the ship Scotty, for myself. The force field on this damn corset is about to let go. If I don't get more power the explosion will ruin my image forever!

SPOCK: Captain, I have the answer. I have traced the source of the problem to the master computers of a giant entertainment company on planet Earth. It seems the crew of STAR TREK - THE NEXT GENERATION is tired of waiting for their chance to cash in on movies and have devised a remarkable plan. Since most of the plots revolve around you making loud, macho noises and then seducing the female lead, they decided that changing your image would do us in. They programmed the laundry computer hoping to destroy your macho image and replace it with a more feminine one. If that didn't work (after all there are some females who might find our current mode of dress appealing), they planned to send the footage of this movie to the Federation Armed Services Committee and cash in on the current debate on gays in the military.

KIRK: Fiendish, Mr. Spock, but to no avail. If they succeed in canceling us we'll just start an afternoon talk show and we'll clean up!

THE END

By the way, Scotty did not pucker up.

(Ed.Note: This article originally appeared in CrossTalk magazine, and is reprinted here by permission of the author.)

The Push-Ups

Incredible Feats of Engineering

by Wendy Lee, Press Telegram

When was the last time you bought a bra? If it's been awhile, listen up. It's a brave new world out there.

"The push-up bras are feats of engineering," marvels Ellen Appel, spokeswoman for Fredericks of Hollywood, which offers about 10 different styles of push-up bras. "There's no question about it. The way the wire and cups are angled, the construction of the bras is very complex. The construction of any bra is very complex, the newer ones even more so." Rome, as they say, wasn't built in a day. Neither was a push-up bra.

Not surprisingly, the profundities in bra engineering have spawned a new bra-speak. For instance, one press kit I received referred to "dramatic cleavage," "three part cup construction," "precision angled back and underwire cups," and "removable contour pads." Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's "Wonderbra," by Sara Lee Intimates. This particular bra has 54 components. All this is designed to give its wearers a deep plunge and push together effect" as well as "more natural projection," among other benefits, the folks at Sara Lee say.

In industry terms, my Stone-Age 34A bras offer stunningly "undramatic cleavage." This deficiency, I soon came to know, might be better served by a plunge cup, rather than a demi. Live and learn. "The plunge cup is the regular, sexy low-cut bra," explained J.J. Boone of Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills, who recently was extolling the virtues of Gossard's "Super-Uplift" bra. "The demi-cup is half of a cup. You see bras with straps almost over to the sides, just in front of the armpit? The bra is low and sitting there and you're bubbling out. You," she added pointedly, "may not know this."

With all these new things to remember, it may be no big surprise that 70 percent of the bra-wearing public is haplessly cavorting around town in the wrong size according to industry estimates. "Cause they don't know," says Appel of Frederick's. "There's a lot to know about bras. Count the parts. They are a lot of work to put together, even a 34A." With that in mind, a blue-ribbon Press-Telegram panel of bra experts (me and other women with nothing better to do) devised the following layman's guide to push-up bras:

What it Is: Frederick's of Hollywood's push-up bra **Price:** \$19.50 to \$28.50 **Where you get it:** Any Frederick's store or

through its catalog, (800) 323-9525 **Observations:** Very-high cleavage quotient, but the straps pinched our shoulders a little and the bra felt a bit scratchy. We prefer less padding. **Rating:** 3 out of 5.

What it is: The "Miracle Bra" by Victoria's. **Secret Price:** \$38. **Where you get it:** Any Victoria's secret store or through its catalog. **Observations:** Fits great, less filling. Didn't give us as much cleavage as the Frederick's pushup, the "Super-Uplift" or "Wonderbra." **Rating:** 3 out of 5

What it is: The "Wonderbra" by Sara Lee Intimates. **Price:** \$26. **Where you get It:** Right now, only in New York. The bras will be available in the Southland around September; distribution centers are still being determined. Call toll-free (800) 4-NEWBRA to request the store where you'd like your cup to runneth over. **Observations:** A little tight in the back. Our judge says, "I felt like I was wearing a corset. It felt like my shoulder blades were a little pinched. (But) after the initial tightness, you get used to it." High marks for "dramatic cleavage." Says our judge, "It was exhilarating." **Rating:** 4 out of 5.

What It is: The "Super-Uplift" bra by Gossard **Price:** \$39.50 to \$49.50 **Where you get it:** Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills; and Saks at South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa. Other outlets will carry the "Super Uplift" later this summer. **Observations:** Comfortable, easy on the eye, but a little loose around the top of the cups. Definitely an uplifting experience, though. We liked the little fake pearls in the tiny front bow. **Rating:** 4 out of 5.

Scale

- 1: Even Wendy wouldn't wear
- 2-3: Wendy's mother might wear
- 4: Really moved us
- 5: Would make Dolly Parton proud

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

Telling the Kids

by Ricky Hunt

Ouch, the things you learn from your kids! I suppose every parent goes through this sort of thing, but being able to talk with your now adult children reveals some interesting things you were not aware of when they were growing up. Specifically, I gained some insights into the age old question "Do we tell the kids?" I have a message for all you closeted crossdressers with children: you don't have to tell them, they already know.

My daughter had moved home to go to college in town, and our son visited on weekends, as much for the free laundry and all the food he could swipe as to visit the old folks. It was one of those late night gab sessions that occasionally happen, and the subject got around to the things they had pulled on their parents long enough ago to be able to admit them now. There's no other way to say it, we were bamboozled from top to bottom, and I can only console myself by thinking of the things I pulled on my parents in turn. Naturally the subject of my crossdressing came up along the way, and I was certainly enlightened.

My son found out when he went poking around in my van where I kept a suitcase of Ricky's clothes for the time I spent on the road. When my daughter was about 10 I built a locked closet in a corner of the attic to hide my dresses, thinking it was out of the way and would attract no interest. Yeah, I should have painted a billboard with a great red arrow saying, "Daddy's hiding something behind this door and you absolutely need to find out what!!!" It became a challenge, and it was practically no time before she found the key and opened the closet, with a friend looking on, and then hastily shut it again wondering what the heck those mammoth dresses were doing in there. It was a considerable time later that we formally told the kids about my odd hobby, and they have both been wonderfully accepting. They even managed to get through the Halloween when I came out of the closet and ran around the city in my flowery finest for all to see, and my daughter has seen me dressed many times without any damage to her psyche.

There is both a relief and a responsibility in having the kids know you are a crossdresser. Naturally, no longer having to hide a major part of yourself is wonderful, but that also entails a major responsibility to not let your desires take over the needs of your family. The first crossdresser I met in person almost made me quit dressing. (Well, I know it wouldn't have lasted, but...) He had absolutely no consideration for his wife and daughter, who could never invite people over because when he got the urge to dress, he dressed, and damn the family. He never helped around the house, spent money they didn't have on clothing and wigs, and made up the most outrageous stories to justify his insensitivity. I just noticed I have been using the masculine pronoun, although I usually try mightily to use the feminine to describe my sisters, even if it gives me a rather funny feeling to call a he a she. I have never been able to think of this person as anything other than a man with

fake boobs. The pain he caused his family was so very apparent, but he could not see it or react to it. Years later I took rape and abuse training and recognized that this person was using his crossdressing as one of many abusive tactics on his family. To see something I find so enjoyable perverted to a tool of hate disturbs me greatly, but then a very wise man once said, "Never underestimate the power of human stupidity." Unfortunately, he was right.

All this surfaced recently because my daughter became an engaged woman, and we had brought my future son in law in on the secret. I actually think I was more nervous about him finding out than when our kids did. He is an exceptional young man and was not at all upset, but what happened a couple weeks later has blown my mind. With the baby and her mom in the house, I had not been able to get dressed for about three months, and the urge was getting rather strong. When I found myself unexpectedly the only one in the house one Saturday, I eagerly donned bra, blouse and heels and sat down at the computer to write. I did shut the bedroom door just in case someone came home, but knew I had at least four hours before any scheduled arrivals. Anyone who has dealt with one of those airline TV monitors is sure to know what happened next. In the middle of a creative fog there came a knock on the bedroom door and I about severed my knees when I leaped up in my chair and rammed them into the desk drawer. I hastily asked, "Who is it?" and was answered by my future son-in-law's voice. He wanted to come in. Partial relaxation set in, as he had seen me dressed on Halloween and didn't freak out. But since then my beard had grown back, and it felt different.

Taking a firm grip on my lifelong reflex to hide my skirted self from the world, I called out, "I'll warn you, I'm dressed, but if you want to you can come in." He did. Not so much as a raised eyebrow, no quaver in his voice, just a cheery, "Hi, Dad, where is everybody? We're all supposed to meet here for the concert." With that he crossed the room and put his hands on my shoulders. To me it felt like my bra straps were about 2 inches thick under his hands, drawing attention to my well padded bosom. He commented about how warm I felt to his cold hands and gave me a short neck rub, and went out to wait for the rest of the group to show up.

I feel very warm and fuzzy thinking about his matter of fact, uncritical acceptance of me. There are not many 20 year old men who are able to casually touch another man while he's wearing women's clothes without the slightest bit of anxiety or revulsion. What I was wearing made absolutely no difference to him. Even though his news of an impending horde in my living room meant I had to return to the land of normalcy, I kept the glow of that unstrained personal acceptance with me throughout the day.

(Ed.Note: This article originally appeared in CrossTalk magazine, and is reprinted by permission of the author.)

My Visit to San Antonio, Texas

By Lorraine Kimberly Adams

While attending the recent Texas T Party in San Antonio, Texas, a very popular transgender conference, some of the girls and I decided to go downtown late Saturday morning and visit the most famous landmark in all of Texas, The Alamo.

Luckily for us, one of the girls had rented a car for the entire weekend. Imagine five crossdressers squeezing into a small rental car. Not exactly a pretty sight. Anyhow, after crowding ourselves into this tiny vehicle and trying to figure out how to get downtown we somehow managed to find the correct turnoff and immediately found a parking lot very close to the Alamo.

We walked through the rear entrance of this famous landmark into a beautiful garden of green lawns, winding sidewalks, beautiful flowers and trees. Latin rhythm music accompanied by a haunting windpipe instrument filled the moderate weathered air. We did catch some attention. What do you expect, I being the shortest of the group at five foot nine and a half in one inch heels, while the tallest stood about six foot five in three inch high heel pumps?! The girls wore beautiful subtle dresses. I decided on a simple pantsuit outfit with matching top and pants, black mules, a beautiful long necklace trimmed with tiny gold leaves and black beads, as well as a large black purse. I also wore a brown straw hat to polish off my ensemble. As we traversed through this beautiful courtyard we landed up in front of the familiar chapel of the Alamo. For a moment I believe we became the other attraction at the Alamo that day. We stood in front of the Alamo and took a few pictures of each other.

Afterwards, like some women, we tried to decide peacefully where to go next. We finally agreed to go down the famous Riverwalk. For those of you who not familiar with the Riverwalk, it is a part of the San Antonio River that diverts into a section of San Antonio near the Alamo. It is a beautiful walk along the river lined with all kinds of shops and restaurants. The surrounding milieu with the motorized barges of tourists buzzing slowly along reminds me of an European picture, something of a Venetian setting. Beautiful flowers and vine covered trees capture the eye of the beholder. Riverwalk makes for a very breathtaking visual experience. We walked down along the river for about a quarter of a mile. We stopped by some type of amphitheater built in a Spanish Southwest design and took pictures. A couple of the girls decided they wanted their picture taken posing on one of the bridges. After we were done there we walked over to the

other side and started heading back.

With all of that walking I began to get a little warm. I spotted a Hard Rock Cafe. I persuaded the girls to stop there for at least a drink. I made the reservations with the hostess. She responded in a nice way to me. She asked me for my first name and the initial of my last name. She informed me that we would probably wait twenty minutes or less. Three of the girls decided to go on ahead and look around. They promised to return within twenty minutes. Michelle and I walked into the Hard Rock Cafe's souvenir shop. The female clerk warmly greeted us. She didn't bat an eye when she waited on us. I purposely told her that I wanted the T-shirts for my kids and the stuffed toy bear for my wife.

It was when I was paying for my purchases that my name was announced over the intercom, "Lorraine A., your table is ready!" I felt very thrilled to hear my feminine name broadcast to the whole world. Never had I encountered such an experience before! Michelle and I walked into the restaurant and told the hostess that the rest of our party would eventually show up. The hostess instructed us to go upstairs. I went first. The excitement of walking up those stairs cannot be truly expressed in words. I felt so ladylike ascending up the stairs like an angel. The host at the top of the stairs led Michelle and I to our table. He then told us, "Ladies, enjoy your meal." I became ecstatic! "Ladies!"

I did notice some patrons sneaking glancing peeks at us. That was okay. I was already used to it by now. I started to get worried about our other girlfriends when Karen only arrived. She told me they were right behind her. They were nowhere in sight. I excused myself from the table and went downstairs to look for our other lady friends. I spoke with the hostess. She said they all went upstairs. I then asked her if it was okay to use the women's bathroom. She found nothing wrong with that. I was in crossdresser's heaven! I went back upstairs and found the rest of our group waiting for me. It turns out that they went to the ladies' room. They had to wait in line.

That's another story for another time.

Anyhow, when our waitress appeared she had the biggest sincere smile on her face, announcing that she was very happy to be our waitress. I asked her to take our picture and she complied. I did notice that after a few minutes that people quit staring

at us. We began to blend in. That wonderful moment in time told me that people didn't really care if there were men in dresses. The initial shock wore off and everything was fine.

Later, Michelle brought to my attention that two teenage girls were trying to figure out how to take our picture nonchalantly. We waved them down and invited them over. One of them asked us in a very thick Southern drawl and a beautiful smile, "Would it be okaaaay if we took a picture of you all?" We gave them the approval. I've yet to find a group of crossdressers that don't want their picture taken. The girls thanked us and walked off. I believe we made their day. They had something to talk about.

The waitress took every chance she had to talk to us and ask questions. We asked her questions as well. We explained to her the myths and truths about crossdressers. She was truly amazed. She wanted a picture of us. I gave her my business card and asked her to write to me. She informed us that we were the first crossdressers to have lunch there, as far as she knew. We probably set a precedent.

After checking our makeup we thanked our waitress for treating us like human beings and then began our trek back to the car. We headed back to the Alamo. I had one of the girls take another picture of me standing in front of the Alamo. From there we walked back to the car, piled in, and took off. On the way back to the hotel we laughed and reminisced about our adventure that day in downtown San Antonio. It would be a day forever etched in our minds.

The whole experience helped me to grow as a transgendered person. I expected people to stare at us when we walked among them. Sometimes I would walk ahead of my friends to see if people read me. I noticed that people didn't stare at me as much when I walked ahead. In a way that made me happy. In another way I felt lonely. I have mixed feelings about this. I want to pass and blend with the crowd, yet I want people to know that I am transgendered. This feeling will take further exploring as I venture out into the world as Lorraine. All in all, I grew a little bit more experienced as a transgendered person out in the world.

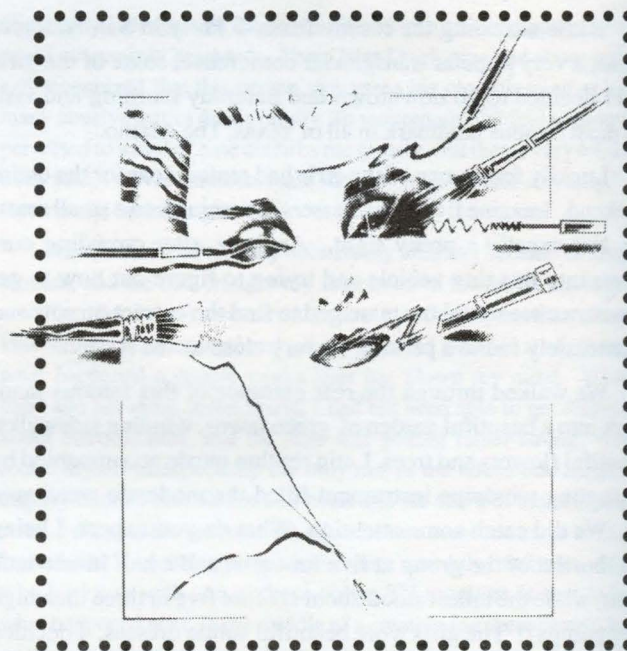
(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)



Hey, Good Looking!

Zip-Zap, It's All Gone

By Denise S.



At the last A Rose meeting Doctor Strong was telling us about the Multi-Wave laser and how it was used in hair removal. I was so excited I couldn't wait to make an appointment.

My appointment was on the 12th of March. I wanted to go through the treatment so I could tell you what it really felt like. I have heard stories from "there was very little pain" to "there was so much pain it was almost unbearable." I wanted to know for my self.

Well, about the pain.....It hurt all right. Just like the stories about feeling like a rubber band. There was about a eight to ten seconds between each ZAP. There was some heat, but what made me jump was the flash of light. Dr. Strong gave me a set of safety glasses, but I kept my eyes closed anyway. She did a test spot on my neck so I could see how it really hurt. NO PROBLEM, I didn't feel it was anything to jump off the chair for. So she continued on up my right cheek, then to my left side. She went down under my chin and came up. When she went to my upper lip I was getting a little afraid. How much pain would it be there? But she had done my upper lip and I almost didn't know it.

The only disappointment I had was that some of my chin hair seemed to stay. I was hoping to get rid of all of it. She said she would use a different filter next time.

All in all it took only about thirty minutes to do. And I secured my next appointment in four weeks. That gives me time to scrape up the money, as like you I'm not rich.

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

Tolerance From A Distance

by Melanie Yarborough

Why is it that some genetic women are fascinated by us and enjoy our company, while others reject us completely? We wish and pray for that perfect supportive woman who'll settle down for a life of transgendered bliss. The girlfriend/lover who'll treat us as another woman in public, but as a man in bed.

But we may need to change our focus. The answer doesn't lie in somehow simply finding Miss Right. Rather, it's in understanding how women generally relate to crossdressers.

Many women may at first be intrigued by crossdressers. In some ways, it's the ultimate compliment. They may also see us as more sensitive to women's issues, as well as appreciative of the difficult task of being a woman. These understanding women may become our makeup/wardrobe/comportment consultants, or accompany us out for a "girl's night out" at a straight place. In fact, they may see us the way they see gay men: as no threat.

However, if a woman finds that same crossdresser is someone close to them, it's threatening. If it's her husband, it's almost completely unacceptable. If it's her son, it's a

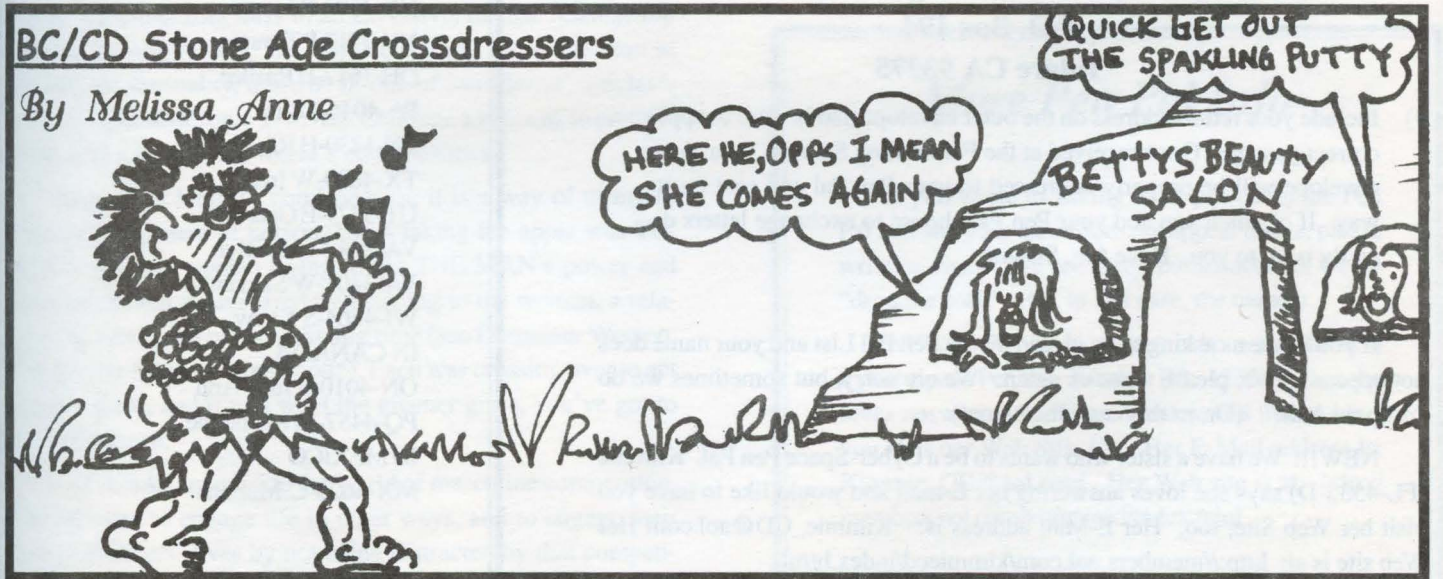
reason for serious concern: is he gay? If it's her brother, there may be slightly more tolerance as he's not part of her immediate world like a husband or son. But there's still shame and keeping it a secret from the rest of the family, and that it somehow might reflect badly on her.

A female makeup consultant or casual acquaintance doesn't have an emotional investment in us. They can afford to be supportive as it costs them nothing. We can feel free to enjoy their support and friendship. It can be a real ego boost. But we can't forget that they have nothing to lose. If they were to become our girlfriend or wife, it would be very different.

One big mistake many crossdressers make is when they find an understanding female, asking their wife or girlfriend, "Why can't you be more like her?" But that's just it. By definition, she can't be. She doesn't have the luxury of detachment that a distant woman has.

The basic truth here is that sympathy is inversely proportional to closeness.

(This article originally appeared in the Neutral Corner newsletter.)



Tri-Ess Pen Pals

Many sisters have written over the years to express their disappointment in not receiving replies to their letters to other Tri-Ess sisters. It seems that while some sisters are wonderfully prolific pen pals, others (for a variety of reasons) are not. To assist those who would like to receive lots of letters, we have compiled a "Pen-Pal List". All you have to do is promise to reciprocate. Just fill out and sign the form below and send it to:

Carol Becroft
P.O. Box 194
Tulare, CA 93275

"I promise the courtesy of a reply to all correspondence from my Tri-Ess sisters."

Femme Name _____

Code Number _____

Here's how to write a Pen Pal through the Forwarding Service:

- 1) Write your letter to your chosen Pen Pal. Include your picture if you wish. If you choose not to include your own return address at first, be sure you include your own Code Number in your letter.
- 2) Place your letter in an envelope, affix correct postage, and lightly pencil in the name and Code Number of your Pen Pal on the front.
- 3) Place this envelope inside another envelope and address this outer envelope to:

Tri-Ess Forwarding Service
P.O. Box 194
Tulare CA 93275

- 4) Include your return address on the outer envelope and be sure to apply correct postage. Once received at the Forwarding Service, your inner envelope will be properly addressed to your Pen Pal and sent on its way. If or when you and your Pen Pal choose to exchange letters directly is up to you. Have fun, Sisters!

If you wrote us asking to be placed on the Pen Pal List and your name does not appear above, please write us again. We are sorry, but sometimes we do "drop the ball." (Or, in this case, the name!)

NEW!!! We have a sister who wants to be a Cyber-Space Pen Pal. Kimmie (FL-4532-D) says she loves answering her E-mail and would like to have you visit her Web Site, too. Her E-Mail address is: Kimmie_CD@aol.com Her Web site is at: <http://members.aol.com/kimmiecd/index.html>

List of Pen Pals

AZ-3954-B Rebecca
 CA-3800-M Charli
 CA-1282-V Fran
 CA-4470-S Julia
 CA-3354-N Michelle
 CA-4009-W Paula
 CA-4249-F Shirley Louise
 FL-3434-C Debi
 FL-3892-B Jeanne
 FL-2520-B Joan Ann
 FL-3720-R Karen Rose
 FL-3640-C Norma
 FL-4046-J Rita
 GA-4158-B Franki
 IL-3623-G Nancy
 MD-4435-S Diane
 MN-3996-L Carla
 MO-3752-B Laura
 NC-3743-H Ann
 NC-3723-C Sherri
 NJ-3818-L Carol Ann
 NY-4022-B Cathy Ann
 NY-3433-T Donna
 NY-3277-H Evelyn
 NY-4502-R Fiona
 NY-3717-P Tammie
 OH-1617-H Razilee
 PA-4046-J Rita
 TN-1230-H Rita
 TX-4820-W Irene
 UT-3779-E Genevera
 VA-2642-I Madelyn
 VA-3401-W Samantha
 WI-4864-S Kathy
 IN CANADA
 ON-4010-S Julie Ann
 PQ-4457-M Micheline
 IN MEXICO
 MX-4626-C Mariana

Book Review *Cloister Walk*

by Erin MI - 4708 - T

Since the core issues in crossdressing are essentially spiritual, one book some of you, especially the religiously inclined, might enjoy reading is *Cloister Walk*, by Kathleen Norris. This details a woman's experience in a monastery, and its themes interweave with some that are familiar to transgendered persons, perhaps because becoming a monk involves another form of opting out of the usual gender roles. The sometime feminine, crossover, nature of the monks' outfit is not lost on them, exemplified by the monk who modeled his new habit with a sweater, a model's demeanor, and a humorous comment.

The author observes that ceremony helps us slow down, to notice, and pay attention to parts of life that otherwise elude us. This slowing down to notice is traditionally thought of as being a woman's strong suit, and the CD ceremony has a similar effect. Quoting Psalm 46:10, she takes us to a realization that escapes a lot of guys sometimes. Be still, turkey, and know that I am God. The biblical quiet, and non quiet, state (Ecclesiastics 3) is a yin yang that CDs are familiar with. Both hard and soft, and the necessity, at times, to also be soft.

Her comments on vespers as a form of body awareness resonate with the T enthusiasms for CD as a form of body awareness, and how tiresome the doing oriented, body insensitive, M mode can be at times. The celibacy of the monastery allows the nuns to pay attention to a broader array of life's issues and beauties, things we sometimes miss in an exclusive, intense relationship focused on one person. The celibate can pay more attention to non-sexual sensuality, a theme in one of Jan Morris' articles*, and a complaint of some T-wives. Celibacy, a gateway to promiscuity with a host of the world's other beauties.

Being T is hard to 'cure' because it is a way of trying to obtain a wholeness of person. Eve's taking the apple was TG, since it was the woman trying to get THE MAN's power and knowledge, and Adam erred by listening to the woman, a relationship thing, and he too paid, big time (see *Dominant Women, Submissive Men*, by Gina Scott*). Each was crossing over to get greener grass, and if you want the greener grass, you've got to climb the fence.

The monks are outside the world of masculine competition, freeing them to engage life in other ways, and to engage their own, and others' lives by not being distracted by that competition. Most of us can relate to that. The clothing ceremony used

to mark the transition between the old and the new way of life for the monk, an initiation ceremony, marking a major life division between old and new habits, and ways of being, rings familiar to a CD, who also uses a clothing ceremony to make a change in world view, but it shows that even in a non-T and more socially accepted world, the same methods are used to reflect personal choices, and clothing ceremonies are not only some weird T thing. Because -- we all have our habits.

*Vanity Fair, June 1984, pp. 44-47.

New from Kandice Bottom Line Hips and Slips

Tight half slips to remind you to
Walk and Sit Like a Lady

Moderate 34" hem. Medium or Large	\$25
Control 28" hem. Medium or Large	\$25
Bottom Line Padded Briefer L or XL	\$80

Kandice Morgan PO Box 266, Albert Lea, MN 56007

More Pen Pal Info

If you wrote us asking to be placed on the Pen Pal List and your name does not appear above, please write us again. We are sorry, but sometimes we do "drop the ball." (Or, in this case, the name!)

NEW!!! We have a sister who wants to be a Cyber-Space Pen Pal. Kimmie (FL-4532-D) says she loves answering her E-mail and would like to have you visit her Web Site, too. Her E-Mail address is: Kimmie_CD@aol.com Her Web site is at: <http://members.aol.com/kimmiecd/index.html>

The Jim Bridges Catalogue

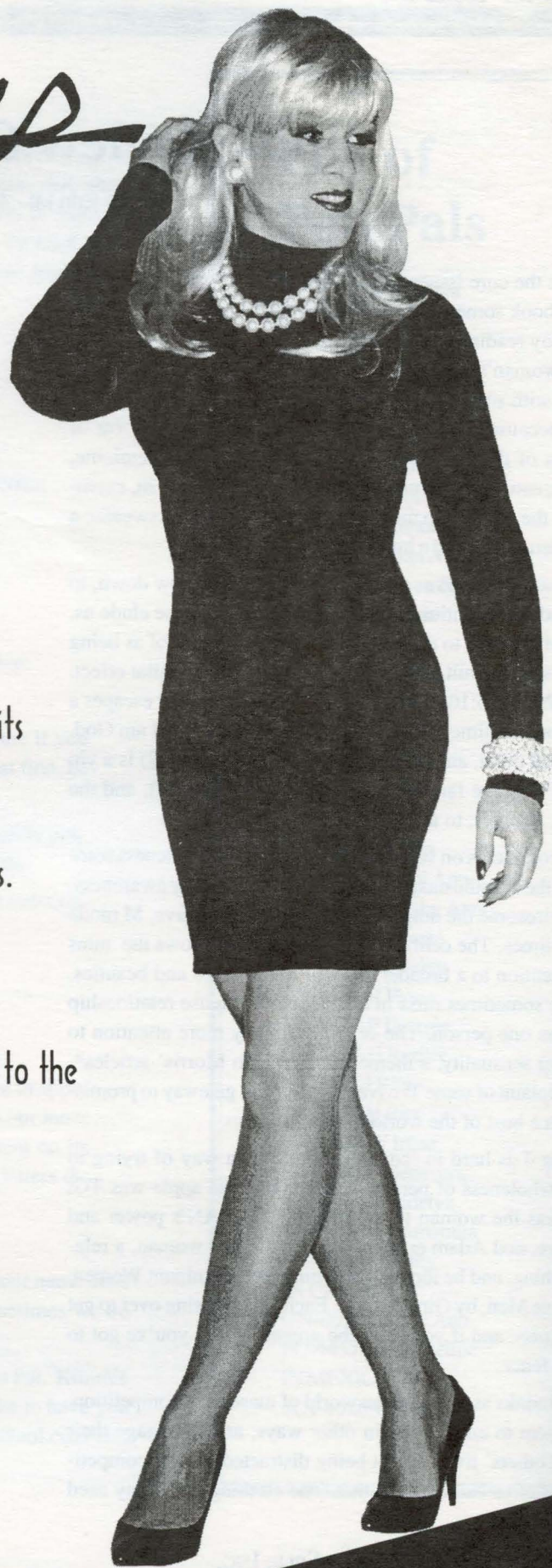
America's Foremost
Transformation
Make-up Artist presents
his NEW line of Dresses, Jackets and Suits
designed for the MALE body!
Featuring: Make-up, Breast Forms,
Corsets, Shoes, Boots, Gloves and Purses.

A complete transformation package
for every Crossdresser!

Send Check or Money Order for \$10.00 to the
Jim Bridges Catalogue
P.O. Box 4715
North Hollywood, CA 91617-0715

phone 1-818-755-9327
fax 1-818-755-7942

When you're in the Los Angeles area...
please stop by for a makeover or private lesson.
We're at 12457 Ventura Boulevard, Studio City, CA
phone: 1-818-761-6650



A Fantasy Come True

Golfing En Femme at Hilton Head

Submitted by Donna Johns FL-3433-T

What follows is a recap of the Phi Epsilon MU golf outing at Hilton Head Island, SC, February 23, 1998. Interspersed in the story are comments made by different sisters.

Last November Susan, Elaine and Donna of Phi Epsilon Mu discussed an en femme golf outing. Donna agreed to look into the possibilities. She contacted Lee who lived on Hilton Head. Lee offered to help in any way possible. Besides making her home available to the Phi Epsilon Mu ladies, she also contacted Palmetto Hall Plantation and found out the players would be welcome on the golf course. Then the planning began.

Lee announced that this would be her first event as a hostess, and even though she did not play golf, she looked forward to the girls staying with her.

The intent was to keep the group small for a first time outing. After all, it would be a new experience for the golf course, for the restaurants, and for the players themselves. What began as a group of twelve ladies, shrunk to eight by the time the final plans were made. Monday, February 23, was selected as the playing date with the preceding Sunday a travel day, and the Tuesday following a time for farewells and the trip home.

Sunday: The weather was threatening with dire forecasts of heavy wind and rain but we all headed for Hilton Head anyway. There were five of us from Phi Epsilon Mu, one from Virginia and one from Maryland to make up our group. The deluge hit us in transit but we made it to Lee's place on Hilton Head by late afternoon. Madelyn, from Virginia, and Georgia Ann, from Maryland, made arrangements to stay at a local motel. They arrived as well and joined us at our hostess's home. Soon we were showing photo albums, snapping pictures and making new friends.

[A quote from Madelyn: About two and a half years ago Donna and I had the pleasure of meeting on Long Island and playing a round of golf together with a pre op transsexual named

Susan. We were en drabbe and remarked how nice it would be to play golf en femme. Last November Donna recalled this incident and told me she had met with Elaine and Susan and an outing was in the making.]

[A quote from Alice: When I walked in the door of Lee's house, she looked at me and said, "I know you from Southern Comfort these past two years." She opened her photo albums and there we saw a photo of me, Michelle and Edie. This is the great thing about conventions; you meet sisters from all over the country.]

[A quote from Georgia Ann: I haven't met you girls before tonight, yet I feel I know you all from my contacts with Phi Epsilon Mu. It is just wonderful to really meet.]

Going back to our tale, it was soon supper time and rather than go out in the rain we sent out for pizza and the trimmings. After a fun evening of chatting and friendship we turned in for the night, fearing that our golf game for the fol-

lowing day would be washed out.

Monday: The rain had stopped, and the sun showed possibilities of peeking out. We called the golf course and found out it was open and our tee times were still in place. Alice, our non golfing den mother who came with us, fixed scrambled eggs while Kristina and Donna went out for bagels. After breakfast the golfers, six in all, divided into two teams to play a scramble type contest. Elaine and Donna were joined by Georgia Ann as one threesome, while Susan, Kristina and Madelyn made up the other.

The golf course knew we were coming en femme so there were no surprises. We were warmly greeted at the cart side and then we went into the club house to pay our golf fees and sign in. One of the fellows had a camera ready and asked us to pose for a picture. The girls had cameras as well so several pictures were taken.

It was a dream come true as we stood on the first tee, splendidly dressed in female golf outfits. Because of the cool weather,



Madelyn, Kristina, Susan putting

Tri-Ess Membership Categories

Those desiring to support and participate in Tri-Ess have several options:

Annual Membership

This membership is intended for crossdressers and their spouses or partners. It is the basic minimum support level. Contribution is \$36/year or \$60/2 years for an individual, and \$48/year and \$80/2 years for couples. Annual members receive our publications and may participate in support programs.

Sustaining Membership

Many Tri-Ess members desire to support the Society's purposes with contributions greater than the basic Annual Membership. While any amount is welcome and helpful, the Sustaining Membership levels shown here provide an opportunity to more significantly support Tri-Ess programs and outreach. Sustaining Members receive special recognition, discounted early registration for the Holiday En Femme, and periodic special offers. Individual Sustaining Members contribute \$96/year or \$160/2 years. Sustaining Member couples contribute \$120/year or \$200/2 years.

Life Members

Life Members wish to demonstrate their lifetime loyalty and support to Tri-Ess. They receive special recognition and benefits, including discounted early registration for the Holiday En Femme and special offers. Contribution is \$500 for an individual, \$700 for a couple. Life Members can, and frequently do, make additional contributions to the work of our organization.

Friends Annual Membership

Those individuals, other than crossdressers and their spouses, who have a constructive interest in the philosophy and goals of Tri-Ess, are also invited to support the Society. These members receive our publications, with the exception of the Membership Directory, and may participate in support programs as appropriate. Contribution is \$24/year.

Friends Commercial Membership

Local and national vendors who serve our community are also encouraged to join Tri-Ess. They receive the Femme Mirror and discounted advertising rates. Contribution is \$48/year



Atlanta, GA July 15 - 19

**BE SURE TO GET
YOUR VERY OWN
S.P.I.C.E.PIN**

Cast in Antique Pewter
Safety catch on back
A discreet souvenir

just **\$10.00**

Made available by the members of Tri-Ess
Chapter, Beta Gamma of Minneapolis MN
All profits over cost donated to **S.P.I.C.E.**
Scholarships Fund (approx. 50%)

Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Clove, and All SPICE
Add some to your lapel today!

(L to R): Alexis, Susan, Elaine, Georgia Ann, Madelyn, Kristina, Donna J.



most of us wore female slacks, blouses and sweaters. Susan and Georgia Ann wore cute short outfits while Madelyn insisted on a wearing a skirt. Needless to say many layers of pantyhose helped keep those players warm. Alice joined us as in-cart commentator and photographer. The game was a lot of fun, with the team lead by Elaine being the winner by one stroke. Anyone familiar with golf knows that all courses use rangers to patrol the course and make sure everyone is playing right along. You might see a ranger once or possibly twice in a round. That day was special, though, and the number of rangers or pseudo rangers must have set a course record. We are sure everyone there managed to drive by in a cart to wave hello and see us play.

[A quote from Alice: "I left the girls after playing 9 holes and went back to the club house to get warm. There I found many receptive listeners as I explained the players were members of Tri-Ess, living out their fantasies to play golf dressed as women. I think we all did a lot to help others understand crossdressing"]

[Something special happened to Kristina that day. Somewhere on the course she lost a breast form, probably while taking a mighty golf swing. The Tale of the Flying Boob and the events leading up to its recovery makes for another story that follows.]

That night we donned our dresses and went out to The Old Oyster Factory for dinner. Lee had made the arrangements, told them we were members of Phi Epsilon Mu and guests, and that we would be coming en femme. That made everyone comfortable and all had a great time. Donna had printed up certificates for "Best Golfer" [Elaine], Happiest Golfer [Kristina], Greatest Hostess [Lee], Best Den Mother [Alice], and Largest Wardrobe [Madelyn]. Everyone received a special button that read:

Phi Epsilon Mu

*We Came - We Played - We FEMinized
Hilton Head Golf February 23, 1998*

Once our waiter got into the spirit of the evening, he too joined in the fun. Little by little, everyone from the kitchen staff made sure they came out to see our group. The hostess complimented us on our dresses and our fine demeanor. She was amazed that we had all golfed and that we were, indeed, cross dressers out for a wonderful evening together. We left behind copies of a special poem our sister, Jane, of St. Johns, Newfoundland had written in advance for us. That poem too, will follow this tale.

Tuesday: Morning arrived and once we had done our make-up [six girls, two bathrooms] and dressed we waited for Georgia Ann and Madelyn to join us. Then it was off to the Cracker Barrel for breakfast. The first available table was right by the entrance to the dining room so we were there in all our splendor for one and all to admire. Just as at The Old Oyster Factory, all the staff wanted to come by and see the now famous [in our eyes] golfing ladies of Hilton Head.

Soon it was time for hugs and good byes. Those of us who came from Florida stopped at Savannah for a short visit to the river walk and a little shopping before continuing toward home and the end of our outing.

There were many smiles and happy exchanges, tons of make up used, good golf shots and bad golf shots, a lost breast enhancer, smiling waiters and waitresses; there were admiring looks, curious glances and a thousand photos; there were memories made and friendships reinforced. As one, we all commented, "Wait Until Next Year!"

Ending this report on the happiest of notes, we have heard from both the golf course and The Old Oyster Factory telling us they enjoyed our visit and offering their facilities to us any time we might care to return.

(Ed. Note: Accounts of this event also appeared in FEM, newsletter of Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter, and in the "Old Hags and Sagging Bags" newsletter.)



On the porch of the Cracker Barrel restaurant; L to R: Georgia Ann, Alexis, Donna, Kristina, Susan, Madelyn and Elaine. Photo by Lee Cashin.

TRI-ESS Chapters and Forming Chapters

Region 1 (New England)

New York City Metro Area

CHIDELTA MU

P.O. Box 1, River Edge, NJ 07661-0001

Contact: Susan Lynette NJ-4142-W

Phone: 1-800-484-7593 (Code 4985)

E-Mail: cdm81@hotmail.com

Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/>

WestHollywood/Heights/7396/

Albany NY Metro Area

LAMBDA CHILAMBDA

P.O. Box 97, Ilion NY 13357

Contact: Evelyn NY-3277-H

E-Mail: stucomone@aol.com

Buffalo, NY Metro Area

NU PHICHI

Buffalo Belles

P.O. Box 1701, Amherst, NY 14226-1701

Contact: Denise NY-3404-N

Phone: 716-446-2661

E-Mail: buffalo_belles@juno.com

Website: <http://www.geocities.com/>

WestHollywood/Village/3339/

Region 2

(Middle Atlantic/Ohio Valley)

Trenton, NJ Metro Area

SIGMA NURHO

1092 St. Georges Ave., Ste. 234,

Rahway NJ 07065

Contact: Carol Ann Lee NJ-3818-L

Phone/Fax: 732-826-5287

24-Hour Voice Mail:

800-484-7666 Pin: 1257

E-Mail: cal.tris@csi.com

Northern Pennsylvania

Endless Mountain Girls

EPSILON MUGAMMA

P.O. Box 4, Three Bridges NJ 08887

Contact: Alice Harding NJ-4160-H

24-Hour Voice Mail: 717-364-2949

E-mail: emgtris@hotmail.com

Gouldsboro, PA Metro Area

FORMING CHAPTER

Contact: Sue PA-2164-C

Northern Ohio, Western PA Area

ALPHA OMEGA

P.O. Box 2053

Sheffield Lake, OH 44054-0053

Elaine Lee OH-9034-B: 216-556-0067

E-mail: aomega@ruralamerica.net

<http://www.ruralamerica.net/~aomega>

Lansing, MI Metro Area

Lambda Mu

P.O. Box 246

Moline, MI 49335-0246

Annette MI-4290-B (616) 752-8058

E-Mail: lambdamu@geocities.com

Web site: <http://www.lambdamu.com>

Baltimore, MD Metro Area

CHIEPSILON SIGMA

P.O. Box 505

Baltimore MD 21022-0505

E-Mail: (Grace) tri_ess@hotmail.com

<http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/>

Stonewall/3432

Region 3 (Southeast)

Charlotte, NC Metro Area

KAPPA BETA

P.O. Box 12101, Charlotte, NC 28220

Phone (Sherri): 704-565-5034

E-Mail (Sherri): carmichael@NorthState.net

E-mail (Leilla): leilla@innocent.com

Web Site: <http://www.3dcom.com/tg/triess/>

kb/

Raleigh/Durham, NC Metro Area

SIGMA RHO DELTA

P.O. Box 61406, Raleigh NC 27661

Beverly NC-4268-B: 919-556-7884

E-Mail: sigmarhodelta@hotmail.com

Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/>

WestHollywood/Heights/6299

Greensboro/Winston-Salem Area

TAU GAMMA

P.O. Box 25282, Raleigh NC 27611

Contact: Melissa NC-4534-E

E-Mail: TGTRIESS@juno.com

http://www.geocities.com/~tau_gamma

Atlanta, GA Metro Area

SIGMA EPSILON

Box 272, Roswell, GA 30077

Phone (Lauren GA-3390-H): 770-552-4415

E-mail (Karen): Kerri_E@prodigy.com

Web page: [http://pages.prodigy.com/](http://pages.prodigy.com/kerricd/sigep.htm)

kerricd/sigep.htm

Nashville, TN Metro Area

ALPHA PI OMEGA

P.O. Box 871, Brentwood, TN 37024

Contact: Laury TN-3934-W

lauryw1@mindspring.com

apotris@mindspring.com

<http://mindspring.com/~apotris/>

webpage.txt

Region 4 (Mid-South)

Houston, TX Metro Area

TAU CHI

8880 Bellaire B2 Ste. 104

Houston TX 77036

Contact: Jane TX-1757-M: (713) 349-8969

E-Mail: JEFTRIS@aol.com

Austin, TX Metro Area

ALPHA TAU Chapter

P.O. Box 1398

Georgetown TX 78627

E-mail (Heather): Mousehurd@aol.com

South OK / North TX Area

TAU OMEGA FORMING CHAPTER

P.O. Box 1922, Ardmore OK 73401

Phone (Judy Daniels): 580-226-9644

E-Mail: judytriess@prodigy.net

E-Mail (Michelle): musickmj@hotmail.com

Region 5 (Mid-West)**Chicago, IL Metro Area**

CHI Chapter
P.O. Box 40
Wood Dale, IL 60191
Candace IL-3416-M
Phone: 630-262-8707
E-Mail (Denise): chitriess@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/chitriess/triss/chimain.htm>

Minneapolis, MN Metro Area

BETA GAMMA
P.O. Box 8591
Minneapolis, MN 55408
Sofronia Anne MN-3264-G
Phone: 612-870-8536
E-Mail: triessbg@tri-ess.com
Web site: <http://www.tri-ess.com>

Southern MN- Northern IA Area

FORMING CHAPTER
Contact: Kandice MN-4554-G
E-Mail: kplace@ruralamerica.net

Wassau, WI Metro Area

FORMING CHAPTER
Contact: Frances Ann WI-4148-W

Springfield, MO Metro Area

SIGMA MU
P.O. Box 2502 #198
Springfield MO 65801
Contact: Rachel L'Amour
Hotline (Riki): 417-830-9950
E-mail: sigma_mu@usa.net
Website: http://members.tripod.com/~Sigma_Mu/

Region 6 (Mid-Continental)**New Mexico, So. Colorado, W. Texas**

Fiesta Chapter
8200 Montgomery NE #241
Albuquerque, NM 87109
Contact: Vicky Anne NM-4734-A
E-Mail: VickyAnne@yahoo.com

Region 7 (Northwest)**Moscow, ID Metro Area**

FORMING CHAPTER
Contact: Laurie ID-1704-W
E-Mail: Laurie@moscow.com

Grants Pass, OR Metro Area

Rogue Valley Girls
RHO GAMMA
P.O. Box 5551, Grants Pass OR 97527
Contact: Lori OR-4319-L
E-Mail: loritris@terragon.com

Eureka, CA Metro Area

FORMING CHAPTER
Contact: Lois CA-2148-M

Region 8 (Southwest)**Los Angeles, CA Metro Area**

ALPHA
Box 411352, Eagle Rock Station,
Los Angeles, CA 90041
Contact: Kathy Helms: (818) 352-9448
E-Mail (Janyne): jwcesrap@earthlink.net

Fresno, CA Metro Area

TRI CHI
P.O. Box 26593, Fresno, CA 93729-6593
Fresno Area and North: Phone Karyn: 209-322-5078 or Angela: 209-276-3424
E-Mail: trichi@eudoramail.com
Visalia Area and South:
Carol Beecroft: 209-688-6386
E-Mail: TriChi1@aol.com

Santa Cruz/Monterey Metro Area

FORMING CHAPTER
MUBETA
P O Box 729, Castroville CA 95012-0729
Contact: Fran CA-1282-V
E-mail: frankvose2@juno.com

Phoenix, AZ Metro Area

ALPHA ZETA
Box 1738, Tempe, AZ 85280-1738
Cindy N. AZ-2817-N: 602-488-0959
E-Mail: kyle@goodnet.com
Web Site: <http://tri-ess.org>

Tucson, AZ Metro Area

TAU UPSILON
8802 E Broadway Blvd.#145
Tucson, AZ 85710
Contact: Rebecca AZ-3954-B
Phone: 520-296-3472
E-mail Rebecca: cactusdwlr@aol.com
E-mail Robby: TauUpsilon@aol.com
Web: <http://members.aol.com/tauupsilon>

Las Vegas, NV Metro Area

THETA UPSILON GAMMA
P.O. Box 42401
Las Vegas, NV 89116
Rosalind Doyle NV-2474-P: 702-387-3891
E-Mail: Roz@cybergal.com
Web: <http://www.intermind.net/theta/theta.html>

Region 9 (Florida)**Orlando, FL Metro Area**

PHI EPSILON MU
P.O. Box 3261
Winter Park, FL 32790
Contact: Alice FL-3077-E: 407-263-8978
E-Mail: KellyFL@aol.com
Web Site: <http://www.horizon-usa.com/misc/fem.htm>

Fort Myers, FL Metro Area

GAMMA CHI BETA
P.O. Box 510045
Punta Gorda, FL 33051
Contact: Alice FL-3077-E: 407-382-8389

Region 10 (International)**Quebec City, PQ Metro Area**

FORMING CHAPTER
Contact: Micheline
Phone: 1-418-621-5032
Fax: 1-418-621-5092
E-Mail: milady@cmq.qc.ca

Overseas Contact: Eve Burchert

P.O.Box 1412, Barrington, IL 60010

Tri-Ess-Sponsored CDSO Online Forum for Spouses and Partners of Crossdressers Signs 50th Subscriber!

Our subscription list for support of crossdressers' wives and significant others has signed its 50th subscriber! Operated by a wife, Beverly, the listserv is a forum for all genetic women involved with crossdressers. Subscription is free. It is not limited to spouses or partners who are members of Tri-Ess. However, it is "for women only" as there are many, many forums available for transgendered men.

Now, a few words from Beverly:

Hi! Welcome to our very own support list for wives and/ or SO's of crossdressers. Just a few rules here....

1. NO postings, and NO subscriptions from crossdressers. Not your husbands or your boyfriends. This is for US.
2. No flames. If you disagree with an opinion please do so with courtesy and respect. Don't attack the person.
3. Those of you with strong, militant transsexual attachments, please move on. This list is not for you. If you'd like to E-mail me privately, I can pass on to you several addresses for support of SO's of transsexuals. There are many out there.
4. No advertisements! If you are in doubt about the acceptability of something, please forward it to me.
5. Many subscribers to this forum are uncomfortable seeing people crossdressed. For the comfort of all, transmission of crossdressing photos on the forum will not be allowed. Such transmission can be done by private e-mail, among consenting parties.

That's just about it for now. This list is still new. The rules may change along the way. If so, I will post a general announcement. If you have any suggestions, comments, or just want to talk.....feel free to E-mail me at Crencher@camtel.net.

Regards, Beverly

To subscribe to the list, send e-mail to: LISTSERV@HOME.EASE.LSOFT.COM with <SUBSCRIBE CDSO first name last name> as the message. You will receive confirmation from the listserv with complete instructions. Then, you may send a message to all the people currently subscribed to the list, by sending mail to a single address. **It's simple! It's fun!**

SIGN ON NOW, AND HELP SPREAD THE WORD TO ANY OTHER WIVES/SO'S YOU KNOW!

Chapters On Line!

Does YOUR chapter have an e-mail address? We are receiving an increasing number of inquiries in response to Tri-Ess's Internet presence as well as to ads in gender community publications. Whenever possible we refer inquirers to the nearest local chapter. A Helpline or an E-Mail address makes the referral process much more efficient. To list your chapter's local E-Mail address or Helpline number, contact Jane Ellen Fairfax at JEFTRIS@aol.com

Tri-Ess World Wide Web Sites

Alpha Omega's (Cleveland)

<http://www.ruralamerica.net/~aomega>

Alpha Pi Omega's (Nashville)

<http://mindspring.com/~apotris/webpage.txt>

Alpha Zeta Chapter's (Phoenix)

<http://tri-ess.org>

Beta Gamma's (Minneapolis MN)

<http://www.tri-ess.com>

Brenda Thomas's (Tri-Ess International)

<http://www.firstnethou.com/brenda/>

Chi Chapter's (Chicago)

<http://members.aol.com/chitriess/trisss/chimain.htm>

Chi Delta Mu's (New York City)

<http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/7396/>

Chi Epsilon Sigma's (Baltimore)

<http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Stonewall/3432>

Kappa Beta's (Charlotte)

<http://www.kappabeta.org>

Lambda Mu's (Lansing MI)

<http://www.lambdamu.com>

Nu Phi Chi/Buffalo Belles (Buffalo NY)

<http://geocities.com/WestHollywood>

Phi Epsilon Mu's (Orlando)

<http://www.horizon-usa.com/misc/fem.htm>

Sigma Epsilon Chapter (Atlanta)

<http://pages.prodigy.com/kerricd/sigep.htm>

Sigma Mu (Springfield MO)

http://members.tripod.com/~Sigma_Mu/

Sigma Rho Delta's (Raleigh/Durham)

<http://geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/6299>

Tau Gamma's (Greensboro/Winston-Salem)

http://www.geocities.com/~tau_gamma

Tau Omega's (Ardmore OK)

<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/Garden/2258/>

Tau Upsilon's (Tucson AZ)

<http://members.aol.com/tauupsilon>

Theta Upsilon Gamma's (Las Vegas)

<http://www.intermind.net/theta/theta.html>

Tri-Ess Resources Page

<http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Stonewall/6801/>

NEW! NEW! NEW!

CDTRIESS Online Forum

for Tri-Ess Member Crossdressers

New Program Logs Over 50 Subscribers in First Month of Operation!

Tri-Ess has just inaugurated a new service for you! As you know, our online subscription forum for our wives has been a glorious success. In February we started a new online forum for our crossdresser members. The new program will enable us to chat about the "how-to's" of cross dressing, crossdressing activities, and personal and relationship issues. The forum will be kept strictly sleaze-free, and will focus on our needs as crossdressers. It's our own place for nonjudgemental dialogue; a place where we can access support, make friends, and have fun. Subscription is a part of your Tri-Ess membership; there is no extra charge for this service. To subscribe, e-mail Moderator Sofronia Anne Strong at sas@tri-ess.com

When you request your subscription, please be sure to include your crossgender name and your entire Tri-Ess membership number; e.g., Jane Doe TX-3456-T

It is very important that you keep your Tri-Ess membership current, so that your service will not be interrupted. This program is limited to current Tri-Ess members only. The rules of operation are simple:

- 1) Subscription is free.
- 2) The forum is limited to current full members of Tri-Ess.
- 3) The forum is for crossdressers only.
- 4) No flaming, bashing or ad hominem postings will be allowed.
- 5) No advertisements. This includes "personals."
- 6) Transmission of pictures on the forum will not be allowed. Such transmissions can be done by private e-mail among consenting parties.
- 7) Postings will adhere to reasonable standards of propriety.
- 8) No solicitation of sex or promotion of transsexualism will be allowed.
- 9) The confidentiality of all participants must be respected. Unauthorized sharing of e-mail addresses or material discussed in the forum is strictly forbidden.
- 10) No posting of Web page or Web site addresses without the prior consent of the owner or moderator. No exceptions.

Now's your chance to get up online with your Tri-Ess sisters!

The Internet & The Transgender Jungle

by Melanie Yarborough

A closeted crossdresser pours out his anguish about whether to tell his wife and children about his other self. An older gentleman interested in she-males cruises for pick-ups. Two pre-operative transsexuals trade information about hormones and doctors who do reassignment surgery. A teenage boy lives out his fantasies by presenting himself to others online as a beautiful young woman. Welcome to the world of Cyber-transgenderism.

The Internet has become a standard part of many transgendered people's lives. In fact, this community was probably quicker to pick up on its value and uses before almost anyone else. However, there's a darker side to the internet many don't consider.

There's a natural attraction to the net, to be sure. First of all, there's the privacy. You don't even have to leave your own room; you're safe from the prying eyes of roommates, spouses, or children. It's anonymous; you can pour out your desires and questions (as well as venom) without the risk of face-to-face confrontation. You can present yourself as you want to be, with a femme name and description of your measurements and looks. And transgendered people hunger for information on how to develop their image, information available only from other transgendered people.

However, this communication isn't always a wonderful thing.

A macho aggressive side often comes out online, called "Flaming". Many people send cruel, hurtful messages because anonymity lets them get away with it. The macho impulses to see women (or those presenting themselves as women) as objects to be used, abused and thrown away is given free rein. Aggression in cyberspace could lead to aggression in other space. Moreover, one could start to see people less as flesh-and-blood individuals and more as disembodied entities. A callous, hard disregard for others may result. Overuse of the net could become a substitute for real human contact. Many of us know how addictive it is; you can easily spend an entire evening in front of a screen.

There's a vocal minority of transgenderists, transsexuals, and "out" crossdressers on the net. For every one person talking, a dozen or so are only observing. You may be getting only one point of view, and think it's the only one. The quiet, less assuming, and maybe more reasoned people aren't heard from.

When you have access to too much information but have no framework to put it in, you get "information overload". Just having the info doesn't necessarily make you wiser or tell you how to use it. That only comes from real-life experience.

I'm not saying that the Internet is somehow evil or that people shouldn't use it. It's here to stay. I'm only drawing attention to several negative aspects of it to give users a more balanced perspective. In many ways, computer use is like a drug. And drugs have side effects.

(This article originally appeared in the Neutral Corner newsletter.)

Press Release for 1999 En Femme Golf Outing. En Femme Golfing 1999

by Donna Johns FL3433-T

En Femme Golf 98 was a great success. Who could forget the sisterhood, the happy faces, the flying boobs, the great game, the dining out and the friendly hospitality of Hilton Head? Golf 99 should be even better. Put on your golfing skirt or shorts and join us. All levels of players are welcome. Non players are welcome as well. Accomodations will be at local condos.

Cost for players will be actual green fees plus a proportional share of a condo rental. Non golfers will share the rental fees only. February is still out of season so rates are low. Send your inquiries or reservations to

Golf 99

c/o Phi Epsilon Mu
PO Box 3261
Winter Park, FL 32790

What Is In A Name?

by Heather Jae

A name is a proper title that we each have as distinct individuals. We are given a name at birth, usually through loving and caring thought, by our parents. Sometimes that name is given on the spur of the moment when they are holding a little precious life in their arms. Sometimes they spent months prior to this blessed event as mom carried this little precious life inside of her. We all seem to start out with a name that our parents believe fits us well. Usually most men will always carry that same name and never change it. Of course they may add or modify it by natural variations or nicknames and/or abbreviate it with initials (but women also do the same). Then the individual and society will try and spice it up with terms like "Mister", "Mrs.", "Miss", "Ms.", "Sir", "Ma'am", "Lord", "Lady" and so on. Many times we relish and cherish these titles of importance.

A lady, on the other hand, will through growing up, courtships and whirlwind romances dream of and a lot of times look forward to the day she will change her name. She will take on the last name of her Prince Charming. She will give up her maiden name completely or adopt a combination of her maiden name with her beau's name. Here is where the lady is special because she gets to choose the name she will carry for hopefully the rest of her life. And she and Prince Charming will live happier ever after. Society's fairy tale, right, end of story?

What is in a name for the others, like the "Gender Trans-Gifted" individuals (you and I)? What name do we give this precious and special life that is a part of our personality and make up? We are extremely special in our growth process by being able to choose the name we believe fits our self best. This process is like the couple who in the early months of pregnancy spend much time over the right name for their future child. At some point in our growth process of understanding who we are, starting to realize we are a real individual, and coming to grips with our acceptance, we start to search and think of our Ladylike Name. Some choose a name that will make a bold statement, an outward, "I'm here and I'm going to let you know that I'm here!" They may take as a name sake a trans-gifted heroine who challenged the norm of society. Some choose a name that is the femme derivative of their masculine name. Some choose a name because it speaks of the specialness of their inward feelings of femininity. Some choose a name because it expresses a softness and gentleness and just sounds right.

How did I choose my name? You can rest assured that it was a long and at times a painful undertaking. Without the realization that I was real, and just starting to coming to grips with finally accepting myself as a truly trans-gifted individual, I could not think clearly as to my new name, nor did any seem to fit right. I tried several without meaning. They didn't work and it was a bit depressing. I knew I must find a suitable name to fit me. Finally I made the best choice that I could have ever made. I believe that at one point we all get there, it just sings or clicks. I had always loved the soft- gentle sound of "Heather". I always thought that "Heather" was a real girl's name and had a flowery-sweetness to it. However, when I looked at the way "Heather" was spelled was when I knew that I was Heather. "He-At-Her", that is me. I am a male-to-female crossdresser, who has come to know we are not two different individualities but one personality. I am her and she is me, and I cherish that. So "Heather" became real that day. Where did "Jae" come from? Well, the three most beautiful and special (GG) ladies in my life have names that all start with the letter "J." They are my soul-mate and wife, my lovely daughter and my precious grand-daughter. Three "J"s, thus "Jae." That is how "Heather Jae" was born. The special part of all this is that I had the pleasure and choice to select my true and real name that is my personality. This doesn't in any way lessen my male name because that is an extension of my parents' love for me, and I cherish that name as well. My chosen name, however, complements and enhances my true self and I cherish that too. It is like unto a marriage where the two individuals become one in unity and relationship and love.

What is in a name? Beauty and love and caring and softness and sweetness and joy and dignity, and that is special to a Lady!

(Ed.Note: This article first appeared in the Mar 98 Newsletter of the Wichita Transgender Alliance. It is reprinted by the author's permission.)

Historic Tri-Ess Sorority Pins

Get Your Tri-Ess Pin Now and
Show Your Support for Tri-Ess

Only \$10. Send Check/Money Order to: **Alpha Zeta**
PO Box 1738, Tempe AZ 85280-1738

PM Publishers presents

CROSSDRESSERS: AND THOSE WHO SHARE THEIR LIVES, 46 pictures and the stories of crossdressers and those who share their lives. \$14.95

MY HUSBAND WEARS MY CLOTHES, the first book written from the perspective of a wife is a must in the library of every crossdresser. A best seller in the gender community. \$12.95

CROSSDRESSING WITH DIGNITY, this book is based on research conducted with over 800 crossdressers. \$12.95

LOVE CALENDAR: The Secrets of Love, a perpetual love calendar which can enrich the lives and relationships of everyone who reads and lives this beautiful book. \$9.95 (SPECIAL PRICE \$6.95)

TRANSFORMATIONS: Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them, by Mariette Pathy Allen. A book of photographs and interviews with crossdressers and their significant other. \$24.95 (SPECIAL PRICE \$16.95)

Add 10% to the total order for shipping and handling.

PM Publishers, Inc.
Dept. KR
PO Box 5304
Katy, TX 77491-5304

Big Sister Report

by Marlene

I get about a dozen requests for a Big Sister each month. I currently have 46 Big Sisters corresponding with about 100 Little Sisters.

AK4320A Jo Ann (1)	MI2948T Marcia Ann (1)
AL4005J Saarah(1)	MN1875Z Lynda(0)
CA1012B Carol	MN3264G Sofronia Anne (7)
CA 4624C Melissa (3)	NC3734C Sherri (2)
CA3413C Pricilla (2)	NC3743HElizabeth Ann (3)
CA4273H Karen(2)	NV4222B Robyn (2)
CA 1397L Judy Ann (4)	Ny3404N Denise (2)
CA3738P Laura (2)	NY3717P Tammie (3)
CA3592S Tommie (1)	OH2499M Rhonda (4)
CAI282V Fran (1)	OH2751M Gloria Sue (3)
CA 4346Y Julie (2)	PA2164CSue (3)
CO3869HAngie (5)	PA4046J Rita (2)
FL2448B Carol Ellen (1)	SD4384W Brennda (3)
FL2520B Joan (1)	TN I230H Rita (2)
FL2383L Catherine (3)	TXI669M Vicki (4)
FL2565 P Joan (1)	TXI435W Samantha (2)
FL 2746S Denise (2)	UT4324 Jenni(3)
FL 3433T Donna (1)	VAI304M Andria (3)
HI 4503J Elise (1)	WA2835Q Kristal (5)
IL 3416M Candace (3)	WA3308S Allison (6)
IN3637K Teddy (1)	WII2729L Kathy (2)
ME2461S Betsy (1)	WI4148W Frances Ann (2)
MI 3343P Peggy (1)	

WANTED: BIG SISTERS

MARLENE, your Big Sister Program Coordinator, needs your help. Your new sisters need your help. All it takes is a little sisterly compassion, and the willingness to spend a few minutes writing letters. New sisters are joining all the time. Few things are more rewarding than welcoming them aboard and supporting them in their first year. Won't you write Marlene today, and see for yourself?

MARLENE, PO BOX 4067, VISALIA CA 93278

How to Contribute to Your Chapter Newsletter and your Mirror

By Diane V.

In order to assure that your newsletter is kept productive and stays out of trouble, here is a simple instruction manual for maintaining your newsletter:

1. Pick up pen (or pencil) and paper.
2. Enter writing chamber. (Could be office, den, porcelain facility, etc. You get the idea.)
3. And speaking of ideas, engage brain (but do not clutch!)
4. Proceed to transmit signals from brain through digital process on either right or left hand with writing instrument connected.
5. Warning! Do not exceed personal limitations, commonly diagnosed as writer's cramp, or diarrhea of the pen (similar to diarrhea of the mouth).
6. Do avoid, however, another malady known as writer's block.
7. To aid in evading point number 6, a series of ideas follows: personal experiences; shopping trips; dining out en femme; embarrassing moments; fuzz busting and fuzz-busted; other busy experiences, such as stops at Jiffy Boob; recipes for almost anything; your autobiography; personal discoveries on makeup techniques, clothing, etc., worth sharing; personal triumphs and tragedies to the extent you wish to reveal them.

How about it, Gals!!

(Reprinted from Alpha Omega's Femme Silhouette, Oct. 1966)

Poet's Corner

When Kristina Went a Golfing

by Janey Lang

When Kristina went a-golfing,
She put on all the "glam,"
For, this outing was quite special;
The girls were all "en femme."

One thing worries Kristi;
Her body's like a tube.
Straight up and down, both back and front,
She hasn't got a boob.

So, digging out her Playtex,
The "living" kind, I think,
She fastened up the fasteners,
Quicker than a wink.

And, taking up her breast forms,
She put one in each side,
And, standing at the mirror,
She preened herself with pride.

But pride, as we all know, folks,
Comes before a fall,
If Kristina had but known,
She'd not have gone at all.

But she went off a-golfing,
She made a mighty pass,
Her club went swinging through the air,
Her boob fell on the grass.

But, Katey didn't notice,
Lop sided though she was,
And after playing 18 holes,
The girls all had a pause.

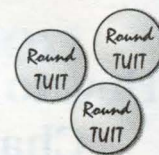
They all went trotting to the bar,
To have themselves a tipple,
And the barman said to poor old Kate,
"Oh, Miss, we've found your nipple."



"Georgia Needs Our Help!"

by Kathryn J. Helms

"Let Georgia do it!"



Quite often when there's a job to be done, I hear people saying, "Let Georgia do it!"

Georgia must be a very busy gal. Just about everybody knows her and recommends her for every imaginable job. She seems to be a very helpful gal with a lot of time on her hands. There's nothing that Georgia can't do.

Why, last month Georgia organized refreshments for a chapter meeting, planned a program for another meeting, wrote, folded, and stuffed a newsletter for mailing, plus spoke with ten potential members on a hotline.

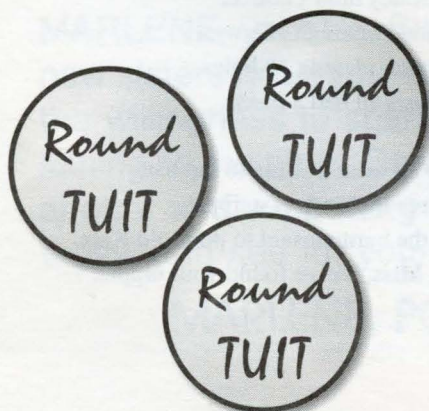
On top of that, she found time to attend another meeting, shop for a friend who was afraid to be seen in public, and appear on a radio show.

I have been very impressed with how much you all respect and admire Georgia and how you trust her to do things you have been asked to do, but don't find time to tackle yourself.

However, I'm sorry to report that I just learned some sad news. Georgia had to check herself into a sanitarium for a long rest! Her doctors say she is suffering from nervous exhaustion and extreme burnout.

I'm told she is wandering the halls asking everyone she meets if they have any "round tuits." She keeps muttering, "Everyone tells me they will help do the things they ask me to do if they *get around to it.*"

Won't you please help poor Georgia? I've enclosed three "round tuits" for your use. Georgia can't give any "round tuits" to you herself right now, but maybe in a few months she will be recovered enough to visit us and distribute more "round tuits" to us herself.



Georgia is hoping that if enough of us get a supply of "round tuits" we will all start to do the jobs she has been doing!

You may use your "round tuits" to help with your chapter newsletter.

Even stuffing and folding and mailing would be a great help.

You may use your "round tuits" to help with refreshments by bringing cookies or other goodies to meetings.

You may use your "round tuits" by helping to plan programs.

You may use your "round tuits" by offering your house as an occasional meeting place.

You may use your "round tuits" by helping some of your sisters get a ride to the meetings.

You may use your "round tuits" by taking your turn at answering the chapter's hotline.

You may use your "round tuits" by being part of your chapter's screening/orientation team.

You may use your "round tuits" by developing contacts with friendly businesses and providing them with business cards and literature for other crossdresser customers.

You may use your "round tuits" by taking a timid new sister shopping with you.

You may use your "round tuits" by promptly paying your chapter and Tri-Ess dues.

You may use your "round tuits" by being a Big Sister or Pen Pal.

You may use your "round tuits" by sending your stories, poems, pictures and cartoons to your chapter newsletter and to the Femme Mirror.

You may use your "round tuits" by supporting the Library Project.

You may use your "round tuits" by doing presentations to college classes and Crisis Hotline volunteers.

.....You may use your "round tuits" by calling and writing producers, sponsors and networks when the media portray crossdressing in either a derogatory or a favorable light.

(Ed.Note: This article was reprinted from "Alpha-Bits," the Alpha Chapter newsletter; a few more "round tuits" were added by our staff.)

Dateline: New Orleans

New Orleans City Council Extends Human Rights, Hate Crimes Protections to Transgenders

by Nancy Sharp

We did it! Crossdressers, transsexuals and gender variant people are equally protected by the Hate Crimes ordinance and the housing, public accommodations, and public clubs (Mardi Gras Krewes which parade on city streets) sections of the discrimination ordinance.

Crossdressers are protected from employment discrimination resulting from the employer learning they are crossdressers. Crossdressers are also protected from employment discrimination as a result of crossdressing away from work.

However, we did not have support at City Hall for crossdressers crossdressing at work. They were concerned about two issues, both of which were ordinance breakers:

1. Employers may establish dress codes for men and women. (This prevents transgendered persons and other employees from wearing "costumes" or exaggerated inappropriate work attire in the workplace...sequins, fishnet stockings and 16 inch heels may be prohibited UNLESS the employer requires it or permits it as part of the dress code.)

2. Employers are not required to allow periodic or occasional crossdressing in the workplace. An employee's gender presentation will be consistent from day to day and will conform to the dress code consistent with his /her gender identity. Female-to males must conform to the men's dress code, and male-to-females to the women's dress code.

I would like to know how crossdressers in your area feel about these restrictions. Do you feel they are reasonable or do you feel they are unfair? If you feel they are unfair, are you willing to publicly testify at hearings when crossdressing issues are discussed in your city, town, or state? Can you put together a cohesive argument which will change the minds of employers and politicians about employees crossdressing periodically in whatever attire they wish?

The television stations sensationalized the news and flashed pictures of people doing drag at a San Francisco PRIDE parade. The reporters reported the news as anti-business legislation which allowed that attire in the workplace. Part of the press release [see below] attempts to correct misinformation in the local media. After all of the work to draft the ordinance to address the concerns of businesspeople and Councilmembers, the media still presented it as City Council approving drag queens and

gays going to work in their Mardi Gras costumes.

Human Rights, Hate Crimes Protections Extended To Transgenders

The New Orleans City Council voted today, 5-1, in favor of an ordinance that will provide protection from intimidation and discrimination based upon gender identification. By doing so, New Orleans becomes the first city in the Deep South to enact such legislation, which is expected to receive the signature of Mayor Marc Morial. The new ordinance brings the city in line with revisions to the Bill of Rights of the revised City Charter, which was approved by New Orleans voters in November, 1995.

The ordinance amends previously-passed ordinances which defined and prohibited the crime of intimidation and defined and prohibited discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. "Gender identification" was added to the list of previously protected classes, which included the actual or perceived race, age, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

Primary authors of the proposed ordinance were Council members Troy Carter and Jim Singleton. During the council's discussion, Council members Eddie Sapir, Ellen Hazuer-Distance and Roy Glapion requested their names be added to the list of authors.

The lone dissenter was Council member Oliver Thomas who voiced concern over whether he would have any recourse should his male legislative aide appear at work in high heels and skirt. He was concerned with his and other employers' liability and the potential for law suits should an employee be terminated for cross-dressing.

The ordinance allows employers to enforce dress codes and prohibit crossdressing in the workplace or while an employee is acting in the course and scope of employment. However, this prohibition is lifted if the employee provides the employer with the written statement of a licensed doctor certifying that the employee "presents the characteristics of gender identification disorder" and that the employee "intends prospectively to attire and conduct him/herself for the foreseeable future" in the workplace "in the manner for persons of the gender with which he or she identifies."

It's Time Tri-Ess, Time To Get Your Chapter Cyberized

by Robyn Paige and Molly Brown

Have you noticed those Tri-Ess chapter web pages on the Internet? Are you maybe just a little bit jealous of how great they make the chapters look to prospective new members? Are you staying away from setting one up because they look too hard to create? Well, let your fears disappear in a puff of cyber-smoke! You will soon learn how easy it is to get a web presence for your chapter, at no monetary cost. It really is a very simple thing to do.

First, your chapter will need to establish its own 'official' e-mail address to receive all of those queries about membership, activities and other questions about cross dressing. For security reasons, this should be an account that is not tied to any one member in the chapter. If your chapter doesn't already have an account, request one from one of the free e-mail services on the Internet. Two very good ones are: Juno (www.juno.com) and Hotmail (www.hotmail.com). They both work very well, but Hotmail offers the advantage that their messages are able to accept graphics (i.e. photos) and other attachments.

Next, you need a place to call home. Geocities (www.geocities.com) provides 11 megabytes of free web space for home pages. They have several different editors to choose from, a built-in upload utility, quite a few icons and graphics right on their server for use on your pages, a good file manager system, cgi support for interactive input forms, and a lot of other facilities. Geocities is comprised of thousands of numeric addresses grouped into "neighborhoods". Most cross dressing sites are in the WestHollywood neighborhood, but you can set up housekeeping in several of them that have a crossdressing-related theme. Go to Geocities and sign up for a homestead (the place where your cyber-home will be born). All you need is the address of one of their vacant lots ... they even have a real estate "agent" that helps you find where the vacant addresses are!

The steps needed to register can be completed in less than 30 minutes. Once you have signed up for your site, you'll be the proud owner of your very own web site! Of course, at this point your home is empty ... but not for long!

The next step is the really exciting one, that of creating your own, unique chapter home on the Internet. It should include a main page which has all of the legal disclaimers about, "If you object to the matter contained in the site, you should leave now,"

identify the chapter and provide a table of contents to the site. Many Tri-Ess chapters already have sites on the Internet. Feel free to visit them to get ideas on how to structure a web site. Pre-planning is very important, but don't be afraid to experiment ... that's half the fun! The Web mistress should use all of the creative assets of the chapter to decide what the site will contain, what style it should present and how it should flow.

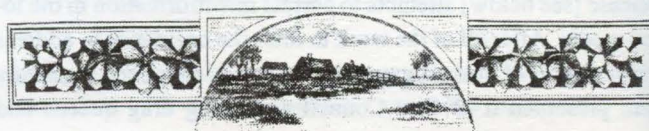
As you build your site, one very important thing should be kept in mind, and that is security. A web page is accessible by anyone in the world, and not just the controlled mailing list that your chapter uses. Any item that identifies any member of Tri-Ess, (text, picture, e-mail address), must have the express permission of that person before it can be included in the web site. This means that ALL people in a picture, including those in the background, must give their permission prior to use.

If your chapter has a member who is willing to take on the challenge of creating a web site then use her. Give her all the support you can, but let her creativity run and don't hold her back. However, if you aren't that lucky, help is available to set up your initial web page, and mentor one of your members in web programming. This has already been accomplished several times with great success. All you need is the desire to set up a web site, and a willing member who wants to learn.

Chapter web pages are a great way to 'get the word out' about Tri-Ess in general, and your chapter and home area in particular.

So what are you waiting for? The e-mail is FREE, the home page is FREE and the help is FREE. All you need to spend is a little bit of time and interest.

For further information, please drop a line to the official Tri-Ess Internet Monitor, Molly (mollynj@hotmail.com), and she can get the ball rolling.



The Evolution of Frances Ann or Step Out and Smell the Roses

by Frances Ann Wagner

.....Although my situation as a crossdresser in my community is relatively unique, it has given me access to the public and an opportunity to experience their reactions to a recognized crossdresser that few others have had. Hopefully these experiences will act as some encouragement to open that closet more often and venture more bravely into a community that is not all that hostile.

I recognized an interest in dressing in women's clothes back in high school, but the few opportunities to do so and especially peer pressures eliminated any consideration of pursuing that interest. So it was laid to rest through two marriages and four wonderful children, encompassing 30 years as a meteorological consultant, including 16 years as a television meteorologist.

Shortly after my second divorce in 1989 I began to dress, a very little at a time. A house of my own on the outskirts of Wausau, and living alone, what could be better? But those initial days of appearing OUTSIDE of the house in skirt and low heels! I am sure that, if any of my nearby neighbors were at home at the time, they still chuckle at recollections of Frances with lawn mower in tow running for the sanctuary of the garage as an auto suddenly approached. Why the mower had to be included in those frequent retreats I am still not sure.

For the last 3 or 4 years I have been pretty much transgendered. I go everywhere as Frances. The only exception has been the bowling alley where I am in a league. I have been in their lounge on occasion and accepted; I have indulged in open bowling without a problem. But there are still strong vibes that Frances would not be appreciated in the league. Interesting. But Fran will eventually emerge there, too.

Why do I "dress?" For me, three specific reasons. Initially, it gave me access to the bright colors and combinations thereof that women still enjoy on occasion, as well as the variety of lovely fabrics not normally worn by men. Secondly, the projection of the feminine side of Fred has brought out a self-confidence and self-acceptance that I had not experienced before. I actually like - REALLY LIKE - that feminine figure I see in the mirror. What a wonderful feeling, and as therapists tell us, how much easier it becomes to appreciate and love those around us when we have the same feeling toward ourselves!

Thirdly, Frances from the start began to take on characteristics - her own personality - that mimicked the finest qualities of special people in her male host's life (See page 12 of the Spring 1997 Femme Mirror). Hopefully she will live up to some of the qualities she has designated as her goals.

Where to go from here? Well, first realize that as a TV personality in Wausau for 8 years, Frances is virtually always recognized in Central Wisconsin as Fred. So passing is not an issue. I don't, no matter how feminine, how lovely I appear. But this puts me on notice that I must at ALL times dress impeccably, with behavior to match. While there will



always be those who will not accept the phenomenon, as a recognized crossdresser, I hope to give few the opportunity to criticize Frances for not acting and appearing in a manner that is a credit to everyone.

I am well aware that behind my back many disparaging remarks are made. So many who do not understand something find it easier to criticize rather than search further into the real truth. This does not bother me; it must not bother any of us. It is part of the territory. But for those with whom I have direct contact - doctors, lawyers, clerks, auto mechanics - they have been respectful to a person. One dentist said, in a friendly voice, "Fred, I'm here to work on your teeth, not examine your clothes." Teens, however, have great difficulty concealing their giggles when identifying a crossdresser. EXPECT IT. But they are only now coming to grips with their own sexuality. A man dressed as a woman is new, strange, and amusing to them. So be it. If the opportunity is at hand, confront them in a friendly, low key manner. Otherwise, walk away. There will be another day.

My next challenge is one that is both unexpected and welcome. After being denied the chance to participate in a very low profile capacity in my church's Lenten services ("They will be looking at you rather than what you are representing"), I have found a local priest who acknowledges my need to present myself as Frances. Initially he allowed me to do a reading at our Palm Sunday service. In front of 300+ people!!! His/our next step is to arrange a private meeting between Frances and our bishop so that he is properly and accurately informed of what Frances is all about. Then adding Frances to one or more committees where there is more one-on-one contact. Then, ushering, more readings, etc. Am I frightened? Do birds fly? But, my sisters, it is for my benefit, for OUR benefit. Join me as best you can, please. It's lonely and a little scary out here!

(Ed. Note: Frances Ann is a member of Beta Gamma Chapter, where she was voted a Sister of the Month. An earlier version of this article appeared in "En Femme," the Beta Gamma newsletter.)

The Pink Triangle and Related Symbols

The pink triangle is easily one of the more popular and widely-recognized symbols for the gay community. The pink triangle is rooted in World War II times, and reminds us of the tragedies of that era. Although homosexuals were only one of the many groups targeted for extermination by the Nazi regime, it is unfortunately the group that history often excludes. The pink triangle challenges that notion, and defies anyone to deny history.

The history of the pink triangle begins before W.W.II, during Adolf Hitler's rise to power. Paragraph 175, a clause in German law prohibiting homosexual relations, was revised by Hitler in 1935 to include kissing, embracing, and gay fantasies as well as sexual acts. Convicted offenders—an estimated 25,000 just from 1937 to 1939—were sent to prison and then later to concentration camps. Their sentence was to be sterilized, and this was most often accomplished by castration. In 1942 Hitler's punishment for homosexuality was extended to death.

Each prisoner in the concentration camps wore a colored inverted triangle to designate their reason for incarceration, and hence the designation also served to form a sort of social hierarchy among the prisoners. A green triangle marked its wearer as a regular criminal; a red triangle denoted a political prisoner. Two yellow triangles overlapping to form a Star of David designated a Jewish prisoner. The pink triangle was for homosexuals. A yellow Star of David under a superimposed pink triangle marked the lowest of all prisoners—a gay Jew.

Stories of the camps depict homosexual prisoners being given the worst tasks and labors. Pink triangle prisoners were also a proportionally large focus of attacks from the guards and even other inmates. Although the total number of the homosexual prisoners is not known, official Nazi estimates were an underwhelming 10,000.

Although homosexual prisoners reportedly were not shipped en masse to the death camps at Auschwitz, a great number of gay men were among the non-Jews who were killed there. Estimates of the number of gay men killed during the Nazi regime range from 50,000 to twice that figure. When the war was finally over, countless many homosexuals remained prisoners in the camps, because Paragraph 175 remained law in West Germany until its repeal in 1969.

In the 1970's, gay liberation groups resurrected the pink triangle as a popular symbol for the gay rights movement. Not

only is the symbol easily recognized, but it draws attention to oppression and persecution—then and now. In the 1980's, ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) began using the pink triangle for their cause. They inverted the symbol, making it point up, to signify an active fight back rather than a passive resignation to fate. Today, for many the pink triangle represents pride, solidarity, and a promise to never allow another Holocaust to happen again.

Like the pink triangle, the black triangle is also rooted in Nazi Germany. Although lesbians were not included in the Paragraph 175 prohibition of homosexuality, there is evidence to indicate that the black triangle was used to designate prisoners with anti-social behavior. Considering that the Nazi idea of womanhood focused on children, kitchen, and church, black triangle prisoners may have included lesbians, prostitutes, women who refused to bear children, and women with other "anti-social" traits. As the pink triangle is historically a male symbol, the black triangle has similarly been reclaimed by lesbians and feminists as a symbol of pride and solidarity.

The astrological sign of Mercury is traditionally the symbol of transgendered peoples. In Greek mythology, Hermes (the Greek version of the Roman god Mercury) and Aphrodite (the goddess of love) had a child named Hermaphroditus. That child possessed both male and female sexual organs, hence the term hermaphrodite. Also, rituals associated with the worship of Aphrodite are believed to have been highly sexual, involving castration, transvestism, and homosexual relations.

In the symbol itself, the crescent moon at the top is supposed to represent the masculine, and the cross at the bottom represents the feminine. The ring represents the individual, with the male and the female balanced at either side. [Ed. note: other sources indicate that the purple triangle has also been used as a symbol for the transgendered community.]

Inspired by the gender symbols, the IFGE Logo is another symbol for transgendered peoples. The International Foundation for Gender Education is an educational and charitable organization addressing crossdressing and transgender issues. One of the organization's logos, this symbol combines the lavender color and the pink triangle shape with a ring denoting various genders all fused into one. This is a copyrighted symbol, but you can use it for non-commercial purposes to denote transgendered

The Pink Triangle and Related Symbols (continued)

or gender-supportive individuals. For more information, visit the IFGE Home Page.

Other Miscellaneous Symbols

These symbols are not less important than any other symbols; they simply are not as widely-known or not as widely-used as other popular symbols. Nevertheless, they represent their own important stories and histories.

The labrys is a double-sided hatchet or axe commonly used in ancient European, African, and Asian matriarchal societies as both a weapon and a harvesting tool. Greek artwork depicts the amazon armies of Europe wielding labrys weapons. Amazons ruled with a dual-queen system in which one queen was in charge of the army and battle, and the other queen stayed behind to administer the conquered cities. Amazons were known to be ferocious and merciless in battle, but once victorious they ruled with justice. Today, the labrys is a lesbian and feminist symbol of strength and self-sufficiency.

In addition, the labrys also played a part in ancient mythology. Demeter, the goddess of the earth, used a labrys as her scepter. Rites associated with the worship of the Demeter, as well as Hecate (the goddess of the underworld), are believed to have involved lesbian sex.

The purple hand was a short-lived symbol of protest dating back to the 1970's in San Francisco. Derived from the New York "Black Hand" Mafia gang name, this symbol was supposedly born in the San Francisco Examiner offices when a group protesting a homophobic editorial had purple ink poured on them. The protesters then proceeded to imprint their purple hands all over the side of the building.

Another obscure symbol from the 1970's is the lavender rhinoceros. Supposedly used as an activist symbol, it was chosen because the rhino is generally a peaceful animal, but when provoked becomes extremely ferocious. An RIA visitor adds the following information:

"The lavender rhinoceros was created as a symbol to increase awareness of the presence of gays and lesbians in American Society. It was created by two Boston artists, Daniel Thaxton and Bernie Toale. Its first appearance was in a series of Boston subway posters during 1973. The rhinoceros is characterized by a peaceful demeanor until threatened, and so seemed an appropriate symbol for the years following Stonewall. The heart on the rhinoceros reflects the common humanity of all people, and the color lavender is a symbol of our identity. The original image was

purposely not copyrighted so it is in the public domain." Thanks to John Petrie for this additional info.

The Awareness Ribbon and Related Symbols

The AIDS Awareness Ribbon, or red ribbon, is commonly seen adorning jacket lapels and other articles of clothing as a symbol of solidarity and a commitment to the fight against AIDS. The Ribbon Project was conceived in 1991 by Visual AIDS, a New York-based charity group of art professionals that aims to recognize and honor friends and colleagues who have died or are dying of AIDS. Visual AIDS encourages arts organizations, museums, commercial galleries, and AIDS support groups to commemorate those lost to AIDS, to create greater awareness of AIDS/HIV transmission, to publicize the needs of Persons With AIDS, and to call for greater funding of services and research. Inspired by the yellow ribbons honoring American soldiers of the Persian Gulf War, the color red was chosen for its "connection to blood and the idea of passion—not only anger, but love, like a valentine," as stated by Frank Moore of Visual AIDS.

Worn by host Jeremy Irons, the ribbon made its public debut at the 1991 Tony Awards, and soon became a popular and politically correct fashion statement for celebrities and other awards ceremonies. Because of this popularity, some activists worry that the ribbon has become simple lip service to AIDS causes; in one particular incident the First Lady Barbara Bush wore a red ribbon while sitting in the audience with her husband, but when she stood at the President's side during his speech, her ribbon was conspicuously missing. However, the Ribbon Project remains a powerful force in spreading awareness of AIDS and stressing the need for further action and research of the disease. The sincerest hope for the Ribbon Project is that it will one day no longer be needed.

Inspired by the red ribbon, the pink ribbon became the symbol for breast cancer awareness. Although, like AIDS, breast cancer is certainly not an issue limited to the gay community, the statistics of breast cancer are historically higher in women who do not bear children. Consequently, for some lesbians breast cancer awareness and prevention is a particularly important issue.

Additionally, the politically-correct nature of the times seems to have spawned even more ribbon variations. Green ribbons are worn by environmental activists, particularly those in the entertainment industry concerned about the use of tropical plywood in movie sets. Purple ribbons signify the toll of urban violence; blue ribbons promote awareness of crime victims' rights. (Re-

The Pink Triangle and Related Symbols (continued)

cently, blue ribbons have also been adopted by the campaign against Internet censorship.) With all these ribbon variations, it is important to realize that no one cause is trying to take attention away from the others; in one way or another, all are equally important to humanity.

Rainbow Pride and Related Symbols

The rainbow flag has become the easily-recognized colors of pride for the gay community. The multicultural symbolism of the rainbow is nothing new—

Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition also embraces the rainbow as a symbol of that political movement. The rainbow also plays a part in many myths and stories related to gender and sexuality issues in Greek, Native American, African, and other cultures.

Use of the rainbow flag by the gay community began in 1978 when it first appeared in the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day Parade. Borrowing symbolism from the hippie movement and black civil rights groups, San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker designed the rainbow flag in response to a need for a symbol that could be used year after year. Baker and thirty volunteers hand-stitched and hand-dyed two huge prototype flags for the parade. The flags had eight stripes, each color representing a component of the community: hot pink for sex, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sun, green for nature, turquoise for art, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit.

The next year Baker approached San Francisco Paramount Flag Company to mass-produce rainbow flags for the 1979 parade. Due to production constraints — such as the fact that hot pink was not a commercially-available color—pink and turquoise were removed from the design, and royal blue replaced indigo. This six-color version spread from San Francisco to other cities, and soon became the widely-known symbol of gay pride and diversity it is today. It is even officially recognized by the International Congress of Flag Makers. In 1994, a huge 30-foot-wide by one-mile-long rainbow flag was carried by 10,000 people in New York's Stonewall 25 Parade.

The rainbow flag has inspired a wide variety of related symbols, such as freedom rings and other accessories. There are plenty of variations of the flag, including versions with a blue field of stars reminiscent of the American Stars and Stripes and versions with superimposed lambdas, pink triangles, or other symbols.

The Victory Over AIDS Flag modifies the rainbow flag by adding a black stripe at the bottom. Suggested by a San Fran-

cisco group, the black stripe commemorates those we have lost to AIDS. Sergeant Leonard Matlovich, a much-decorated Vietnam Veteran dying of AIDS, proposed that when a cure is eventually found the black stripes should be removed from all the flags and ceremoniously burned in Washington, D.C.

Lambda and Related Symbols

The lambda symbol seems to be one of the most controversial of symbols in regards to its meaning. There are several differing opinions as to why the lambda was chosen as a gay symbol and what it really means. However, most sources agree on a few things:

The lambda was first chosen as a gay symbol when it was adopted in 1970 by the New York Gay Activists Alliance. It became the symbol of their growing movement of gay liberation. In 1974, the lambda was subsequently adopted by the International Gay Rights Congress held in Edinburgh, Scotland. As their symbol for lesbian and gay rights, the lambda became internationally popular.

But where history ends, speculation begins. No one seems to have a definitive answer why the lambda was originally chosen as a gay symbol. Some suggest that it is simply the Greek lower-case letter λ for liberation. Others disagree, citing the use of lambda in physics to denote energy (the energy we have when we work in concert) or wavelength (are gays and lesbians on a different wavelength?). Lambda may also denote the synergy of the gay movement, the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The lambda also may represent scales and balance, and the constant force that keeps opposing sides from overcoming each other - the hook at the bottom of the right leg signifies the action needed to reach and maintain balance. The ancient Greek Spartans regarded the lambda to mean unity, while the Romans considered it "the light of knowledge shed into the darkness of ignorance."

Whatever the exact meaning and origin, the lambda originally embodied a fairly militant connotation. Today, the symbol generally denotes lesbian's and gay men's concerns together. Although the lambda was never intended to be linked to any specific gender or orientation such as other symbols may be, historically this is not so: In the early 1970's the Los Angeles gay community created a flag with a lavender lambda on a simple white background. They hoped the flag would catch on to other cities, but their hopes were not realized because some saw the lambda as a male symbol only.

If you want more info, visit the website at <http://enqueue.com>

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower newsletter.)

Our Gender Family #12 - July, 1998

Boom, Boom, Boom

by Rachel Miller

According to the commercials that cute pink Energizer bunny never runs out of energy. He keeps banging that drum; Boom, Boom, Boom, and just keeps going and going and going... Lately I have been feeling more like there's a big hole in my drum and it sounds more like Boom, ..boom, . . b.o..o. .m.... and I'm going, going, gone...

Early in June my energy level was draining fast and I didn't know where to go to plug in to power-up. My schedule was busy. Marsha and I were visiting several friends in Pittsburgh. I was speaking Thursday morning at the BeAll conference and again at the author's luncheon. Everything went smoothly but I was exhausted and crashed that afternoon. The lure of a tour of the Andy Warhol Museum and a river boat dinner cruise got me out of the hotel. Little did I suspect that the recharging of my rundown batteries was about to begin.

The nap helped physically but my emotional fatigue remained. As you may have heard, corporate America isn't on a campaign to develop compassion towards employees. At times it seems that they are preparing people for a limbo contest. How low can you go.

Perhaps the BeAll organizers are psychic and had seen through my desire to conduct a personal pity-party because there seemed to be a conspiracy to force me to abandon those plans. We boarded first class buses at the hotel and left on time for the museum. On time—Yeah! Good start. Despite my best efforts to resist, the level of excitement was so high on the bus that it began to rub off. They had the nerve to supply enthusiastic, highly-knowledgeable docents to guide us through the museum. That made it extraordinarily interesting and time flashed by.

Back on the bus and off to the Liberty Belle dinner cruise up the three rivers (can anybody spell Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio?) Great food. Great scenery. Pittsburgh is actually gorgeous. Dancing. Friends. Fun. By the end of the night I was tired but my drum beats were picking up their rhythm. This was great but I still had no idea what an impact the rest of the event would have.

The first big impact was about issues and people who get between me and my goals. Ellie Altman started the thinking about confronting what she described as the toxic people we all know and said that we need to "take the power away from those who

use it negatively and with control." I knew she was right but wasn't clear how that applied to me.

On Friday afternoon Elise DeLong and Wendi Miller described the difference one person can make as they virtually single-handedly changed the discrimination laws in Pittsburgh to protect the transgendered. They worked within the system but also acknowledged that its OK to get in the face of those who stand in the way when a reasonable approach fails.

Alison Laing topped it off by helping us learn who we are, where we are going and what is getting in the way of achieving our goals. I resolved to apply what I learned to my work situation and over the past two weeks have made some real progress. I don't know how it will turn out, but I feel stronger and more in control of my destiny. It's a good feeling.

The second major change was to really be true to my unique self AND to honor the unique expressions of self that others employ, especially when they are different from mine. The lessons came in waves on Saturday morning starting with Dr. James Huggins' discussion of how we often allow people to make us feel guilt and shame because of our transgendered nature.

I sat in stunned silence at the next session as Dr. Randi Ettner painted a detailed picture of my childhood and how without realizing it I had allowed social conventions to break off the feminine side of my character and induce shame about myself.

Jointly James and Randi had already convinced me to be more true to myself but more reinforcement arrived with Dr. Richard Docter (I love that name.) He helped me understand that gender identity isn't an either/or proposition but a continuum of self images and gender roles and that while labels are useful, they are largely arbitrary.

At the end of the session two cross-dressers complained that they had been chastised, one for using his male name on his name tag and the other for coming to the front desk of the hotel one morning without a wig (can you imagine?) Richard spoke eloquently of the need for us to accept all gender expressions not just our personal favorites.

I was so moved by this sequence of events that I washed out my great head of curls created by Rachel Galen, removed all my makeup, replaced Rachel with Richard on my name tag and

went to dinner wearing my best Nordstrom dress. I was never more my true self than on Saturday night. It just felt right.

The third key was a greater awareness of the importance of friendship—deepening and renewing old ones and starting new ones. Most of us live parts of our lives on the fringes of society and need of friendships with those who truly understand and accept us. A conference is a safe place where that can happen. We need each other and what a great environment to build friendships.

Is your boom, boom slowing down? Is your bunny emotionally spent? Are you hanging around a bunch of toxic people? Then get ye to a conference. Sign up NOW! You need it. You deserve it. You'll benefit!

"The wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed, But the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men."

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Notes

My special personal high occurred when Ellie Altman of the Transgender Special Outreach Network of PFLAG quoted my poem and interaction with my mom as examples of the unconditional love we all need. Hearing my words coming out of the mouth of a respected speaker and knowing that those words are helping others was incredible. My thanks to you Ellie.

An important aspect of this newsletter is the resulting dialog with readers. I place a high value on that personal exchange of ideas even though it extends the writing cycle several weeks. As circulation grew past 2,000 I found it increasingly difficult to answer all correspondence. To accommodate those responses the newsletter will be issued quarterly with the next edition due in October. I believe that approach provides the greater good and hope you'll understand and be supportive of that decision.

You can order my book, "The Bliss of Becoming One!" on-line from Amazon.com (Keyword to:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ISBN=1568250312/002-4615547-8180003>) at 20% off the list price. You can visit My Web Site (Keyword to: <http://members.aol.com/rachelmill>)

The Dash

Anonymous

A man stood to speak
at the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on her tombstone
from the beginning...to the end.
He noted that first came the date of her birth
and spoke of the following date with tears,
but he said what mattered most of all
was the dash between those years.
For that dash represents all the time
that she spent alive on earth...
and now only those who loved her
know what that little line is worth.
For it matters not how much we own;
the cars...the house...the cash.
What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash.
So think about this long and hard...
are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left.
If we could just slow down enough
to consider what's true and real,
and always try to understand
the way other people feel,
And be less quick to anger,
and show appreciation more,
and love the people in our lives
like we've never loved before.
If we treat each other with respect,
and more often wear a smile...
remembering that this special dash
might only last a little while.
So, when your eulogy's being read
with your life's actions to rehash...
Would you be proud of the things they say
about how you spent your dash?

plete with high intensity spot light following his every move) every GEM must suffer through. Is he gay? Is he a child molester? Does he want a sex change? Who else knows of this disgusting perversion?

Why does he want to dress like a woman if he doesn't want to be a woman? Why doesn't he just quit this unnatural behavior and make all of this just go away?

Ms. Ginny and Mr. Scally did an excellent job of assuming their characters's roles and played them well. The play grabbed the audience's attention early and carried them through to the closing scene. The first act was filled with stereotypical one liners that are so characteristic of the conflict between loved ones who have just had their dreams "of happily ever after" shattered. The effect is one of extreme confusion set amongst feelings of frustrated compassion, trying to explain the unexplainable to an irate, not-listening, threatened companion. He just can't get through to the one he loves. The closing of the first act leaves the audience wondering where the writer is going with this story.

The second act opens 5 years later. Brad and Susan are successful lawyers and Brad has begun a campaign to run for Congress, at Susan's urging. The scene opens with the couple preparing for Brad's birthday celebration. Brad, in his Barbara persona and dressed in a currently fashionable dress, is busy in the kitchen fixing an elegant dinner for his loved one for when she arrives. At first, the impression is that all is well on the home front, with Susan accepting and appreciating the expanded gender qualities of her spouse, in whichever persona presented. As the scene develops Susan is giving four gifts to her spouse, two for Brad and two for Barbara. Suddenly the evening's activities are interrupted by the prying eyes and ears of the press. Barbara makes the typical rush to cover as Susan attends to removing any evidence of Barbara. Susan's and Brad's legal assistants Joan and Cheryl, played by Shana Bousard and Monica McCue, enter upon the scene with the news that "Barbara" had been photographed in Singapore in the company of a Drag Queen known professionally as "Princess Pretty".

All thoughts of winning the upcoming election are dashed for Susan, as she reverts back to her wedding night chaos behavior. "Why can't you just leave the dressing alone?" she shrieks! The anarchy escalates as Princess Pretty, played by David Anaya, enters the stage and attempts to rescue the situation by suggesting that Brad take the offensive and officially announce his expanded gender status and seek election upon a platform of honesty and diversity. Susan thinks better and comes to Brad's rescue in a face saving disclosure to the press that accounts for Brad's behavior. The scene closes with the illusion of Hillary at the side of Bill, "supporting her man."

Act 2, Scene 2, opens a month later with the appearance of "All is well with the Saxtons." They have won the Senate election and are packing for the move to Washington. Brad suddenly discovers a box of frillies and is ecstatic that they had just been misplaced and not purged during the election run. Susan is traumatically overwhelmed with the agony of Brad's expanded gender, and again charges Brad with being

dishonest because she "thought" he had given up forever his crossdressing desires. With the trouble his desires caused them during the election, how could he possibly obtain any pleasure from expressing even the slightest longing to wear any feminine clothing?

The play closes with Susan going off to their other home with the question of resolving this difficulty left hanging.

Was the play any good?

Yes, the play was very good.

Although I have a love / hate relationship with this play, the play was very well performed. The performers were in character from their first words and never once did they falter. They grabbed the attention of the audience and never let lose. For an "Off Broadway" theater, the props were well chosen and added substance to the play without being overbearing. The scenes were quickly changed between the acts without the aid of the a curtain pull and in fact added a feeling of time passing that successfully carried the play into the next act.

My aversion for the play is that it duplicated my life as a crossdresser clear down to the point of being married to a Susan, with the closing /current scene being the couple living separately because the wife can not accept the crossdressing. The timing of the scenes also duplicates my life story and the words used in the dialogue could have been a tape recording from one of the many heated discussions between us on this topic. Yes, even the part about buying all of Barbara's clothes on sale at the thrift stores while Susan's are only bought at the finest stores is real. Even the experience of being photographed during one of the few times I have ventured out in public in a town far, far away is true. My friend "Pretty Princess" uses another name but the character is the same, clear down to the point of having a fabulous pink wardrobe. The confusion of "Where is this story going?" that the author leaves the audience with at the closing of the first and final acts, is real. Too real. Too real for it to be comfortable for me. Thus my dislike.

Would I recommend it to a friend?

Yes, I would recommend this play very highly to all of my friends.

The play presents the love and trauma that only a couple involved with crossdressing can experience. It is about feelings that are unique to a personality, feelings that can not be explained nor justified, coupled with the dynamics of living in a relationship and community that does not find beauty in expanded genders. The play presented the feelings of both partners extremely well. It was never intended to make a social statement, nor be a work of comedy. It is a love story that tries to express intense feelings between a couple that is trying to cope in a world that doesn't understand.

Well done! See it, if you ever get the chance.

(Reprinted from The Cactus Flower, newsletter of Alpha Zeta Chapter.)

"The Wedding Present"

A Play about Crossdressing

reviewed by Cindy and D'

First, some background and a synopsis by Cindy:

This January we went to see the play, "The Wedding Present." This was the second time we saw it, and we were impressed with the evolution of the play. The playwright, Marilyn Allen, has done a wonderful job of research. When we first saw it last year, it was based on observations at the 307 Club, research from the book "My Husband Wears My Clothes," and a few other various sources. I thought the original play was extremely accurate in portraying the feelings of a crossdresser and the feelings of the wife upon learning of her husband's other side. But Marilyn has outdone herself in the rewrite.

The play starts with a newlywed couple on their honeymoon. Susan, the wife, and Brad, her new husband, are both lawyers involved with environmental issues. On their wedding night, Susan offers Brad a wedding present of fulfilling Brad's wildest fantasy. During their whirlwind courtship, Brad had made several references to crossdressing and mistakenly assumed that Susan knew all about his dressing and would accept it. Of course, it comes as a complete shock to Susan when Brad pulls out his favorite night gown. The entire first act revolves around the issues involved in admitting "Barbara" into their lives.

In the second act, Brad is running for Congress. But a small problem comes up when the "National Enquirer" gets possession of several photos of Brad in drag while he was in Singapore with a female impersonator friend. This eventually gets resolved and Susan falls into the belief that Brad has changed his ways. A month later (you guessed it) "Barbara" resurfaces. This of course, leads to further conflict, and Brad realizes that Barbara has control of a part of his life and she will not go away.

With the new rewrite, the emotional content and social commentary has gone much deeper and true to life. As most of you know, Marilyn and several of the actors and support personnel attended a meeting in October and were also guests at our Christmas meeting. Further, Toni, Valerie, Mickey and I spent an evening with the cast & crew at the Playwrights Workshop Theater. They asked many questions and listened intently to get a feeling for the emotional impact that dressing has on our lives.

While watching the play, I noticed that several lines were incorporated into the script. Mickey has said for some time now, that crossdressers are driven by an unknown force, like a bunch

of lemmings. She just about fell off her seat when in the first act, Brad explains that crossdressers are like a bunch of lemmings! There were several other of our standard lines that were incorporated into the play, but memory fails me as to what they were.

The lead actors, Ginny Harmon and Steven Scally, played their parts with such believable emotional accuracy that you would be lead to believe that Steven is a crossdresser. He says he is not, and further, he refuses to shave his legs for the part. That's O.K. with me, but he still looked pretty passable when dressed on stage!

After the play, we were invited on stage to field questions from the audience. Renee, Joni, Toni, Valerie, Mickey and myself all had a chance to answer their many questions.

Next, D' provides more detail and some startling personal observations:

I was very fortunate to catch the last Phoenix performance of Marilyn H. Allen's new play "The Wedding Present". Ms. Allen is a playwright with several plays to her credit and an established history for publishing short stories. As an accomplished writer, expanding her talents into play writing seems to be a logical next step. Her choice of subject matter for the play is not so logical. Ms. Allen has taken the subject of crossdressing and tried to turn it into a play that expresses the joy and trauma of being in a love affair with a "GEM" (Gender Expanded Male).

The play opens with the main characters, Brad and Susan Saxton, played by Mr. Steven Scally and Ms. Ginny Harmon, entering their honeymoon suite on their wedding night. Opening the traditional bottle of champagne, Susan presents Brad with a special wedding present. The "Present" grants Brad anything he wants. Brad seizes the opportunity to tell his new bride about his crossdressing alter ego named Barbara. The bride, expecting a typical sexual request to make love all night long, is not the least bit happy with this sudden turn of events. Susan was all prepared to offer herself to Brad's most fantasized sexual whim, and instead she is presented with Brad wearing a leopard print baby doll teddy that is similar to the one she has chosen for this most memorable night. How could he do such a thing! Of all the wrong times to have chosen, this is the most repulsive time of all. How could he?!

What follows is the typical interrogation (police style com-

A Family Outing

by Diane Liegh (TX-4261-H)

Most articles written for publications aimed at crossdressers deal with fantasies or situations where the male is crossdressed. This is fine for those of us who have crossdressed for many years and have, at least, some idea of who we are, where we are going and where various things fit into our lifestyle.

This is not so for the new crossdresser. When he finally finds that he is not the only male in the universe who has a need to wear the clothing that today's society classifies as "for women only", he enters a new arena. In many cases, the floodgates are opened and he tries to make up for lost time. It is all so new and exciting that he may enter a state of euphoria. The idea that it is OK to wear panties, hose, bras, slips, dresses, etc. is mind boggling. But there is so much to learn! What are his femme sizes, how do you do makeup, where can he go and what can he do? Sadly, some reason that if wearing the clothes is this great then taking hormones must be even better. And imagine how great it would be to have SRS and be a real woman.

Whoa! You are still a man. Think back about your life. Did you enjoy being a male? Did you like the automatic respect, the feeling of power, and the freedom to go and do pretty much as you please, that are automatically granted to boys?

Sure, we all missed having that formal and going to the prom; wearing mini skirts, and doing all of the other things that we envied young girls doing. You probably don't envy them their menstrual periods, being mentally undressed by all the horny boys, and the roller coaster mood swings as their hormones ebbed and flowed.

Whether you are married with children, married without children or single, you are still a man. Do you want to throw away all of your relationships for an experiment in self gratification?

I am a male crossdresser of almost six decades. I enjoyed being a boy while I was growing up and I enjoy being a male as an adult. I have no ideas of ever going "full time" or having SRS. I would like to tell my extended family about

this part of me, but I haven't decided yet whether or not I will. If I don't, they will never know of a significant part of me. If I do, they may not be able to handle it and I will have caused them unnecessary pain.

The point of all of this is the following article. It describes a trip taken by my male self, my spouse and two of our children. There was absolutely no crossdressing involved. When talking with Frances Fairfax about this trip, she was somewhat incredulous. "You mean you didn't dress at all?" "You didn't get into another of your predicaments?" My reply was something like, "No, I was just a male on a vacation." You see, a male crossdresser has two facets - a male side and a female side. Both sides need to be expressed. Most, if not all wives, really want to spend time with "their man."

A ski trip to Lake Tahoe, Nevada. So much to do. We had to decide on clothes to take, make plane reservations, and make rental car reservations. The plane - you can't get there from here! All of the flights are overbooked. You can't go direct to Reno or connect through Salt Lake City. The only way we can get you there is to go to San Francisco, sit for 10 hours and then fly a shuttle back to Reno. The rental car was easy. The accommodations were easy too since we have a timeshare condo at Incline Village.

The BIG DAY is here. Get up in the middle of the night so that we can finish packing and get to the airport in time for our early bird departure. Did I mention that our son and daughter were going with us? Well, they were.

We arrived at the ticket counter where everything turned out to be in order.

Our luggage looked like we were going to be gone for a month, not just a week. We went through security and on to the gate. Funny, there were people all around the left main landing gear out on the ramp. Hummmmm. Listen! A public address announcement: "The flight for San Francisco will now be leaving from gate 11." We were at gate 8. On the way I stopped and asked the ticket agent what was going on. He said the landing gear door had failed to close for landing

and during the landing roll-out, about 4 inches of the door had been ground off! We got on the new plane and off we went.

We arrived in San Francisco on time and rather than kill 10 hours in the airport, our kids decided that they would take the opportunity to rent a car and see the "City on the Bay." Mom and I elected to stay at the airport and rest and read. Hours later the kids returned full of tales of their time exploring. We then boarded our flight to Reno and were anxious to attack all of the snow dumped by El Nino on the mountains around Lake Tahoe. We picked up our rental car and were off for Incline Village.

My son is a very good skier since he started at an early age. My daughter (actually step daughter) skied for the first time 3 years ago. She was scared to death of close places, elevators, high places, etc. How in the world was she ever going to get to the top of the mountain? And if she got there, how was she going to ski down? The courage which she exhibited was phenomenal. She wanted to ski so badly that she was willing to go through hell to do it. Her first lift ride, her first hill, her first tram ride, snowplow, stem christie, and all that other stuff that must come before you are a skier. I don't remember her ever protesting that she "couldn't do that" about anything. Now, in her third year (actually third week of skiing, each week a year apart) she is a tiger. Just let her at that mountain!

On our first day we went to Squaw Valley - home of the 1960 Olympics. She couldn't wait to get on the tram and up

the mountain. The deadly fear of three years ago was conquered. Ski down that hill. "What more do I need to learn?" she asked after the first run. I told her that she now knew all she needed. The rest was just practice. She was jubilant. We skied together and both had a ball.

Meanwhile, #1 son was attacking bowls, moguls and runs that went straight down at what looked like 60 degree angles. Dad used to do that once upon a time, but many things now dictated that those areas be left to the younger skiers.

Poor old dad. I spent time with both kids but the endurance isn't what it used to be. Good excuse to go spend time with mom in the lodge.

We skied several other areas on the following days. The night before our last day it snowed 24 inches. We went to Heavenly Valley the next day to give the kids an opportunity to ski on snow which hadn't been groomed. Skiing on two feet of new WET snow was a new experience for her.

When we weren't skiing, the time spent together was just as rewarding. Everyone pitched in to help make meals, clean up, and all the other necessary chores. Then we played games, talked or watched television.

Tracing our route back home didn't require a long sit in San Francisco. Our arrival at DFW was kind of bittersweet. We were all sorry it was over but happy and content that the time together had occurred. This trip was every bit as exciting and enjoyable as the Alaskan cruise I took en femme. I am glad that I can enjoy both.



F
St
New
Car
Invit
Web
M
is
7
Bes
52
Ho

Calendar of of Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

30-10/4 Southern Comfort, Atlanta GA, SCC, PO Box 77591, Atlanta GA 30357-1591, (404) 633-6470, sccatl@aol.com

OCTOBER

18-25 Fantasia Fair, Provincetown, MA Fan Fair 98, PO Box 473, Portsmouth RI 02871, (401) 624-9703, fanfair@lng.com

NOVEMBER

5-8 Paradise in the Poconos, CDS, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406, (610) 640-9449, poco@cdspub.com

5-8 Fall Harvest, Minneapolis MN, CLCC, PO Box 14844, Minneapolis MN 55414, (612) 229-3613, CLCC@topcity.com

8-13 **TRI-ESS HOLIDAY AT SEA/DIGNITY CRUISE #10**, Miami-Nassua-Coco Cay -Key West CRUISES INC., 1-800-621-6699 (Barbara Arendt), 1-800-818-7830 (Mike Sinn)

DECEMBER

19 **PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ**, Chicago, IL. Chi Chapter, PO Box 40, Wood Dale, IL 60191, (630) 262-8707, chitriess@aol.com

Preferred Graphics

State-of-the-Art Graphics and Publishing!

Newsletters, Brochures
Cards, Letterhead, Envelopes
Invitations, Announcements
Web Graphics, Paper Design

*Making It Happen for YOU
is the Thrill of Our Business!*

713-862-3312

Best Price/Best Service Guarantee

5225 Katy Freeway Suite 310
Houston, Texas 77007

Large Rings for Crossdressers

Sizes 8 to 14

<http://www.ruralamerica.net/~kplace/rings.html>

For Info Write:

Kandice Morgan
PO Box 266
Albert Lea, MN 56007



3ct Round Fashion Ring

SPICE VI

by Frances Fairfax

We made it back to Houston Sunday night after 12 hours on the road. We flew down the Interstate, and I'm sure it was because of the aerodynamic lift provided by SPICE! This one was really and truly the best ever! The presenters were so enthusiastic, their talks and workshops so practical, veterans and first-timers alike could not help but learn and grow. There was an atmosphere of anticipation from the moment one arrived, a dynamic tension to our common purpose. And there was FUN!!! From our Wednesday evening excursion downtown for a Southern-style dinner at Aunt Pittypat's Porch, to the midnight singalongs down in the bar, we refused to take ourselves too seriously. Peals of laughter were audible through the room dividers, as we "got the message" from our blue-ribbon faculty.

Starting off Thursday morning in the Hospitality Suite with good hot coffee and wonderful banana bread personally baked fresh for us by our charming and efficient local chapter hostess, Dae, we proceeded to our opening General Assembly address by Alan (don't call me "Dr.") Yorker. Never had we heard the issues of our husbands' crossdressing and our own involvement in it explained so clearly and practically! We are hoping that he will make us a tape of his presentation for our future use.

From that bang-up start we proceeded to separate men's and women's sessions for our bonding circles and to work on Myers-Briggs personality inventories. This SPICE's theme was "From Stumbling Blocks to Stepping Stones," and we got right to work on identifying and dealing with those Stumbling Blocks. Workshops during the three days included Sallie Hunt on Depression, Denise O'Doherty on Relationship Issues, Richard and Marsha Miller sharing their personal story, a "Why Not Ask the Children?" panel and Sallie again on Barriers to Communication.

Each day's pace was purposeful yet unhurried, with

generous breakout times to continue conversations, question presenters, and regroup for the next rounds, which somehow managed to start right on time! Light lunches were served to mixed company, while some took advantage of the optional women-only room. All presenters made themselves available for individual and small-group consultations, and the compassionate peer support so freely extended was almost beyond description.

The sheer intensity of our self-education was relieved by a Friday afternoon devoted to excursions to Atlanta area attractions. For those remaining behind, several discussion groups were available. Each evening's dinner was enlivened by speeches: Sallie Hunt on "Building Self Esteem," Suzanne K. on "The Triple A's of Happiness," and Richard Miller wrapping up our Saturday banquet with "Celebrating Stepping Stones."

The Saturday workshops by Denise O'Doherty had taught us the communications skills needed to "Turn Stumbling Blocks to Stepping Stones," and closure sessions (both joint and women-only) tied up our new-found knowledge and experiences in silk-ribboned bundles for the trip home. Those departing later in the day on Sunday had an interfaith religious service with Gary Helms telling how "Love Is Life's Magic Name." The bittersweet goodbyes had begun with the "early birds" the evening before.

Other wonderful memories include singing this year's theme song (to the tune of "Country Roads") each evening at dinner; hilarious Minnesota humor by Robert and Onnalee, Suzanne and Steve; Dave's wondrous transformation from shy guy to songleader; the special bonding among the CDSO ladies who finally met face-to-face; that great banana bread every morning; and, first-timers and old-timers alike vowing to come again next year! We'll be seeing "ya'll" in the North Woods next summer!

About Our Cover Girl

Written by Toni G.

Our First Lady and newsletter editor, Cindy, is being honored as the Cover Girl of the month. Though everyone in the group has met, talked to, or been interviewed by Cindy, nobody truly knows her deepest darkest secrets and fantasies. Unfortunately she wouldn't share them with me either. She said that if she revealed them, they would no longer be secrets! We can all only imagine what they are!

Cindy started her journey into the cross-dressing world when she was about 12 but only began her true trek out of the "mental" closet about 11 years ago when she came out in full dress. In her first year with Alpha Zeta, she helped start the Chapter's library, and she was appointed newsletter editor. The library has since passed through many hands, but she still continues on as editor of the Cactus Flower. She stated that it was such a relief to find support groups that let you know you weren't nuts, a pervert, or worse. Leaving those fears in the closet with all the old baggage was a stepping stone into her role as a leader in the transgendered community here in the Phoenix area. The message that "You are not alone" is one that she strongly works toward as First Lady. She and her wonderful wife, Mickey, the Chapter Secretary/treasurer, have put forward enormous effort and time to help Alpha Zeta grow to over 80 members. They were also the key leaders in the "A Rose", an open support group, for several years. Without them, both groups would not have the hot line, newsletters, Web site, leadership and energy that we all now use and enjoy.

In her free time, when she's not working on Alpha Zeta stuff, or house repairs, Cindy loves to travel. Her most enjoyable trip was to Japan. The culture, honesty and sincerity of the people made it her favorite place to visit. She does own a couple of kimonos & I think she'd make a cute Geisha Girl! In her travels Cindy pursues another talent, photography! Check out the walls of her house when you visit sometime. Her eye for beauty does not rest with a cute dress! Her greatest passion, when it comes to hobbies, is flying. Until her heart attack several years ago she used to pilot a plane. I'm sure the free feeling as she soared through the air is much like what she feels when cross-dressed.

Cindy's greatest desire would be to have better health & to lose 50 pounds. (Sounds like the cry of many middle aged women). She loves outfits that hide the bumps of middle age...particularly loose, flowing silky fabrics. She wants to present herself as a proper, decent middle-aged lady. None of the trumpy teen-age



stuff for her! Believe it or not she has quite an array of panties...but she claims that is it not as large as the collection of high-heeled shoes her 93-year-old father has! Evidently she comes by this passion genetically!

Along with her passions in life, Cindy displays a great deal of compassion. She reaches out to new members regularly through the hotline and meetings with potential Alpha Zeta members. Cindy has a warm heart, willing ear and winning attitude. She admits she has a weakness when it comes to remembering names and faces, so if she forgets yours don't take it personally! In fact, when it comes to names, she got her femme name by switching nametags with a female member of another group she belonged to long ago, and it just stuck!

Cindy is thankful for the support she receives as a TV through the various groups she has belonged to. We are thankful for her, her dedication, hard work, and patience with the frustrations that come with running a non-profit organization and her generosity in keeping the group going. Hats off (they better be adorned with flowers and lace) to Cindy and Mickey. Without their devotion we would be back in our own physical and mental closets. Thanks for helping us all to fly free!

Highlights of the Winter Board Meeting

January 18, 1998

by Frances Fairfax, Secretary

Melanie Rudd, Finance Committee Chair, was appointed to the Board of Directors.

The Board authorized Tau Chi Chapter to put on Holiday En Femme 1999.

Jane reported on the cancellation of HEF 1997, and announced that Beta Gamma Chapter had withdrawn their proposal to hostess HEF 1998. The Board authorized Peggy Rudd to arrange another Holiday At Sea Cruise for November 1998.

The Board approved an \$800 budget for the Tri-Ess CDSO online forum for spouses and partners of crossdressers, the CDTRIESS forum for Tri-Ess crossdresser members, and an eventual Tri-Ess couples' forum.

The Board approved Judy Daniels' Motion, previously considered at the Summer 1997 Board Meeting which stated "That in order to participate in Tri-Ess' 501©(3) tax benefits under a Group Exemption Letter, each Tri-Ess chapter must:

- 1) document on a quarterly basis 90% or better compliance with Tri-Ess membership requirements;
- 2) furnish quarterly financial reports to Treasurer Samantha Walls, for inclusion in Tri-Ess' annual tax return."

Peggy Rudd reported on plans for the 1998 SPICE conference and challenged Board Members to promote SPICE attendance and donations.

Jane presented the Membership Report. Tri-Ess membership hit new highs in 8 out of 12 months in 1997, but improvement is still needed in our member retention rate and in chapter membership compliance. Virginia Prince stated that Tri-Ess' strength lies in our unique focus on family and relationship support. This occasioned a standing ovation for Virginia.

Jane, Marlene and Judy presented the Chapters Report. Judy has visited chapters in several cities. Some long-established chapters are enjoying a resurgence in membership under new leaders, and new chapters are thriving in Austin and in Greensboro NC.

Guest Sofronia Ann Strong of Beta Gamma Chapter reported a total of 78 inquiries processed through that chapter's Tri-Ess web site in their first four months of operation, and challenged other chapters to establish web sites as well.

Melanie Rudd reported on her initial organization of the Finance Committee and their plans to hold two or more meetings before the Summer Board Meeting, in order to draw up a working budget and accounting system for Tri-Ess.

Jane reported on efforts to design a new logo for Tri-Ess and called upon Onnalee to present her preliminary sketches. A majority of Board Members preferred one design over all others, but in a Sense of the Board Resolution, voted to ask Onnalee to further refine it.

Virginia Prince presented the Investments Report. At year's end Tri-Ess had approximately \$42,000 in investment accounts, some of which has been budgeted for upcoming 1998 expenses such as the new Membership Directory.

Carol Beecroft asked the Board's input on the future of her publication, "The Clarion." After discussion, Carol and the Board voted to discontinue "The Clarion."

Library Project Report

by Marlene

We now have sent 39 packs of books to libraries all over the US. This is out of 69 attempts. About half the libraries do not return the postcard even after two letters and a phone call.

A Weekend at Camp...

by Taffy Cheerful CA-4680-H

This past weekend was a major milestone for seven of us... We attended the twice-annual CD Weekend held at the Rainbow Mountain Resort in the Poconos (www.rainbowmountain.com). What was unusual about this experience is that the seven of us are transgenerational crossdressers, otherwise known as adult little girls (LGs), ranging in assumed age from 8-12 years old. Six of us are around 50 in human years, and the seventh is 19. With the exception of one, who had participated in a demonstration of historical petticoats sponsored by the organizer of our participation in the event, the rest of us had never been out in public as LGs. Six are heterosexual and the seventh, the youngest, is gay, although sexual preference is almost meaningless within the LG context. LGs, at least as we know them, are fairly asexual.

Early in the year, Aunt Tessy, the sitemaster of Petticoat Pond www.pettipond.com, had attempted to put together a weekend for "Poufbunnies", those fascinated with petticoats. Several of the LGs who participated in the chat room on the site asked if they could attend as well. The first location fell through, being bought by a religious group, and another was sought. Aunt Tessy finally deciding to join forces with the already scheduled Rainbow Mountain CD Weekend. There did not appear to be a large enough group to justify a weekend for only the Poufbunnies and LGs. With that settled, we LGs began planning in earnest.

For several months, a dozen or so LGs gathered each evening in the chatroom to discuss the weekend. This would be our first outing and we were in a collective fright. Several of the LGs had still not even come out to their spouses, much less anyone else. The nightly discussion was filled with anticipation, trepidation and vacillation, as each of us alternated between voicing our fears and attempting to provide a brave face to the others so they would not back out. We began referring to the weekend as "camp" and what fun we would have while at camp. This, of course, confused some others who assumed we would be out in the wilderness in tents, instead of comfortable beds in warm rooms with full baths. We made plans, exchanged maps and explored how we would recognize one another, since (with one exception) we had not met and had no clue as to how other LGs look in drab (DRessed As Boy). I would be flying in from California, another would be riding a bus for 2.5 days from New Mexico, and the rest would be driving in from various points in the Northeast.

A week or so before the event, Aunt Tessy notified us that she would not be able to attend since she had just been selected as one of the two leads in a play. It took a whole lot of effort from each of us to hang in there and continue our planning. This was not the time for backing out and we worked on each other constantly to keep our spirits high. Several of us were fairly uncomfortable with going to an openly gay resort, even though this was a CD-only weekend, but Aunt Tessy had assured us that there would be chaperones at the resort to watch out for us... LGs (even dress-up ones) can never be too careful.

We agreed to meet at noon of check-in day in the parking lot of the Wendy's near the resort. I took the red-eye into Newark, stopping at a shopping mall on the way to the Poconos to get a much needed hour or so of sleep, and ended up arriving about 15 minutes late. Driving up, I saw a group of several men standing near the entrance of the parking lot. One of them was wearing a railroad hat, which I had been told to expect; I had told them I would be wearing a pair of Winnie the Pooh overalls. As I approached, they all called out, "You must be Taffy! Great to have you here!" For the first time I got to see what Liesel, Joy, Jenny, Erin and Pat looked like. They looked no different than any group of five men you would meet on the street. They were all pretty nervous about the weekend, chatting about this and that. By wearing Pooh overalls and ruffled anklets, I was much more "out" than any of them were just then. After exchanging greetings, we waited around for the seventh to arrive. After an hour and a half we decided to go check in anyway. The maps we had all been given were very detailed, and we had no fear that Melissa would be able to find her way to the resort, which she subsequently did.

Checking in, we found that most of us were bunked in Cherry House, a two-story building directly across the road from the main building (housing the restaurant and lounge). The members of the staff who greeted us were friendly and helpful, directing us to our rooms and giving us the schedule for the weekend. Aunt Tessy had told them about us and Erin had paid them a visit earlier to scope out the site. While the rooms were small, they had full baths and were warm and comfortable. We wanted to wash up and get changed. Unfortunately, Joy's bag, containing all of her clothes, including a dress she had laboriously scaled up from a children's pattern, cut out and put together, had gotten

Continued on page 68

Continued from page 67

misdirected somewhere along the 2.5 day bus trip and we had no word from the company as to when it would arrive.

Liesel offered Joy some clothes, as it seemed we had all over packed, each bringing whatever we could stuff into our suitcases on the slim chance that it just might be needed. Silly me, I even brought a bright fuchsia Lands End skater skirt swimsuit, but the pool was closed! We all met back in the reception area for pictures wearing our respective finery. I was wearing a red corduroy jumper and white Winnie the Pooh t-shirt, ruffled lace-trimmed anklets, red Keds and a soft-red bob wig. Everybody looked soooooo different! We talked like mad things among ourselves, each wanting to find out more about the others and what our interests were. Picture time, and everyone wanted pictures, although everyone was uncomfortable about anyone taking their picture...

Shortly after we had changed Aunt Tessy arrived in drab with a full beard and mustache. The part in the play demanded it and she could only stay through the afternoon of the next day because of rehearsals. No dress-up for Aunt Tessy, but she was accepted warmly and thanked often for organizing the event. In retrospect, it seems odd that an event which was originally organized for Petticoat Pond's Poufbunnies ended up being attended only by the LGs who visited the Poufbunny Chat. It seems that the LGs have virtually taken over the chat room for our discussion of camp and dresses...

Joy called the bus station and was told that the lost bag had finally arrived. I offered to drive her down to the station, suggesting that she change first as she would have to go in to claim the bag. At the time, I did not consider it strange to get into the car in drag and go driving through town. I was caught up in helping a friend and it needed to happen right then. On driving back to camp, Joy pointed out a K-Mart and said she had earlier needed something. I offered to stop and go on in with her, feeling strangely confident. Nope, we just had time to get back to camp before dinner, so we drove on. After dinner, while we sitting around talking, someone mentioned that the incredible precious French movie "Ma Vie en Rose" was playing locally, and I suggested that we all go to see it right then, just as we were dressed. The others were game and the staff checked the schedule, only to discover that we were already too late for the final showing. What a few hours had done to us! Time for more pictures

and long talk out on the patio before returning to the room for a shower and the cute lace-trimmed, bloomer bottom baby doll pajamas I had made last weekend.

Getting up the following morning, we were all bright and eager for breakfast. I showed up in a red knife-pleated tennis skirt, t-shirt embroidered with a flowered border containing "Taffy" in big letters, white lace/red ribbon trimmed anklets and red Keds. The others came in wearing beautiful square dance style dresses with multiple petticoats. It is pretty clear where all of the large size square dance dresses are going—the LGs are buying up them all... After a long and leisurely breakfast with much talk, we adjourned to the non-smoking area to prepare for a birthday party we had arranged for the afternoon.

The other weekend guests were adult CDs who busied themselves throughout the morning and afternoon in makeovers, nails, and viewing merchandise brought in for the event. As LGs, we had little interest in breast forms, corsets, fancy manicures or extended makeup sessions. The clothing being displayed was for a target audience much, much older than our assumed 10 year old average. 5" high heels was hardly what we were looking for, although it would have been nice if the local pageant store had been invited to bring in some cute communion dresses with someone to measure us to order for later shipment.

The birthday party was a smashing success. We played pin the tail on the donkey, took more pictures, made bead bracelets and ate our fill of delicious cake and ice cream. The party had provided us with the opportunity to change once again, with me switching into a pink Vitadini sweater, a pair of pink linen-look bloomers I had made the previous weekend, white lace trimmed anklets and shocking pink Keds wannabe sneakers. We were treated by the resort to several rounds of Shirley Temples and a candle on the cake which Joy had the honor of blowing out multiple times as each of us took pictures. Aunt Tessy brought some books on fashion from the 50's and 60's for us to drool over; which we did, pointing out which dresses we wanted and why. There was time for more pictures and more talk as we scrambled around the floor to pick up the beads which seemed to fall off the table no matter how careful we were in trying to string them.

A local psychologist running a survey of CDs stopped by to speak briefly with us. She had held a presentation in the

other room while we were having our party and was curious why we weren't in there listening to her. Neither she nor her assistant had ever encountered LGs before and did not know what to make of us. I had previously filled out what questions I could make sense of on her website, sending a note explaining my background which she claimed to have not received. Her survey questionnaire asked about sex change operations and sexuality; neither of which was of interest to any of us and she left confused, but promising to check out our websites.

Dinner was another opportunity to change clothes with most of the LGs putting on square dance dresses with multiple petticoats. I changed into a pair of black velvet overalls with a silver Tweety Bird applied to the bib, an applied Tweety Bird t-shirt, frilly lace/black ribbon trimmed anklets and black patent Mary Janes. The food was excellent, served promptly and the staff was extremely attentive.

(A side note: It was pretty clear than many of the older CDs really did not know what to make of us LGs. They knew that we could not "pass" as 10-year olds and couldn't figure out what was in it for us. Although some of them were sincerely confused about us, all of them were extremely cordial, gracious and even supportive throughout the weekend.)

After dinner was yet another opportunity for a new experience. The resort had scheduled a fashion show in which the people attending the weekend (and some locals) were the models, modeling an outfit they brought with them. For this event, the resort brought in a locally well-known "female impersonator" as the MC (she would later perform in the lounge). From one of the participants, we learned that the resort holds these "fashion shows" about every two weeks, although we heard that this night was the most populated by far.

I quickly changed into a flaming red bob, a beautiful pink silk border eyelet dress with multiple petticoats I had commissioned from Bill Jones of San Francisco, white anklets with a ruffle of the same material as the dress, white leather Mary Janes and a straw hat with a pink ribbon band and bow on the back. The four of us LGs who had filled out entry forms lined up with the "big" girls to be called. As the MC called us, we each paraded in, curtsying and twirling, answering one or two questions asked by the MC or the guests. The MC was totally clueless as to why we were

there, as were some of the audience who had come in for the evening. I got the impression that the newcomers looked upon CDs in a more sexual context, as a number of the comments and questions had a decidedly more "adult" flavor. This was reinforced later on in the evening when we were invited to the lounge, which we all declined. After all, we were all too young to smoke or drink.

Sunday morning was our final breakfast, a bittersweet experience. We had all had a marvelous time and had grown to know each other much better than we had anticipated. We understood the limitations placed upon each of us by our respective circumstances and gained an appreciation of just how valuable this weekend had been for all of us. We now knew who the person at the other end of the chatroom was and felt that we could demand openness and honesty of each other in the future. At least we felt we would know if someone was exaggerating. We acknowledged that there were other LGs who could likewise benefit from the experience and vowed to try to meet again for another weekend, inviting those LGs from England, Ireland and Australia with whom we had chatted long enough in advance that they could purchase discounted tickets. We took more pictures as each of us changed and packed our cars for the return trip.

Looking back at the pictures I took, I can see in the faces just how much each of us was changed by the experience. (I can't wait to receive copies of the pictures the others took.) I was able to interact with others who find the LG experience equally fascinating, questioning them about their history and life experience. Jenny, the 19 year old, commented that she almost felt she was "cheating" as she was able to relish an experience which most of us had to wait for half a century to enjoy. In unison, we codgers said, "No, it is yours to enjoy freely."

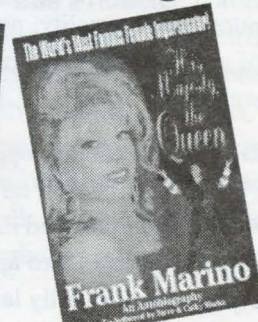
I recognize that the staff, not knowing what to expect of us in the beginning, went out of their way to make the weekend memorable and in doing so made it perfect for us. Although rain kept us from doing much outside, it forced us to stay together and learn to interact with each other. In the process we learned as much about ourselves as we did about each other.

Girl's classic fashions of the 50's & 60's:

<<http://www.geocities.com/FashionAvenue/1492>> "Everyday is a great day for little girls to dress-up..."

Only The Best

From CDS! • Books • Videos • LadyLike Magazine



Your Information Resource For The Next Millennium

Visit Us On The Internet • www.cdspub.com

CDS, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, Pa 19406

Voice: 610-640-9449 - Fax: 610-648-0257

Ask for Catalog "T" - info@cdspub.com

CDS has been serving the information needs of the transgender community since 1985.

Petticoat Girls

Vanity WEB pages available to sisters.
FEMME e-mail boxes \$12 per year.

FREE Web Space available to the wives of crossdressers
Also Wanted: Articles written by our wives for posting
Will host Chapter Web Sites - No Charge

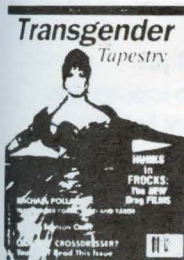
<http://www.ruralamerica.net/~kplace>

For More Info Contact Candy at: kplace@ruralamerica.net

or write to:

Rural America, P.O. Box 266, Albert Lea, MN 56007





Subscribe Now!!

Transgender *Tapestry*

P.O. Box 229
Waltham MA 02254

Tips & Tricks
News, Views & Personals

Only \$40.00 per Year

For Quickest Service


Call (617) 899-2212 with your Credit Card

Name _____

Address _____

City _____


Sally A Hunt, M.A. MFCB



Licensed Marriage,
Family & Child Counselor
(209) 227-0477

Individual Psychotherapy
Couples & Family Counseling
Gender Sexuality Women's Issues

Chevalier Publications
P.O. Box 1686
Tulare, CA 93275



**Write For A Price
List of Books**

The Femme Mirror

Advertising Rates

Per Year (4 Issues)

Full Page \$300

1/2 Page \$175

1/4 Page \$95

Bus.Card \$50

Please send us a copy of your ad, camera-ready if possible, along with your check or money order payable to Tri-Ess to:

The Femme Mirror
8880 Bellaire B2, Ste. 104
Houston, TX 77036

Tri-Ess members deduct 20% from all rates. Gender Community events and publications free on reciprocal basis.

Newsletter Editors

Please send a copy of each edition of your newsletter directly to:

FEMME MIRROR
c/o Frances Fairfax,
8880 Bellaire B2 Ste.104
Houston, TX 77036

We would like permission to reprint letters and articles from your publication which are of interest and significance to our readers. We promise to give proper credit for anything we print.

Many Thanks..... MIRROR Staff

Classroom Presentations

by Lori Lorr OR-4319-L

As some of you may be aware, I have been doing presentations to college classes in the southern Oregon-northern California area for a while now. Early last November I squeezed in another presentation at Southern Oregon University. This was to a large Human Sexuality class of thirty-five first-year students who were not very worldly yet, but it went extremely well. Some were completely unaware of crossdressers, so this was a big event for them. After class four girls came to lunch with me and kept me there for two hours in a two way discussion.

.....In late January I spoke to a Psychology class at the University of California at Davis. This was the largest group yet, forty students, more sophisticated as most were seniors. Their response was really overwhelming in their generous compliments and the insights they gained.

While at the university I went to the Sociology Department to introduce Lori. This contact led to another presentation on April 20. The Criminology Department also indicated an interest in having Lori speak.

On May 24 I spoke to another Psychology class for Prof. Pierson at Southern Oregon. She has become a good friend to Lori and has yet to meet my male side. Perhaps I should be getting a fee for all these appearances, but the universities have no funding for honorariums.

What I really wish, however, is that all the outreach would produce more active members for Rho Gamma Chapter and Tri-Ess. So many we reach through our newspaper ads as well as my appearances have either monetary or spouse problems. We are spread so thin. I should say I am spread thin.

(Ed. Note: Lori reports that she has lost her dear wife Jo Anne to cancer. Jo Anne was very supportive of Lori, and even in her illness spent many hours counseling with inquiring crossdressers by telephone. Sisters like Lori and Jo Anne are the true heart and soul of Tri-Ess.)



Dr. A. S. Nubel

Psychotherapist
Specialized in Treatment of
Gender Identity Disorders (TV/TS)

Individuals
Marriage & Family Groups

683 Donald Dr N.
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

(908) 722-9884

Fax: (908) 722-0666

Insurance Accepted

Tri-Ess Supporting Membership Information - also complete reverse side

 Yes! I would like to join in supporting Tri-Ess, *the Society for the Second Self, inc.*

Please select one of the categories and levels of suggested minimum supporting memberships shown below

All Tri-Ess supporting members receive - Membership Card and *The Femme Mirror*, our quarterly magazine, along with special discounts on selected products and services. Sustaining and Life Members receive special recognition and additional valuable membership benefits. Crossdressers will also receive the Tri-Ess Membership Directory, its supplements and a free personal listing in the Directory. Supportive Wives who join with their crossdressing husbands in the "Couple" category receive the quarterly newsletter, *Sweetheart Connection*, and early registration discounts for 'SPICE', annual spouses' conference. Wives and female partners may also join in the "Individual" category to receive their own copies of *The Femme Mirror*.

"Individual" Supporting Membership categories
Intended for Crossdressers only (see definitions)

"Couple" Supporting Membership categories
For Crossdressers and spouses or female partners

*New - 16.7% Special savings - 2 Year Option**

*New - 16.7% Special savings - 2 Year Option**

 Annual \$36 per year \$60 for two years*

 Annual \$48 per year* \$80 for two years*

 Sustaining \$96 per year* \$160 for two years*

 Sustaining \$120 per year* \$200 for two years*

 Life Member \$500 * one time payment

 Life Member \$700 * one time payment

 Other, Please specify your optional or additional gift amount \$ _____

Please check the appropriate statements: I am - OR I am not - over eighteen (18) years of age.

 I am - OR I am not - A CROSSDRESSER - defined as an individual, typically a heterosexual male, who occasionally chooses to make a social role presentation considered appropriate for persons of the opposite genetic sex, for the purpose of personal expression, without the intention of entering a program leading to sex reassignment surgery, and without attempting to attract a partner of the same genetic sex. Your femme signature is satisfactory.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Payment Options: Enclosed is my Check or Money Order payable in US Dollars to "Tri-Ess"

 Charge my membership to VISA or MasterCard or American Express

Account Number _____ Expiration Date ____/____/____

If paying by credit card, please enclose a separate sheet of paper showing (1) your name as it appears on the card, (2) the billing address, and (3) your credit card signature. This information is confidential and secure. Your credit card statement will indicate PM Publishers Inc, Katy, Texas, and show the payment amount you have indicated above, plus an additional 5% donation. (\$36=\$37.80, \$48=\$50.40).

For your security, The Society makes every effort to protect the confidentiality of all contributors, members and applicants. Your true identity, personal check and credit card information are safe with us.

* One time payment in full is required for these categories. Crossdressers financially unable to afford the minimum annual contribution amounts shown above should write for optional payment plans, reduced payments or waiver.

[The terms used herein assume the Crossdresser is male. Female Crossdressers are also welcomed. Please write Tri-Ess for detailed information]

the Society for the Second Self, inc. / 8880 Bellaire Boulevard, B2, Suite 104 / Houston, TX 77036-4621

Tri-Ess Email: TRIESSINFO@aol.com

Tri-Ess Telephone Helpline: 713.349-8969

Please mail this completed form and payments to:

Donna Martin
P.O. Box 597859
Chicago, IL 60659-7859

Donna Martin's Email Address
djmtris@aol.com

Tri-Ess Supporting Membership Information - also complete reverse side

For privacy and security purposes, Crossdressers and their wives, and other members, may choose to use assumed names. Most Crossdressers adopt a feminine name. If you do not have a name, have fun. You might select one that is similar to your real name, 'Sam' becomes 'Samantha', 'Donald' can be 'Donna', or choose one that defines your femme personality, 'Hillary', 'Mae', 'Dolly', 'Marilyn', your first girlfriend, or favorite movie actress. You can use your true surname, or choose a modification of your last name. However, it is usually advisable and we recommend you create a completely different femme surname. The choice of your name(s) should be made thoughtfully to meet your personal security needs and preferences. Even your mailing name may be another pseudonym. For additional security and convenience, we encourage Crossdressers to use a US Post Office Box or similar commercial mail receiving service. Simply rent the box in your true name and list any others names, including your femme name and your mailing name, as authorized to receive mail.

If you have been a former member of Tri-Ess please give your membership number, if possible, state of residence at the time, and the femme name used for your previous membership

Previous Tri-Ess number _____ Name _____ State _____

___ For "Individual" Crossdressers (Wives may also join as an 'Individual')

___ Check here to have a Tri-Ess Big Sister' contact you by mail

Femme Name _____

Mailing Name _____

Mailing Address Line 1 _____

Optional Line 2 _____

City, State and Zip+4 _____

___ Check here to indicate a wife Joining as an Individual Please give the membership number of your Crossdressing partner _____

___ For "Couples" (Crossdresser and supportive spouse or female partner)

___ Check here if you wish to be contacted by the nearest Tri-Ess Chapter

Crossdresser's femme name _____

Spouse/Partner's name or other adopted name to be used _____

Mailing Name(s) _____

Mailing Address Line 1 _____

Optional: Telephone Number in case we need to contact you _____

Ask for: _____

Optional Line 2 _____

City, State and Zip +4 _____

Optional: Secure Email Address: _____

The "Friends of Tri-Ess" Supporting Membership categories below are intended for non-Crossdressers; individuals, organizations, vendors and other entities that support the educational aims and purposes of The Society. "Commercial" Members receive discounted advertising rates and other important benefits, write for complete details.

- ___ Friend of Tri-Ess "Annual" Member minimum contribution \$ 24 per year
- ___ Friend of Tri-Ess "Commercial" Member minimum contribution \$ 48 per year *
- ___ Friend of Tri-Ess "Benefactor" minimum contribution \$100 * Please Specify \$ _____

Organization Name (If applicable) or Business Name (Commercial Members) _____

Mailing Name of Contact Person _____

Telephone Number _____

Mailing Address Line 1 _____

Optional Line 2 _____

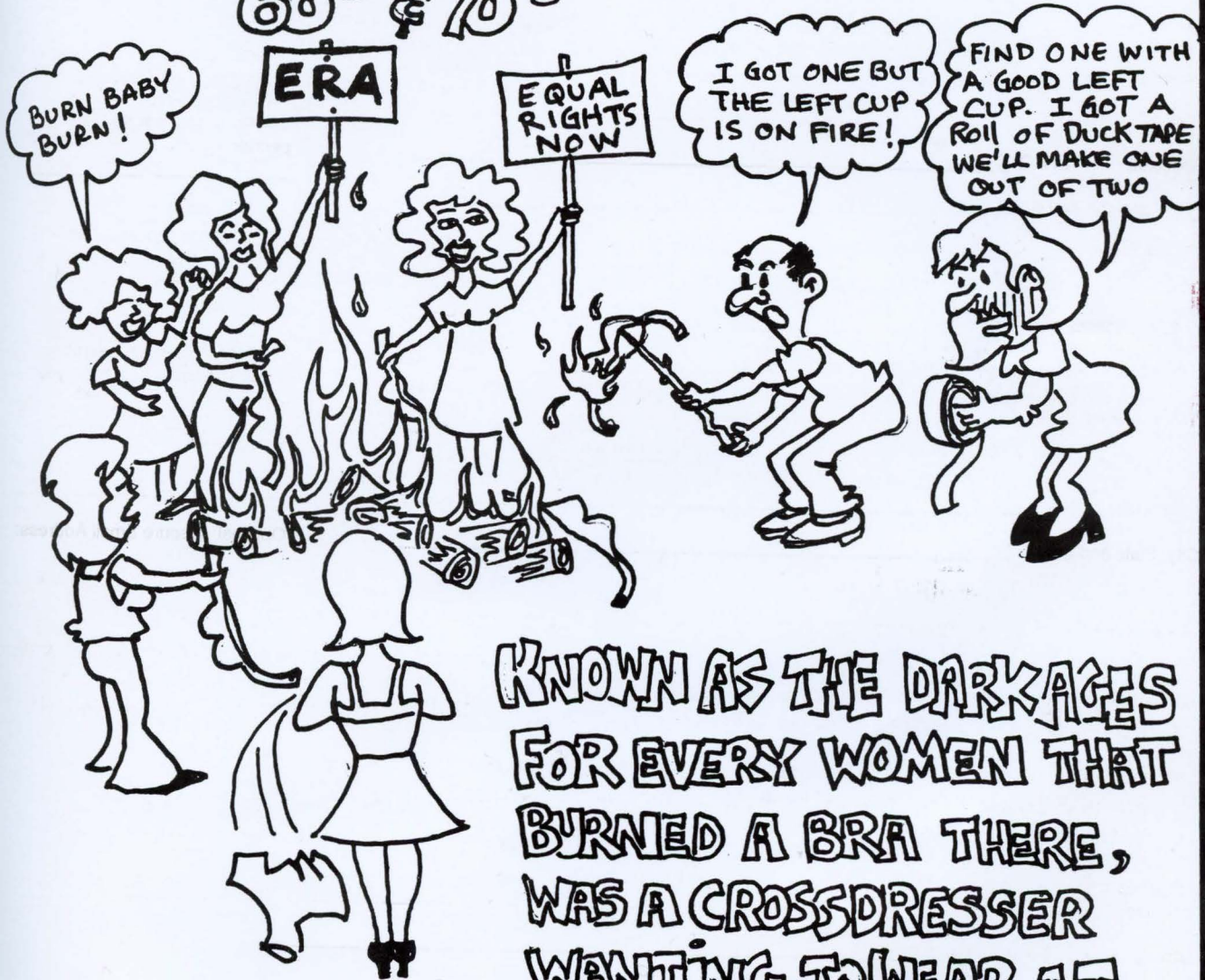
City, State and Zip +4 _____



BIZARRE HUMOR

By Molly Anne

FEMINIST MOVEMENT OF THE 60'S & 70'S



KNOWN AS THE DARK AGES
FOR EVERY WOMEN THAT
BURNED A BRA THERE,
WAS A CROSSDRESSER
WANTING TO WEAR IT.

A Crossdresser's Bill of Rights

by Jane Ellen Fairfax

1. We have the right to expect our spouses to accept that our crossgendered side is an integral part of us that cannot be "cured" or "wished away."
2. We have the right to make available educational literature for our spouses, suggest means by which they can talk with other spouses, suggest couples' counselors who provide a level playing field for both crossdresser and spouse, and otherwise encourage our spouses to educate themselves about crossdressing.
3. We have the right to reasonable outlets for our need for crossgender expression, subject to sensible limitations posed by job, family and social considerations.
4. We have the right to honest and open communication with our spouses, with negotiation and compromise on both sides, particularly in regard to acceptable outlets for crossgender expression and in matters pertaining to telling our children.
5. We have the right to freedom from guilt imposed from without or within.
6. We have the right to belong to support groups that promote our own personal growth and well-being, help us to understand our spouses' needs, and provide tools for relationship-building.
7. We have the right to support groups for our spouses that encourage mutuality, communication, and renewal of relationships.
8. We have the right to freedom from discrimination in jobs, housing, and public accommodations.
9. We have the right to be treated with dignity and respect by our spouses and families, and by society.
10. We have the right to be asked for our permission before our clothes, makeup, jewelry or personal items are borrowed.
11. We have the right to personal time in which to get in touch with our own masculinity and femininity, pursue our personal growth, and work on creative projects.
12. We have the right, and indeed, the responsibility, to contribute positively to our family, community and society while expressing our gender.