

Cross-Port Inner View



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The next meeting is August 17, 8:00 PM at Golden Lions

Potpourri



Bobbi L.

ordinary gals. They were F.I.s Charles Busch, Lypsinka, and Linda Simpson. Authored by Charles Busch, the ten page overview of drag culture claims that "...far from being over...drag is only just entering its golden age. Proclaiming that drag is actually

"The yen to cross-dress is by no means restricted to the male psyche; we are also in the throes of a burgeoning 'drag king' movement."

It's not the heat it's...just too darn uncomfortable wearing makeup, nylon, and lace when the "humiture" reaches the level of King Kong's armpits. Thus, the July meeting had a lot of us show up in guy clothes. Bobbi, Jill, Michelle, and "Tall" Paula were dressed as "MEN!" Thank goodness for Elaine, Linda, Kristine and the hard-core TVs, else the only femme's would have been the TS's & G.G.s.

Speaking of "real" girls, Cross-Port was fortunate to have amongst our group that night an attractive young lady offering free make-overs. Erma Sanders (former *Everybody's News* "From the Stalls" columnist) manages a Mary Kay business and had heard that some of us were in desperate need of cosmetic counseling (no one I know, of course). Well, she was a joy to chat with about her personal history and her burgeoning relationship with the local transgendered community. She enjoyed being with us, too. (We are, after all, just a bunch of beautiful people trying to say something important).

And now to the really important stuff:

"Decade of the CD" revisited:

The media have been buzzing with TV news recently.

In a parody of a recent *Vanity Fair* cover, the July 17 issue of *New York* magazine modeled three alluring ladies in provocative dress. But these were no

approaching the level of "respectable art form," Charles Busch traces the evolution of the art from its lip-syncing infancy to its more mature presence on New York's fashion show catwalks. Busch believes (as do I) that "we worship...female performers and long to create some of that magic in ourselves."

This view of drag is balanced with a counterpoint piece from G.G. Kim France who takes a defensive position against drag's willingness "to suffer" in the quest to become "...better women than real women..." She points out that when Bloomingdale's sought a new figure model for its female mannequins it selected RuPaul. That, she says, represents an unattainable physical standard more threatening than Kate Moss' undernourished frame. And in case there is any doubt about Ms. France's opinion of the lifestyle the last few lines of her essay clarify the mud:

"Drag queens will insist that they don't really want to be women, they just want to honor us, darling. Which is exactly how Al Jolson felt about his minstrel shows." **BAM!!!**

"Bringing movies out of the closet"

[Cincinnati Post, July 20, 1995]

Listing five summer films already out or soon to be released, Duane Dukek of *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, considers the "objectively, if not outright positively..." way mainstream Hollywood films have portrayed gay and lesbian themes and characters (once again, no mention of a separate transgendered existence). The article featured a publicity photo of "To Wong Foo, Thanks for everything, Julie Newmar." John Leguizamo looks yumilicious; Patrick Swayze poses sultrily, but it's Wesley Snipes who takes the prize with the most impressive transformation.

One of the films mentioned in both pieces is the documentary *Wigstock*. Locally, the film had a run at the Esquire. I missed it but I'm betting that some of you viewed it. Let me know if it was truly deserving of S & K's two down-turned thumbs. I will make an attempt to rent it from Blockbuster when it makes its way onto video.

And speaking of video, my thanks to Cindy West who picked up a copy of *Glen or Glenda*, the cult favorite from Ed Wood. Once only available from TV gouging outlets, this Rhino Home Video selection may be purchased for under \$10.00 from Suncoast Video stores at the local malls. After viewing this classic(?) I am so very thankful that in my more closeted period I did not shell out the \$69.00 one purveyor of perversion demanded. In addition to this Ed Wood-work, Rhino offers more of this tortured soul's art. *Jail Bait*, *The Violent Years*, *Orgy of the Dead*, *Night of the Ghouls* and *Plan 9 From Outer Space* are included in this collection. Additionally, Rhino's cleverly composed *Ed Wood, Look Back in Angora* (reviewed in *InnerView* February, 1995) is available at the same price.

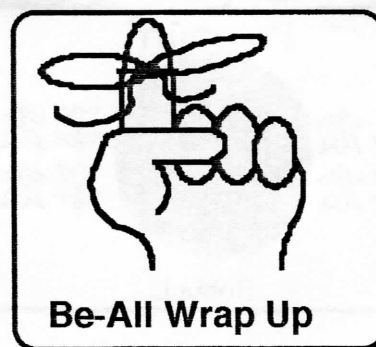
What could possibly be more bizarre than Ed Wood? How about the story out of Bountiful, Utah ["**Man is missing wife**" *Cincinnati Post*, July 14, 1995]? No, the article was not about some guy searching for a partner (well, in a way it was). This husband, married over three years, is now "confused, embarrassed and broke" because his wife not only "took" him for \$40,000 during the span of their marriage, but also defrauded him by not revealing that **she was a man**. It turns out that Leasa Jensen is in actuality, Felix Urioste and that Bruce Jensen had no idea until convinced by police. I guess, sometimes ya' never know!

And the bizzarro mondo is no stranger to the Queen City, either. *Jerry Galvin's World* July 24, 1995 revealed that a young lady flying to San Jose from CVG sat next to a gentleman who confessed that not only does he enjoy wearing women's clothes, but that while appearing to her to be wearing menswear,

his casual outfit was indeed purchased in a women's store. The lady asks him, "Are you wearing a bra now?" He replied, "Oh no...When I travel, I wear a camisole."

Finally, your checks can now be as glamorous as you are. *Checks in the Mail, Inc.* of California offers the Marilyn Monroe check. A full-color likeness of the movie star will, as the company promotes, make it possible for anyone to cash in on Marilyn's good looks. And if you combine that with the deviant fantasy of the Marilyn Monroe stamp permitting you to lick her behind, well, paying bills has never before had such appeal.

Stay Healthy. Stay Beautiful. Avoid Runners.



June 14, 1995

Dear Be All Committee Members:

I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend and be a part of the Be All. As I look back on the experience, I realize it served a lot of purposes for me. Most importantly, it confirmed to me that what I thought I was feeling and thinking is, indeed, what I am feeling and thinking. That may not make sense to you, but it was like shock therapy to make sure I wasn't fooling myself. I found that, with very few exceptions, I had been amongst a group of very nice ladies who had taken great care with their appearance. Frankly, sometimes I actually had to remind myself that they were crossdressers. I think that may be the ultimate compliment. It's certainly meant to be. Most of the people I had the opportunity and privilege of talking with were wonderful, caring human beings. I've discovered that crossdressers make better conversationalists than most of your run-of-the-mill "regular" guys. I guess I also discovered that I will actually go out in public wearing skintight clothing. Oh my God, where will it all stop? The bottom line is, I think I've discovered that I'm centered, but it took the Be All to allow me to see that.

I thought I'd take a moment to put down a few thoughts of my own from the weekend, as well as questions that surfaced from conversations I had or seminars I attended:

Partners: A huge need people seemed to have was how and when to tell a person they cared about. I'd urge them to educate their partner and prepare them (as Mark did for me) with books and articles that will help the person better understand crossdressing as well as the spectrum of feelings they'll probably experience. I'd also urge them to set the stage by explaining what type of relationship they would like to have with their partner. The partner needs to know the context of the relationship.

Girlfriends vs. something more: No one directly addressed it in anything I attended. "It" being the physical relationship. If I brought it up in conversation, people jumped on it and wanted to talk about it. It seemed to be an important topic that was missing from the mix.

"I found that, with very few exceptions, I had been amongst a group of very nice ladies...."

Hair: The men with longer hair were interested in how I felt about Mark's long hair. Some of their partners had problems with the length of their hair. I might suggest that in addition to suggestions on how to style hair for their feminine selves, that suggestions for how to style their own male hair might be helpful. From a woman's point of view, I think it's helpful if their masculine and feminine hair look different.

How to tell children, family or friends: The experts said there's not a lot of available data to help with this (especially the kid part), but it's obviously an issue and source of concern to many.

It would seem to pull the group together, and maybe give some couples the opportunity to talk in a safe environment, if there were more couples

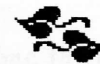
seminars. It's sad to think that this could be the only time or first time that some couples might be able to talk with each other. All the seminars, even the ones with tears, were not downers, but very uplifting. These types of experiences could have a positive affect in couples' relationships.

Lastly, I thought it might be helpful to think of a way to get the "partners" more actively involved. Maybe all the wives could put on a little show for "the girls". I think it would be a good morale builder for the guys to know that their wives were involved and having as much fun as they were. I know many partners were in town. I met a few at some of the seminars. But, they seemed to disappear from any of the large get-togethers.

Thanks, again, for the opportunity to attend the Be All. And, thanks for talking me into being in the show. It got me into a lot of conversations I might otherwise have missed. I'm happy to know such a great group of people, and look forward to getting to know you all better.

Sincerely,

Susie



Be All Committee
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear friends,

I thought you would appreciate some feedback on your first Be All conference. Since I attended as a vendor, I can only give you my impressions from that viewpoint. I did not attend any seminars, but I did hear that some were extremely well attended and appreciated.

Things I liked:

Separate vendor rooms - gave a great deal of flexibility and freedom in scheduling hours. Great for security. Bathrooms were appreciated.

Saturday night - Big Band Music. It was absolutely the BEST Saturday evening entertainment I've seen at a conference in a long time.

Meals - were very good, not too heavy. Wednesday night's buffet was strange to a person not familiar with Cincinnati chili/

Things I didn't like:

Separate vendor rooms: I know I'm schizoid. The bad part was not getting "curious" traffic.

End of the hall and no signs: I was put out at being at the end of the hall after being one of the first to register for vendor space. It should have been first come, first served.

Registration packet: I saw that some vendors were allowed to put flyers into the registration packets. Had I known that this was possible I would have done so too.

Fee: vendors paid the same fee to attend as did participants, but we don't get to participate since we're minding the store.

Scheduling: With little or no time between seminars it is hard to do any business. It gets all crammed into the last half hour or so. Seminars and vendors separated by twelve floors worsened the problem. You need to have more time between sessions so people can shop.

Overall, for a first time effort and on short notice, you all did a great job and should be proud.

JoAnn Roberts



July 7, 1995
Crossport Gender Support Group
Cincinnati, OH

Dear Friends,

My sincere apologies for not getting this questionnaire to you sooner. I...hope that the information may yet be of use to you.

This Be-All was of great personal significance to me as it marked my first anniversary of coming to terms with my gender gift. Exactly one year before the Saturday Banquet, I emerged from the darkness and took my tentative first steps into human contact *en femme* Tentative, indeed. I was peeking around

corners and furtively darting through the corridors during those first moments.

What I have experienced over the intervening 365 days could only be dreamt about in early 1994....

At any rate, my attending your Be-All in Cincinnati was very important to me, for the anniversary alone. I was not disappointed. While I didn't attend as many seminars as I would have liked, I was extremely pleased with what was available.... Two of the highlights...were the Johnny Mack Big Band (Wow!) and the religious service Sunday morning. You can be extremely proud of what you created. The program was so full of activities, both serious and fun. The vendor area was wonderful and the arrangements for separate rooms was very good. It provided a little more privacy for a first-time wig buyer, etc.

"All of the folks whom I encountered from Cross-Port were just wonderful to me!"

Although I did not stay at the Holiday Inn, my encounters with the staff were superb. Sunday morning the hotel manager treated me with complete respect and acceptance.

One of the table servers was so accommodating and showed genuine affection for all of us. One of the most wonderful outcomes of these transgender events is in winning the hearts of an entire hotel. I've yet to hear of a case where the opposite has occurred.

Another significant experience was with Bobbi L.'s Photography. After one short year, I dreamed of having a nice formal portrait of me. One year before, the idea of pictures was scary. What a difference a year makes. She offered a package that I could not pass up. Her manner was so nice that I was sure the pictures would be lovely. When I opened the package I was absolutely stunned. The result brought tears to my eyes. She had truly "captured the fantasy" and brought out a contented, feminine expression in my face that I never thought I'd see.

All of the folks whom I encountered from Cross-Port were just wonderful to me. I mentioned Bobbi. Sadly, I am poor with names, but the Mistress of Ceremonies of the Miss Be-All Pageant was a class act. The ladies who assisted Rev. Bonnie Daniel were wonderful.... Besides conducting an important seminar on living with a transgendered person (with Laurie G.), Beverly L. did a fabulous job in handling an efficient

registration and other unsung tasks. Of course, there is the irrepressible Linda Buten...she obviously has a true love of life and provided a spirit which touched everyone.

As for next year, I hope to see many of you in Detroit, although I am somewhat shaky on attending myself (too close to home and work). However, one of my Columbus friends said to me, "You won't be able to stay away!" She might be right.

...You wonderful people provided me with an oasis of hope. Bless you all.

Sincerely,

Susan Hall



**Up the Street...
and around the corner**

Heather Phillips

Oh what a night! With IRS winding down, last Friday night we had our section good-bye party. Monday we will be at less than 15 people when at our peak we had about 90 people. Its going to seem empty. Enough of that! Let's start at the beginning:

Friday started like any other Friday, except instead of dressing down, we dressed up. I wore my red suit with a white blouse and a red ribbon tied in a bow at the collar. I had requested and was granted four hours of annual leave in order to keep a commitment to speak at the New Spirit MCC's Men's Group. Paula and I were scheduled to speak about transgender people and our issues.

I arrived a little before the scheduled time of 8:00 PM, Paula was there waiting for me. The meeting didn't get under way until 8:30. Of course Paula and I were our charming, witty selves; so naturally we had our audience hanging on our every word. Oh please! No, it really did go well. I have talked to several different groups, but the questions this time were a little different and I geared my initial remarks a little differently to fit our audience.

I enjoy talking before groups, and I feel it is very important to get our message forth. I did confess to the group that when I joined *New Spirit*, the last place I thought I'd find myself was at the Men's Group. Paula and I had a good time and when we

left, I am sure they had a better understanding about us.

Later that evening I was supposed to meet my co-workers at Barleycorns in Newport for our end of season party. I asked Paula to join me. Most everyone I worked with would be there. So a few minutes after 10:30 Paula and I left for Newport. Paula followed me in her car and miraculously was able to park next to me. As we were walking to the bar, Paula said, "People say I have golden ____ being a lady, I let you choose your own euphemism but **you** going to Barleycorns at this time on a Friday night with all these young people...?" So Paula pretended I was Gina, and followed.

I really never gave it a thought. I am so accustomed to going wherever I want, it never occurred that we may have a problem. A group of young people were gathered in front of the gang plank and a couple of them made a few remarks, but I used my normal defense: I pretended not to hear them. Once inside I found my group and, as I turned to introduce Paula, I panicked. Paula who had been right behind me wasn't.

I started looking for her. Having been exposed to members of our community who, when confronted with new people, bolt and head for the closet, I was concerned. I went outside, but no Paula. I looked back down the aisle but with the crowd I couldn't see her. I decided to join my group and keep an eye out.

Shortly, Paula joined us. I should have known Paula wouldn't bolt, after all isn't she Cross-Port's feather-weight champ? Paula had met a friend and stopped to chat. I introduced her to the members of our table. We sat with my two best friends Penny and Bessie.

It was a sad time and a happy time at the same time. We were happy for Bessie because she had managed to get a detail that would keep her working through at least the end of September. But it is at the Gateway Center, so Penny and I won't be able to share dinner and spend break time together. That made it sad for us. During the season it was the three of us, Bessie, Penny and me. Penny and I will be typing letters for another 1 to 5 days and after that, who knows?

"Of course, Paula and I were our charming, witty selves; so, naturally we had our audience hanging on our every word."

Working at IRS has been both good and bad for me. Good because I needed a job, and the people

I met were so accepting (and I needed to be accepted). Bad because it is filled with good-byes. I just don't need any more good-byes in my life. Shakespeare wrote "Parting is such sweet sorrow". Bill, you don't know what-in-hell you are talking about, there is **nothing** sweet in parting!

Until next time, this is Heather, up the street and around the corner of Greater Cincinnati. May God bless and keep you in His love.

ADDENDUM:

This is Paula telling the readers the "whole truth" about Heather and the IRS party. As far as the four wise-asses at the gangplank, I wanted to punch their lights out and extend my record from 1-0 to 5-0. But Heather reminded me to stay focused on the fun inside, not the trouble outside.

Inside, I saw a line dance teacher who only knew my male self, so she met Paula, ready or not.

Then I met the IRS people and I was very impressed with how well they accepted Heather. Everyone was running from table to table hugging each other, with Heather right in the middle of everything. And they treated me great, too - any friend of Heather's was a friend of theirs.

I'm sure it was much different six months earlier when she started at IRS. I believe that they were less understanding back then. It's to Heather's credit that she made the effort to win these middle-age Northern Kentuckians over. Well Done,

Heather!

From our Readers:

Letters, etc.

I guess it's about time that I made a contribution to the Cross-Port newsletter. I don't know if anyone noticed or not but I have not been coming to as many meetings as I have in the past. At one time I went to over 30 meetings in a row without missing one and one day hoping Elaine would miss one and in a few years I could set the record for the most meetings attended, but things change, and they changed for the better.

**"On July 5, 1994 I met Debbie.
In September, 1995 she will
become my wife."**

On July 5, 1994 I met Debbie. In September, 1995 she will become my wife. Debbie is very supportive of my desire to dress and she buys me jewelry and gives me advice on outfits. I know that she enjoys the feminine side of my life. We have dress-up nights here at the house and will watch movies, listen to music and shoot pool all evening long.

**"Hopefully, soon we will be
back at our old meeting place,
or will find a new one."**

So why have I been missing about half of the meetings? Well, first I have a schedule where I work four days for twelve hours a night and then I am off for four days and the way it ends up I have to work half of our meetings. In the past when I was lonely and before Debbie met Debbie, I would take a vacation or a sick day to come, but now Debbie is the center of my life and I take my time off on Saturdays so we can be together more often on weekends. I have to work half of the weekends in the year. This does not agree with me at all.

Well onto other things. I have bought four pairs of high-heeled sandals this year and have my eyes on another pair at Baker's. I phone-ordered a pair from Frederick's but they did not know if they were in stock or not. I have some new outfits in mind but I'll get to that later.

I would like to say a few things about the *Golden Lion*. For starters, the place is a dump. The bathroom is too small. In the main room there's not enough seating and the building is too cramped. The *Golden Lion* is not a good a good place for our new members or people who are afraid to come out dressed. I was laughed at on the street (not the first time) when I came to the May meeting. While this does not bother me much it is embarrassing for Debbie.

We were up at the old Christopher's a couple of months ago and we were told by management that they would like to see us have our meetings there. Hopefully soon we will go back to our old meeting place or find a new one. I have heard some people complain about the distance they would have to drive to go back up to Monroe, but these same people never seem to complain about driving several hundred miles somewhere out of state!

After I got laughed at the last time I decided I had to take a close look at myself and try to make some improvements. My major problems are large calves and a thick neck. I can cover my legs with either long skirts or a pantsuit. Other than wearing a scarf I don't know what to do about my neck. At least

the experimenting will be fun and it will give me a chance to buy some new outfits.

Keep your wig on straight.

Debbie C.



**The Perils of Paula:
a continuing saga
"The Church and Me"
Paula Harmston**

I've been a member of the Mormon Church all my life but I've been inactive the past fifteen years so I don't know anyone at the local Mormon Church. The head of a local Mormon Church is called the "Bishop." He donates 25-30 hours per week, holds down a regular job plus family obligations.

When attending church in male clothing I never got the warm and fuzzy feeling that I've seen other Mormons have when they give their testimonies in church. I've never been conversant with the scriptures and I've not achieved the milestones that most devout Mormons achieve.

As my twenty year marriage has been unrewarding and I've currently been separated for fifteen months, I've thought of going back to church, trying to re-activate myself. But I wanted to try different methods because my other attempts failed and since I'm not getting any younger, time becomes important as my salvation is at stake.

For the past year I've attended a local non-denominational Christian church. Before attending I got permission from the pastor to come cross-dressed and over the following months I acquired some semblance of spirituality. I started to pray, I found my Bible, I began reading it.

As much as I enjoyed going, it wasn't enough. The Mormon church has so much more to offer me. But I didn't want to go back as a male because Paula is more receptive to spirituality than my male self. So the thought crossed my mind, would the local bishop let me attend cross-dressed? Now the Mormon Church can be really, really conservative, so my chances of convincing the bishop were not good as I called him for an appointment.

I saw him in late March (I wore a man's business suit) and told him about my situation. After two hours he said that he didn't know what to tell me. The church had no official policy on this subject but he did know one thing, that God loved me.

We met two weeks later and after an hour of discussion we just looked at each other. I knew he

wanted me to drop the idea but, on the other hand, he knew that one of his jobs was to get people into church and generally turn no one away. So I said, "Bishop, you haven't said if I can come dressed." And he replied, "But I haven't said you can't." He said that he would consult his superiors and get back to me.

I didn't hear back from him so I wrote and said that I planned to attend on July 2nd which gave him plenty of time to prepare his congregation if he so chose, or to simply tell me that I couldn't come. If he said that I couldn't come cross-dressed, then I wouldn't. In our church the bishop rules and you usually don't cross him.

Not hearing from him, I went to church on July 2nd, sat near the front, dressed like many other ladies, in a long, floral dress. The chapel was full, people on both sides of me, shoulder to shoulder. The Bishop conducted the meeting and when it ended I stopped by and said hello. He smiled and shook my hand and I left. The following week was a repeat of the same.

During these two meetings no one communicated to me in any way as I wasn't availing myself to that kind of interaction, I wasn't attending Sunday School. Only the main meeting where the sermon and communion are done. Based on the first two meetings I was satisfied with how things were going and I thought that the bishop was passively agreeing to my attending cross-dressed since he had done nothing to the contrary and the congregation paid almost no attention to me.

"When attending church in male clothing I never got the warm fuzzy feeling...."

My guess was that less than ten people knew a cross-dresser was attending church which was fine. But there had to come a day when more knew because I wanted to attend Sunday School and I just couldn't continue to be a stealth bomber.

A few days after the second meeting I called the bishop's secretary and asked where my Sunday School class met and who was the teacher. She said that my class met in the main chapel ten minutes after the main meeting and she gave me the teacher's name and phone number.

I asked her if she knew that a cross-dresser was attending church. She said, "No." So I said it was me and asked her for her thoughts. She didn't seem to have an opinion one way or the other. I asked her how the Sunday School teacher would react and she advised that he was reasonably open-minded. I said that I would call him as I thought he

was owed the courtesy of knowing that I was coming to his class, similar to me telling the bishop.

The Sunday School teacher was not open-minded. In our phone conversation he immediately challenged me with, "Are you gainfully employed?" and, "Does it give you a buzz?" from the tone of his voice I heard, "How can a nut like you hold down a job and how intense is the orgasm?"

These questions caught me off-guard but I gave decent answers: "I work for one of the largest employers in town." and, "There's no buzz." Better answers would have been, "I wasn't aware that employment was required. Jesus was unemployed his last three years." and, "Same buzz as your wife gets."

**"I told him that other churches
...would gladly have me as a
member and that I had some-
thing to offer... if only they
would give me a chance."**

I sensed that he wanted me to get lost but he kept coming back to the fact that the bishop knew about my attendance so he said that he would call the bishop for his input. I gave him my home phone number if he wanted to talk some more.

He ended by saying that I might go unnoticed in a big crowd but in a room of only twenty-five people I will get a lot of attention, especially if I sit near the front of his class. I told him that I wasn't coming for the attention and that I don't sit in the back of the bus or come through kitchen doors. He seemed to like that response, possibly because it was a manly jousting kind of thing.

The next Sunday, July 16th, I attended the main service and when it ended, waited for the Sunday School class to begin when a man came by and said that the bishop wanted to see me in his office. The bishop told me that I had to quit coming cross-dressed and as he started to talk I could tell that his engine was racing so I gave him the floor.

The gist of his message was that I was creating a disruption not conducive to the spirit that he was trying to build within the church; that I was claiming the rights and benefits of women to which I had no claim; that I was making a mockery of womanhood; and that I was sinning just as if I was fornicating.

He also told me to go home and be the husband and father that I should be and that I could come back anytime so long as I was wearing male clothing. He talked for about 5 minutes and then he just sort of ran out of gas and asked me what I thought.

I told him that I hadn't noticed attendance going down or any one leaving on my account. I said that if his own secretary and Sunday School teacher didn't know that I was there that I was hardly a disruption. I reminded him that I hadn't talked to anyone and hadn't used the rest rooms, that his analogy to fornication was rather extreme and that I wasn't claiming the rights of anyone, only my right to worship in my own way and that as my personal salvation was at risk, that the end does justify the means.

I told him that other churches in town would gladly have me as a member and that I had something to offer his church if only they would give me a chance. I said it was nice when ninety-five percent of the members fall into a cookie-cutter mold but what does God do with the rest of us? I doubt that he just throws us away. I finished by asking, "What is the goal, to drive me away for another fifteen years, or to get me active again by building on the momentum of the past year and three weeks?"

I asked what he would do if I came back the next week and he said that, while he wouldn't post guards, he would start "disciplinary proceedings" which I assume ultimately leads to ex-communication. He then reached for his Bible when I cut him off and said, "Bishop, I'm going to go before you or I say something we later regret." He looked at me like he really wanted to read to me and I looked at him like "we're done." I stood up and I walked to the door, he opened it and I went to my car and drove home feeling absolutely crushed.

It's been three weeks since that confrontation and I've given it a lot of thought (I have not been back since). I know that bishops aren't perfect but in this case, if he really thought it was a sin, why didn't he feel that way on July 2nd and 9th and when he shook my hand last spring? His actions on July 16th were a 180 degree turn-around and came as a complete surprise. He had my name and phone number; why didn't he call me before Sunday and just tell me that he had changed his mind?

I recognize that the bishop possibly reacted to pressure from the Sunday School teacher, his secretary, or other members. It's easy for any church leader to follow the suggestions of members far more influential than me.

I'm disappointed that my detractors didn't take the time to get to know me; to learn about transgendered issues; to learn that I have a heart and that all I wanted to do was to worship in a way that works for me. Interestingly, the bishop and I do agree on one thing, God really does love me.

cont'd

epilogue:

I was in San Francisco on business and met with the Bishop of San Francisco on July 29th and asked if he had any experience with gender-challenged Mormons, since the Bay Area is home to so many transgendered people. He told me about a post-op who was baptized into the church after her surgery and is now a Sunday school teacher. He added that she is very active in the church and is a "wonderful person". Wow, I came out of that meeting walking on clouds!!

I know how to contact the post-op and hope to meet her during my next trip West in October (since I have many questions for her regarding how the church handled her situation, how did the local members handle it, etc. And the Bishop of San Francisco agreed with my local Bishop, God really does love me which was self-evident by his revealing this new information to me.



POST-OPinion

Diane Torrance

Last week I wrote to a friend with whom I had not spoken since before my surgery. I was describing my social life (practically non-existent by most definitions) when I realized that except for work, "I've blended into the vast melting pot of Midwest womanhood." In the words of Riki Anne, I've become a "stealth transsexual," a respected member of the community!? How did this happen? Is it desirable?

To the first question, I think it happened because I just went about my business, neither seeking special treatment nor calling attention to myself by manner or dress. In short, I have consistently striven to be just like every other woman on the street. I may not always pass, but my behavior fits society's preconceived idea of "normal."

Desirability is a much tougher question. All of the transsexuals and a fair number of the cross-dressers with whom I've discussed this subject agree that being born "one way or the other, doesn't matter which" would have been a preferable option. However, since we're stuck with our "non-standard" behavior, do we boldly go forth, claiming our constitutionally protected rights of Freedom of Assembly and Freedom of Religion, as Paula is prone to doing, or do we bury ourselves in a different closet

which can be just as confining, just as uncomfortable as the one we left?

"At every opportunity we need to interact with the Gay/Lesbian community and the local NOW chapters."

As an example: I had over four and a half decades of living before I transitioned, but I am now forced to deny much of my past. I was on the periphery of a conversation between two men about their experiences in Vietnam. I could have contributed something worthwhile, however to do so would have raised questions I did not wish to answer.

The act of changing closets, a.k.a. transition, can also be a very painful process. The "hall" connecting the two closets contains a gauntlet which must be negotiated. Being open with our identity forces us to remain in the hall.

Okay, enough metaphors. There is a third option. We can maintain our security when close to home, but be as outspoken as our natures will allow when outside the confines of our "protected area." How about in another city? How about Washington, DC during the first week in October for The First Annual Gender Lobbying Day?

Somehow I convinced Riki Anne that I am trustworthy. She sent me a packet containing the details of Lobbying Day. If you are interested in this worthy endeavor, you may contact Riki directly at: 212-645-1753 or 714-4874 or e-mail at Riki@Pipeline.Com. Operators are standing by!

Should you feel discomfort talking to someone famous who appeared in a national magazine with a meat cleaver in her hand (sounds like an attitude problem to me - hers), I would be pleased to provide copies of the packet to all who ask. See me at the meeting or contact me through Cross-Port.

The purpose of *Lobbying Day* is to contact all Senators and Members of the House (or their legislative assistants) so that when a bill which affects us (health care, employment, veterans benefits, etc.) comes to the floor, we will have an established relationship when we ask for their vote. This is really not about getting in anyone's face or having our faces shown on channel 5 at 11:00pm; it's about "assuming our responsibility in this participatory democracy." I expect this can be done without sacrificing our safe havens back home.

[Note: October 2nd, the first Monday in October, is also the opening day of the new Supreme Court term. Perhaps we should all stop by to visit

Clarence and the rest of the judges who are charged with defending our constitutional rights.]

N.O.W. CONVENTION

As discussed last month, the National Organization for Women held its annual convention in Columbus July 21st -24th. Twelve members of the gender community attended. Those attending felt it was "quite successful." The resolution, which did not make it to a vote due to time constraints, reads in part:

THEREFORE

Let it be resolved that NOW adopt a policy that supports the lives and identities of transgendered and transsexual people;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED

That NOW chapters examine current policies and practices that discriminate against the transgender and transsexual community.

(Gee, maybe we are all sisters under the skin!)

One of the earliest signatories to the petition was Ms. Ellie Smeal, past-president of NOW and before the convention ended a NOW National staffer who works closely with current president Patricia Ireland, pledged to work toward passage at the board meeting in early September in Chicago.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

The purpose of getting involved in NOW and even Gay/Lesbian groups is so that we might add our voices to the lobby for in Health Care Bills and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) and as a group, might be included. These are important issues for all of us.

Okay, so you're a crossdresser and this doesn't really apply to you, right? WRONG! Suppose someone you work with sees you out dressed and reports you to your employer. You could be discharged. In most cases, you would probably get your job back; but the trauma involved in returning to work isn't worth the price of not being involved now. I AM AN EXPERT ON THIS, TRUST ME!

At every opportunity we need to interact with the Gay/Lesbian community and local NOW chapters. According to Riki Anne, the NOW chapters which were most responsive to the needs of the gender community were those that have active trans-people in their local organizations. I can't imagine that the same would not apply to gay/lesbian organizations. We are after all, really lovable folks.

To that end, as Cross-Port "re-invents" itself we are trying to expand our presence within the local gay/lesbian community. On August 5th, four Cross-

Port members attended the Greater Cincinnati Gay/Lesbian Coalition membership meeting. We made contacts with Stonewall and the Gay/Lesbian Community Center. Our activism is long over-due.

The hall is luring me back...



"Campfire Girls"

Jill Arnold

July 7, 8, and 9 I hosted the second annual GCGLC (Greater Cincinnati Gay and Lesbian Coalition) camp out at Cowan Lake. Those of you who did not make it really missed a great time. There were ten G.G.'s from GCGLC and three Cross-Port girls.

Kaila and I arrived Thursday afternoon and registered, then we set up my camper and a couple of spare tents that I carry. We then went into Wilmington and did our grocery shopping for the weekend ahead. Upon returning to camp and putting the groceries away, we ate our supper then sat around and enjoyed the cool evening while talking.

Friday morning we got up, ate breakfast then tidied up the camp sites. We explored the camp grounds and talked to other campers, lending a hand where needed. Later that day, Melony arrived.

Two GCGLC members, Carol and Kim, brought their dog, Lacey. Carol said that Lacey did not like men but accepted me as Joe, probably because she sensed Jill in me. For a dog to look at Joe and sense Jill really did a lot for my ego.

After supper on Friday we sat around the campfire and had long discussions as a group. We talked about our life styles, our jobs and our families and friends. We discussed the reassignment surgery procedure and got a detailed step by step description from Kaila, including just what is done with the penis. The GCGLC women found this enlightening. Our discussions lasted well into the wee hours of the morning.

Saturday morning found us eating breakfast together, then we split into smaller groups and enjoyed a number of activities including fishing, hiking and riding bikes. Our lunches were scattered throughout the day, whenever anyone got hungry.

**"...talking to the ranger with
half of my face still made up.
I guess you could say he
really did talk to Joe/Jill"**

For supper Saturday, each of us fixed a covered dish, contributing to a most delicious pot luck. For the first time on this trip, Jill dressed for supper. Although I was a little nervous I quickly felt like one of the girls. We even heard a neighboring group of women wondering about our GCGLC signs. One of them made a comment about the fact that there were nothing but women on our campsites (CHACHING!! WE PASSED).

After supper, Amy, Heather, Donna, and "Guff" went fishing. A small boy fell off his bicycle resulting in the handle bars being rammed deep into his thigh. The women stopped the bleeding until the life squad arrived. Later, someone locked her keys inside her car and sent the park ranger to my site to ask for "Joe/Jill" (that's exactly how he asked for me) She knew that I was a policeman and would probably know how to get her car open. About fifteen minutes before that I had returned to my camper and changed into boots, jeans and a t-shirt.

I was still taking off my makeup when the ranger arrived. I thought that maybe something had happened to one of the girls. I (hurriedly) tried to wipe it off with a towel but wound up going outside, talking to the ranger with half of my face still made up. I guess you could say he really did talk to Joe/Jill.

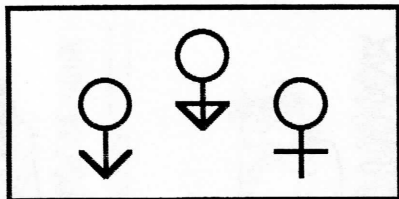
After dark everyone sat around talking and I had a drawing for door prizes, three personal stereos with headphones, which I had donated. Melony did the drawing because she was ineligible, (she had won last year).

Noon on Sunday found us saying our fond farewells with hugs and promises that we'd keep in touch and would all come back again in October (I'll have flyers out soon).

I have pictures of our camping excursion which I will show at this month's meeting.

Love,

Jill



Future Fun

August 17th - *Cross-Port* meeting at the Golden Lion

September 14-17 - *Paradise in the Poconos, Canadensis, PA*

September 21st - *Cross-Port* meeting

September 29, 30 and October 1st - *Southern Comfort* in Atlanta

October 2nd and 3rd - Gender lobbying day in Washington, D.C.

October 5-9 - *Fall Fling*, Cape Cod, MA

October 13-15 - 3rd annual GCGLC campout, Cowan Lake

October 19th - *Cross-Port* meeting

October 26-29 - *Fall Harvest*, St. Louis, MO.

November 16th - *Cross-Port* meeting

November 17-19 - Erie Sisters' *Riverside Gala*

December 21st - *Cross-Port* Christmas party

For Sale:

Roberta has a darling "Cinderella" gown in a size 12. (see photo)

Only \$5.00

contact: Bobbi at the next meeting



[Roberta as "Cinderella"]

Publication Notice

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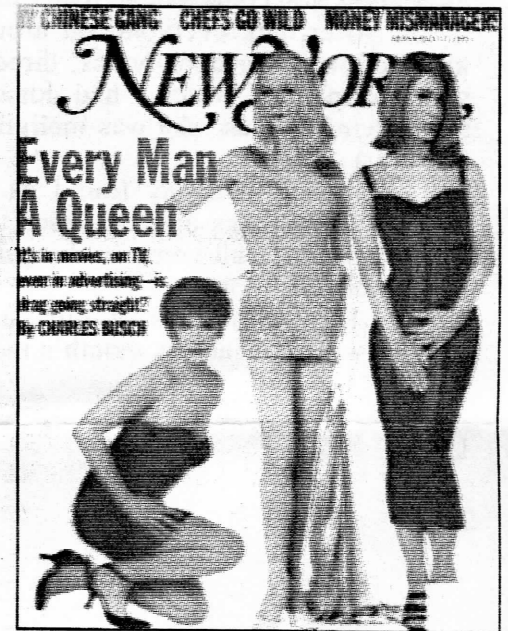
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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, transsexuals, and their families and friends.

Cover fit for a queen

The cover of the July 17 New York magazine might make you do a double take. These pouting beauties are men — drag queens to be exact. From left, Charles Busch, Lypsinka and Linda Simpson pose in a spoof of a recent Vanity Fair cover dedicated to Hollywood. The story, written by Busch, discusses the phenomenon of the "mainstreaming of drag." We had no idea.



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 July collection.....\$60.00
 One subscription..\$18.00
 One newsletter.....\$2.00

August InnerView Staff:

"Head" honcho.....**Bobbi L.**
 "Slave" typists.....**Paula H. & Diane T.**
 "Creative Juicer".....**Jennifer M.**
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