

The Monmouth & Ocean News

A Publication of M.O.T.G.
Monmouth Ocean Transgender
An Affiliate of Renaissance Education Association

M.O.T.G., P.O. Box 8243, Red Bank, New Jersey 07701

February, 1994

High Notes

by Marybeth, Editor, M.O. News

Many, many thanks to Alison Laing, a very dear friend of M.O.T.G., for speaking so eloquently about the **Berdache tradition** and other fascinating aspects of Native American culture. Our January 29 meeting was truly an educational evening for all members and guests of M.O.T.G.

Please mark your calendars with the following **meeting dates**:

February 26

March 19

April 30

May 28

June 25

July 23

August 27

September 24

October 22

November 26

December 17

Although we try to have our meetings on the 4th Saturday, some meetings were changed to accommodate holidays and other special occasions. Please make a special note of them.

Our **February 26** meeting will feature a presentation/discussion on **acceptance** by **Danielle**, Co-director of M.O.T.G. There will be a speaker followed by time for discussion and sharing by other members. Please read Danielle's article for more information.

Our next business/newsletter meeting will be on **March 11 at 7:30** at **Elaine's condo**. Attending business meetings is a great way to meet people. Your editor thanks you in advance for sending out the newsletter, as she does not have time to do so! Please see Elaine for directions.

Starting at our **February 26** meeting, our small room will be available for a **T.S. Support/Rap Group** for all those interested. The room will be reserved for our transsexual members for the **entire** meeting time on **February 26**.

Beginning on **March 19**, the schedule for the small room will be as follows:

8:30 - 9:30 - Significant Others Support Group/Rap Group

9:30 - 10:30 - T.S. Support Group/Rap Group

Members of both groups are asked to respect the time and privacy of the others. We would appreciate volunteers to help coordinate discussions for both groups. Please let us know if you are able to help out. We need you.

Please see **Elaine**, our treasurer, if you have not yet paid your dues for the year. Dues are **\$25.00** a year for **members** and **\$10.00** a year for **associate members**.



As you can see, our advertising campaign is in full swing. The M.O. News now offers **full page ads for only \$90.00 a year!** **Half page ads are \$50.00; business card-sized ads are \$25.00.** Please contact **Marybeth** via the P.O. Box if you wish to advertise in the M.O. News or know of anyone who does. **Please support our advertisers!!** We need to patronize businesses and services within the transgendered community. We would like to welcome our newest advertisers, **Creative Design Services** and **Forever Chic Consignment Boutique.**

Our first fundraiser will be a film festival, "Cinema en Femme," on **March 5, 1994** at our usual meeting place. The cost of the evening is **\$20.00; bring a date, \$10.00 extra.** The price includes a special cinematic presentation, soft drinks and popcorn, and door prizes. **Proceeds will go towards building up the treasury of M.O.T.G.** We hope to be able to afford an M.O.T.G. telephone to better communicate with our members.

Please send contributions to the M.O. News to **Marybeth** by the **5th** of each month via the P.O. Box. If you are writing an announcement/article about yourself, please put it in the 1st person: e.g., "I will be giving the presentation."

One of our members has not yet been able to attend a meeting due to work restrictions. She would like very much to correspond with transgendered people from M.O.T.G. Please contact Terry at the meeting our via the P.O. Box for more information.

February Meeting

by Danielle Richards, Co-director, M.O.T.G.

Up to the present we concentrated on having programs featuring a speaker offering a presentation of a topic related to gendered behavior. February's meeting will be a brief departure from this format and will feature a short presentation followed by an opportunity for members to open up and tell their own story. I will be giving the presentation which will focus on acceptance of the gendered phenomenon. This presentation will be followed by one of our members, Cathy, telling her own sincere story. Other members will have an opportunity to share their feelings. Don't forget to bring your spouse/significant other!

Literary Procedures

by Vikki M., Librarian, M.O.T.G.

I have been appointed the new librarian by the Board of Directors. In order to inventory the holdings, please let me know at the meetings what M.O.T.G. items you have checked out. A listing of the M.O.T.G. library will be published in the newsletter in a few months. If anyone has any ideas on how the library could be more useful and/or titles the library should have, please let me know. The Board has decided that anyone wishing to borrow a book or tape **MUST leave a deposit.** The circulation period will be **three months.** As the library develops, procedures may change.

Of course, all donations of material are deeply appreciated.

Barbara A. Susinno R.N., C.P.E.

Jessica Lynn Porter C.P.E.



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**Women as Civil War Soldiers
A Review**

by **Vikki M.**

There is a wonderful article in **Smithsonian** magazine of January 1994 about women who dressed as men in order to serve in the Union army. The author, **Laureen Cook Burgess**, recently won a lawsuit against the National Park Service, fighting for the right to participate in re-enactments of Civil War battles dressed as a man. Although she does not claim to be a crossdresser, she has done a lot of research on crossdressed women in that war, ostensibly to support her lawsuit.

To date she has accumulated evidence of 127 women who served. Because women were not allowed in the Army, if one was discovered, she was summarily discharged. The real numbers will never be known. Many of the women she documented were never found out. The most touching items are a series of letters written by Pvt. Rosseta Wakeman to her family. These are ordinary letters from an ordinary soldier. There is something about reading a person's private correspondence that brings a shiver of recognition, like being startled by yourself in an unexpected mirror. Although most of the article is about Pvt. Wakeman, other women are mentioned and daguerreotypes of them are included.

Ms. Burgess plans to publish the annotated letters in a book "An Uncommon Soldier" this year. The publisher is the Minerva Center in Pasadena, Maryland, which is dedicated to the study of women in the military.

A nice thing about the Smithsonian article is that it is very sympathetic and matter of fact. No media hype or glitz here. A copy of the article is available from the M.O.T.G. library. The Smithsonian magazine should be available in most large libraries.

A Plea from a Sister

by **Dianne W., member, M.O.T.G.**

Girls, I am from Toms River and I really need a ride to our meetings. My night vision is not as great as it once was. Even a ride from the computer parking at rest stop 100 on the Garden State Parkway and back would be greatly appreciated.

I remember my days in the service when, if anyone had the eyes of an owl, I did. However, age has a way of catching up with us all. I have thoroughly enjoyed the meetings I have attended and gnashed my teeth over the ones I missed due to rain.

The oncoming lights blind me. On the Parkway I have no problems, because the lanes are divided. But leaving the meetings, I do have to drive slowly. Because I am dressed and I know how much the cops love to pull people over for DWI offenses, I feel that I am taking a tremendous risk.

Possibly someone could offer me a helping hand; that is really what our group is all about. I will be happy to "kick in" for gas.

[Editor's note: If you are able to provide a ride for Dianne, please let her know how she can contact you via the P.O.Box, and we will pass along the information. Please include your phone number if you are willing to have Dianne call you to make arrangements.]

Dianne's Helpful Hints

by Dianne W., member, M.O.T.G.

Did you know that your local Woolworth's carries black nylons, two pairs for a dollar eighty nine? They wear like iron, are sexy, and hide razor nicks. Be sure to buy several packages. When one runs, just replace it.

K- Mart's brand of lingerie is the same as Frederick's of Hollywood at half the price, and even better on sale days. This does not mean we should walk around with a folded back catalog in our hands doing comparison shopping using the excuse, "Dianne told me to check it out."

Want to add to your wardrobe? Check out the local bag sales at churches in your area. Remember not to stuff the bag but roll up the items you like. (Remember those days from the service, when this was the first lesson you learned while you were packing a duffel bag with those horrible "Rambo" clothes you had to wear. You were probably wondering if they ever turned out anything in O.D. trimmed with lace.) If you are the bashful type, you can always say you are buying for your sister who is on welfare, has three kids, and a husband who abandoned her.

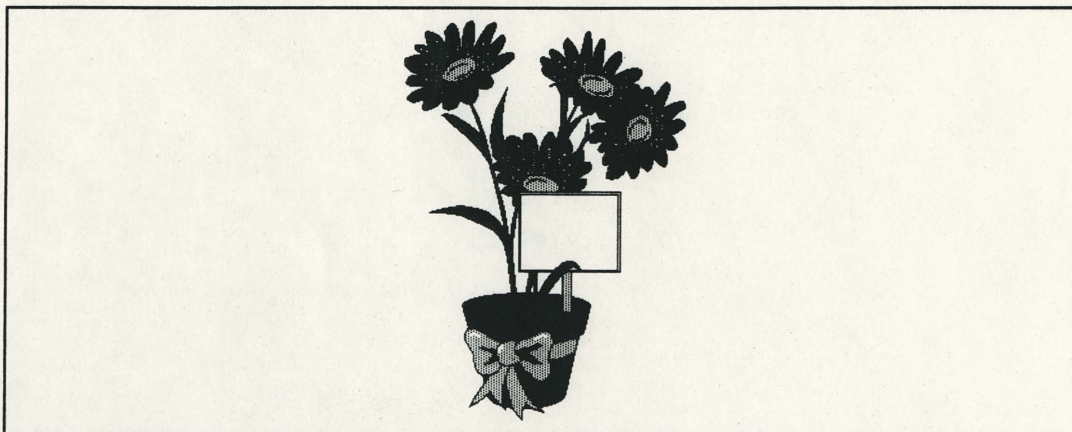
Would you like to have bounce when you flutter about? Can't afford those three hundred dollar life-like prostheses? Try baggies filled with wild bird seed or unpopped popcorn.

Your new heels are too tight? That pair you saw that was created just for you? Try putting them on first thing in the morning, because the foot has shrunk from sleeping. Wear them for twenty minutes each morning for two weeks and they will stretch. To speed things along, you might try treating your synthetic shoes to a warm toasting with a hair dryer at night. Do this sparingly.

Will it fit? Try the wonderful magic number "twenty." Add twenty to the dress or slack size and if your waist falls within two digits you have selected the right size for you. Note that this information will never be found in the Sears catalog section.

Are those slacks I see long enough for me? To hold them to the waist is inviting "those looks." However, if you hold the bottoms together and allow the waist band of the slacks to touch your ankles, you look like a wise shopper checking workmanship.

We are part of a "put down" culture. Remember that "that girl" over there is you and I and take "her" shopping with that in mind. Merchants love our money. That is why all those nice things were designed for girls just like me AND YOU.





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