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2-1995

February 1995

Buffalo Belles

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Recommended Citation

Buffalo Belles, "February 1995" (1995). *Buffalo Belles Newsletters*. 60.
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BUFFALO BELLES**NU PHI CHI

President: Denise Miller V.P.,Treas.: Janice Gnau Newsletter: Kathy Lorraine

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Dear Sisters,

We started the New Year out with a terrific first meeting. Braving the first real Buffalo weather of the season, was a fine turnout. The intrepid souls out that night were Jean H., Patty J., Janice G., Kathy L., Collean D., Joan c., Nancy, Frances L., Dana D., Holly I., Rene, Michelle, Julie, Tammy Z., Jackie with Yvette and Dee Dee. Also there were guests Jeniffer, Kurst, and Starrie.

The feature for the evening was a makeup session with Mary Kay. We had representatives Barbra and Evelyn. They did quite a session! About half of the girls participated. Each girl got a makeup tray/mirror to use while going through the whole makeup routine of skin care, preparation, application etc. All of the reports I've heard, were quite positive. I sure wish I could have participated in the event, but had to come in Drab for the second meeting in a row and couldn't stay long. Figures, those would need the most help, don't get it!! Now, if we had an orthopedic surgeon there who could show how to be six inches shorter, I'd have camped out for a week to be first in line!!

This was probably a record attendance for a meeting. It was for Pizza eaten! Two party sizes and our usual assortment of chips etc.

We met in the alternative site. Why we had to move from the regular site is not known. We were scheduled for the regular, but were forced out at the last minute. Hopefully we will have this straightened out soon. This isn't really a problem per say, as the alternative site is excellent also. The problem lies with any first timers that may show up. With the snow, the fire escape was't safe to use. For those familiar with the facility, there isn't any problem.

If you wish to further avail yourself of the services/products of Mar Kay, you can reach Evelyn at 684 8435. They liked our group very much. It was a first for them to do such an event for a group as ours. Support our friends! Now it is New Year and tax time in upon us, don't forget Janice for your battles with the IRS!

Kathy

The upcoming meeting will be a business meeting. Denise promises to be there, and if I can convince Jean to bring along her VCR once more, we can finally view the Speaking As a Woman video. If anyone has any ideas, complaints, suggestions, etc. This will be a good time to bring them up. I know Denise is interested in trying to put on an 'event' this coming summer. She has been looking into local hotels to stage from. We can hear what she has at the next meeting. I'm not sure we have the size to do such an undertaking, but think we should lend our support to the two that we have already in place; Riverside weekend in November and the upcoming Xpressions Spring Gala. (only nine weeks away). Janice should have some color brochures at the meeting for this event. Any ideas for another Buffalo Nite Out III out there??

* * * * *

We have an interesting new booklet in the library. It is the CLT Breast Plan. It tells of how to enhance your breast development without the use of hormones. The author claims her breast size to be a 34C. This is a permanent method, not just for the weekend. Does sound to be plausible, but I think I'll stick with my own method of figure enhancement naturally, remove your kidneys for a better waistline silhouette!!!

* * * * *

Our guest policy has been refined a bit. Guests can only make two appearances as a guest. After that she must join or up her membership to full. We feel that after two "tryouts", if we don't pass the guests standards, she should look elsewhere. If you bring a guest to a meeting, you are responsible for her. Guests must understand what it is that our group stands for and our code of conduct. The one you signed when joining.

We are close to having our new hotling. The number may still appear in this issue elsewhere. Or be given out at the next meeting. The primary purpose of this is two fold. The first as a means of outreach. We will begin to try to "push" out existence before the media more. Perhaps a weekly ad in Buffalo News, Pennysaver etc. Listing in the various Gay publications. We greatly need a PR Gal. Someone to get the word out. Any volunteers out there?? Remember how alone you felt at one time?? There are probably hundreds of sisters out there in WNY who could benefit so much from our sisterhood. Finally there will be a group for them to call. But they need the word, Sister!

The second purpose is for updates on what is happening. Other local events will be publicized, such as special bar events, Rochester, and hopefully a last minute update of the meeting room. Call before leaving, and you'll know if we are downstairs or up.

* * * * *

A reminder to the few who haven't renewed their membership. Dues are due!! For those who only wish to be a sister by mail, it is fifteen dollars. For those wishing to attend, the cost is twentyfive. This is the last newsletter you will receive if you haven't paid! For those who chose not to renew, would you please let us know how we failed you. Please. We want to do better.

* * * * *

HOW NOT TO BE QUOTED BY JANICE GNAU

This is a follow-up and further information to the Halloween article which appeared in the Buffalo News on 10/31/94 and in the Buffalo Belles December newsletter.

Due to a phone call from Kathy I left my name and phone number with Mr. Racz (Buffalo News reporter) answering machine. He called back a short time later and we talked for about twenty minutes or so. By the time we talked he had already talked to several individuals including Terry Bradley (from the Rochester CD Network) and Cheven Davis (a well known Buffalo Female Impersonator). I believed by the time we talked he had the working version (if not most of the article) of the article completed.

We basically confirmed what he had talked about with the other individuals. The part I found interesting was how my response surprised him a bit and differ from the information he had compiled. The following is close to the quote or statement that appeared in the Buffalo News (BN) and what my (JG) statement was.

BN: It's a more accepted time of the year for a man to shop for women's clothing.

JG: No difference now versus any other time of the year.

BN: Many men say they resort to ruses such as for my wife or girlfriend to acquire their wardrobe.

JG: I don't volunteer any information but if the shop clerks ask they are told the truth.

BN: I try them on at home.

JG: I know my size but if I want to try them on, I do it in the store

BN: Some shop by mail to avoid any hassle.

JG: Always shop in person.

BN: High holy days for crossdressers.

JG: Amateur night.

The only quote I did receive in the paper was that I did a lot of my shopping at the Boulevard Mall.

It was clear to me during our phone conversation he had the basis of the article done and was looking for clarification and verification by myself. I believe he was dissappointed that I was giving him a complete different set of answers. The only item I was disappointed in is that I tried to obtain a mention of the Buffalo Belles name and address in the article and the reporter refused or was unable to do so.

A short while after that phone conversation I received a call back from the reporter requesting if it would be possible to obtain a picture of some individual. I resisted my first, second, third, etc. impulse and decided it would be dumb for me to do so. It was finally decided that our Canadian representative Teresa (who was visiting me for the weekend) would do so. I told the reporter we had an individual who would do so but she was not a crossdresser but a transsexual. He said that was fine so the only remaining questions was where and when.

I said any place after a few hours should be okay. That time would be for me to get my act together, just because I wasn't going to be in the picture doesn't mean I wasn't going to be there. He asked what would be more convenient, my house or some shopping center or store. I told him that my house would be more convenient but then I asked him that wouldn't a picture at some store or the mall be more representative of the article. He quickly agreed to the mall and called back a short time later that he would have a photographer available in about four hours, done and agreed to.

So keep in mind that while reporters are suppose to be impartial and for the most part they are, they can still put a slant on any story and tell you in a honest and frank way only one side of the issue. Sometimes it is not what is said but what is not said.

Next issue: Meeting with the photographer

1995 accounting as of January 20, 1995

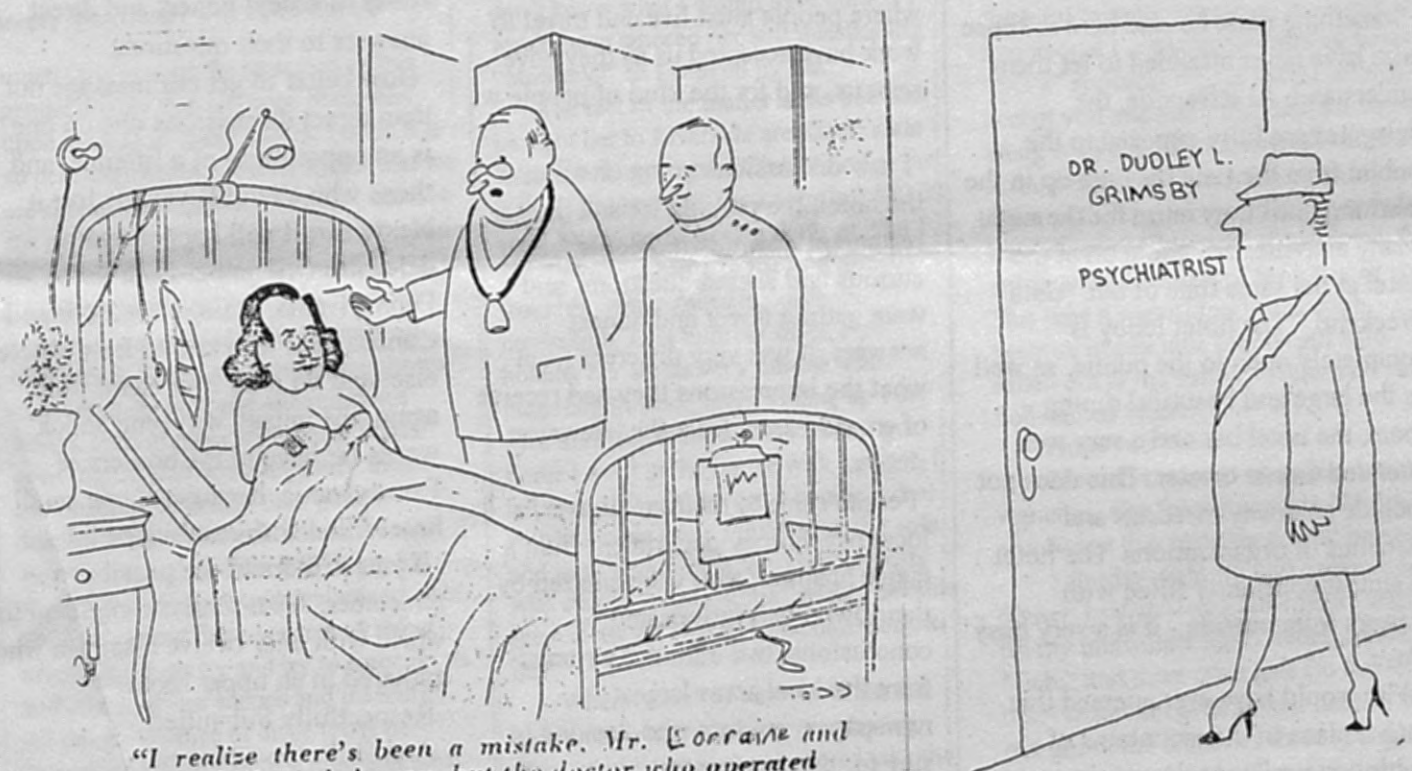
Yearly dues	14 @ \$25	\$350	
Meeting fees	17 @ 5	85	\$435
Room rental	4 @ 20	80	
Copies		24	
Refreshments		23	
January pizza		34	161
			<u>\$274</u>
			====

Fourteen paid members is a long way from the fourty we need for a break even point and the number of members we do have.

Many thanks to Barbara and Evelyn for their Mary Kay makeup session. If you wish to contact them or order any products/services their #'s

Barbara 689-6819
Evelyn 684-8435

As noted elsewhere in the newsletter Kathy went under the knife (no she was not schedule for SRS) on the 21th. By the time you read this she will be home and resting. Hopefully she will be back at the future meetings.



"I realize there's been a mistake. Mr. Lorraine and we'd like to help you, but the doctor who operated went back to Denmark this morning."

Due to the number of members from the Buffalo Belles who attended Riverside 1994 and to encourage other members to go in the future I am going to re-print a number of articles and letters which appeared in Mirror Images (the newsletter of the Erie Sisters). I have attended all three Riversides so far and hope to attend many more in the near and far future. Jenice



Riverside?

It's all about people!

I have always had the impression that it took exciting people to make exciting things happen. After three years of the trek to the "Riverside Gala" I believe it with all my heart. Every year is better than the last and the delegates leave with a sense of pride and real accomplishment.

Honestly, I wish the Erie Sisters, and the "Riverside Committee" could take

the credit - but, the credit goes to many people. How could we have known we were going to almost fill the hotel with exciting, fantastic people?

Something must be said here to those who have never attended to let them understand. At Riverside, the delegates are fully exposed to the public from the time they get up in the morning until they retire for the night. Many activities are going on at the hotel at the same time of our "Gala Weekend." The hotel lobby is completely open to the public, as well as the large and beautiful dining room, the hotel bar and a very well attended dinner theater. This does not include company meetings and meetings of organizations. The hotel is almost constantly filled with visitors from outside - it is a very busy place.

Who would have ever guessed that such a place in the mountains of northwestern Pennsylvania; in a very small town by the name of Cambridge

Springs would become the Mecca to which CD's would come the weekend before Thanksgiving every year? And who, in their right mind would frankly give a damn? The time was wrong, the weather would stop people from coming, no one could find it. At the beginning we heard all the reasons of why it could not be done and, we decided to go ahead anyway.

What has happened in the three years is now history, one of success, wonder and excitement for everyone. The community is now pretty much open to us and next year we may go about anywhere we would like to go. We have made friends of both local and visitors to the hotel which is beyond measure. A small town, basically a farming center and a place where people must live and travel to work have accepted us as they have seen us, and for the kind of people we are.

I saw discussions going on all over the hotel, the parking lot and the restaurant downtown. People were curious and asking questions, and were getting direct and honest answers. It was very different from what the impressions they had received of crossdressers from the television shows.

People came to us from all over, a local psychology department from a major hospital, who were amazed by their own observations and conclusions, two editorial writers from the local areas largest newspaper, vendors who decided to stay for the evening festivities, and local business people who opened their doors of their businesses and

hearts to us. And last, but not least, the Management and Staff of Riverside Inn who look forward to our weekend now with a warm welcome.

What has happened, so many things, and everyone of them very positive. The occasion is very special, because those who attended are themselves very special. A monument is being built stone by stone and person by person. The event has become a credit and an example to everyone in the CD community.

What have we learned? Well, for one thing which anyone will admit, it is very difficult to lie to anyone wearing a dress, heels and your wig and make-up. That people are curious and are ready to accept honest and direct answers to their questions.

How better to get our message out than direct discussions one on one? It is an opportunity of a lifetime, and those who attend Riverside live it. Next year, it will happen again, delegates will gather from Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and Canada, and who knows from where else, and do it all over again. And again, the impact will send shock waves far beyond the borders of Pennsylvania, because of one small hotel filled with exciting people.

If you still doubt the possibility, remember, Jesus Christ conquered the world with only twelve disciples who gathered in an upper room.

Respectfully Submitted
Ann Hill - Co-Chairman
Riverside Committee

Riverside '94 Eulogy

Well girls another Riverside has come and gone and with it friends, fun and a female lifestyle. Diane has proved once again that when one cares one can excel. I know Diane had help but when push came to shove she was the difference between a Riverside weekend and no Riverside. Few know just what a physical strain an endeavor of this type has taken on her. I am not afraid to ask each and every reader to pray that she be strengthened and have her health restored.

In this issue and subsequent issues any articles I receive from other clubs pertaining to Riverside will be published before regular members articles. I think it's important for those who couldn't attend Riverside 1) to see what they missed, 2) to hear from other club members how vitally important our Erie Sisters event is and 3) to show Diane and her committee just how much their work was appreciated. I asked a number of the gals from other clubs if they would send me Riverside related articles that appeared in their newsletters.

I want to relate two stories to you now about Riverside. Both touched me deeply, personally and made me see how

much I really need the blessings of this gender duality that has been bestowed upon me and so many others. I think it is so necessary for us to never forget that we are special and blessed. We don't deserve the oppression that society imposes upon us, no one does.

But oppression/prejudice can only survive when we make a conscious effort to accept it. When we nurture it, it grows and then it spreads and encompasses others, even in other minorities. Some even cherish it in order to justify their own inability to accept their gender duality. When these conditions are met we (my minority) allow it to thrive by staying in that oppressed/prejudiced state. We chose every day to accept or reject treatment others try and try to force on us and others by our silence and insecurity. All this acceptance of these types of "social standards" sends a loud and clear message to "societies trustees". They are right and we are wrong, they are good we are evil, they are normal we are deviant. Now the rest of the story!

Using the vendors time at Riverside '94, I fell in love with a beautiful gal who was sitting at one of the vendors tables. I started to go by her when I heard her small voice call out to me. It was a very soft sound a word almost to faint to hear. Now that I think about it I almost didn't pay any attention to it. The sound was so soft it was as if I wasn't meant to hear it or better perhaps, that it's source thought my preoccupation with looking and pricing of merchandise was more important.

The word I barely heard was "Mommy?". As with most of my things I own and encounters in my life, I hear, sense or connect with the people and things that are close to me or that are supposed to become close to me, I like to think it's feminine intuition. This was one of those times when all three came at me clearly, (hearing, sensing, connection) and even with the almost imperceptible softness of the voice, I couldn't ignore it.

I had to have her, I immediately knew I needed her more than she needed me. Luckily her foster mother and Aunt were willing to allow me to take her home, even though they had brought her to Riverside solely for the purpose of selling her. Yes, can you believe it selling this small bundle of love that had already taken such a large part of my heart without even trying. I don't know what I would have done if I would have ignored her soft questioning "Mommy?" as I walked by her.

The fact of the matter is the pair that brought her to Riverside are Karen and Adrienne from Crystal Club. Another fact is that I did buy her, for a song too \$30.00, and I had to name her on the spot, that I did. The name came to me as if directly from her own inanimate polyester cerebellum. Fact number three, I'm holding her at this very minute while pounding this out, tears welling up in my eyes thinking about her. #4 when I got home I went in the house with just her. I left everything in the car, I couldn't deal with suitcases now. I put her on the sofa and went about tending to my two cats who stayed "home alone" while I became the real me for two and one half glorious days.

When I finished I sat down on the sofa next to her, planning on relaxing. Hoping perhaps a cat nap would take the post Riverside blues away for awhile. As I sat there in the quiet darkened room I heard her again whisper "Mommy?". Well until this moment I hadn't really

thought much about really holding her, hugging her, needing this, this thing. Solely because of my gender when I was young and growing up I wasn't allowed to associate with someone like her. She said it again "Mommy?" still in a very unpretentious tone and volume so as not

to offend me. So as not to strain the thin unsure thread that held and connected us.

I picked her up and put her face to my chest holding her tightly. I began to weep uncontrollably the tears of frustration, the tears of having to return to my "other" being, and then of relief, at finding this kindred spirit of cloth and yarn. It was as if my heart couldn't hold back the overwhelming feeling of needing this little uncreate. At one point as I was reaching for another Puffs I realized her little cloth arms were extended straight out. They had placed themselves under my arms. It was as if she was hugging me back. That feeling of her arms under mine brought another flood of tears that I needed to release. It's nice to be hugged, in case you've forgotten, especially when you need it the most.

Living alone, the immediate day or so after these events that we so heartily look forward to are very difficult for me personally, I'm not sure about the other gals though. I truly envy those of you out there who have a spouse (sorry I don't like the term "significant other" it sounds so impersonal I consider any and all those "SO's" spouses) who is secure enough to accept you and more than that participate along with you in your expression and enhancement of your gender duality. Most of the crossdressers say they hate to leave, some of the spouses say it too, but I am very very depressed for a day or so. This time it wasn't too bad though because of one little blonde gal who called out to me softly, "Mommy?", a rag doll named "Julie".

I love you Julie!

Second, I want to relate the next two vignettes, also from Riverside '94, to emphasize that miracles do still happen.

Saturday night we had a very nice dinner. I sat at a large table with Charlotte (to my immediate right), Janet, Rachelle, Michil, and three other gals (to my left) that I regret not getting their names. The real gal of the unnamed three sat right next to me, as I said on my left hand side. I was talking to many around the table especially the real gal to my left. All of a sudden and completely out of the blue

she asked me if I was really a girl or a boy. To say the least I was floored. I thanked

her, told her I loved her and then answered her question.

The next incident happened at the dreaded good bye breakfast Sunday morning. I had Julie with me and Janet, Charlotte and I picked out our table where I placed Julie in one of the chairs. We went to the buffet, gathered our food and as I was returning to the table when one of the Riverside waitresses stopped me. She said "I wanted to tell you how nice you looked last night." (at the traditional Lounge time). She said, "I watched you for a long long time last night and you did a very good job, you looked great and I wasn't sure about you all night." Since the lounge isn't a sterile environment, we interact with the public very closely all night in the lounge, it was very reassuring to know "I passed" (and I hate that phrase also) to two real girls or at least caused reasonable doubt. These two remarks from "real" girls made my feminine self just soar. I never thought I was doing "it" good enough to receive those kinds of compliments. Well that's that.

Complacency, apathy, indifference, unconcern, nonchalance I just don't get it, I guess there will always be more takers than doers no matter what field or activity one is involved in. When will the people who don't really need a group to get out realize that when more and more come together the ones who are unsure, afraid or withdrawn about going out find out how easy it is. When will those of you out there who say "I could never go out, I couldn't pass if I tried" realize that your not alone, but your missing a few totally unique experiences by not attending these events. You can never imagine being dressed as a woman right along with 50 - 100- 150 other crossdressers in the same place with you. Believe me you would not feel as alone as the other 360 days in that cramped closet. Every crossdresser should experience being "her" at one of these events at least once in their life. I doubt it would be their last. So with that said remember, Be-All Cincinnati in June 1995 and (crossing fingers VERY tightly) Riverside 1995. Please plan now to attend one or both of these premiere events! I'll be looking for you at both!

Love, Luck, Laughter -
Pam Howard (your editor)

RIVERSIDE

by Diane L.

Well Riverside has come and gone, but not without a lot of help. Riverside is like a club that meets once a year. Old friends and new come together for one weekend, that members look forward too each year. The face of Riverside is changing, not from one club (Erie Sisters) but to many clubs who participate in putting together the best event of the year.

I would like to take this time to think a lot of people from a lot of different clubs who make Riverside the success it was. The first would have to be the Buffalo Bells whose members stepped in when some things did not go according to plan. Who would have never guessed that a newly forming club would have Voltaire to do such an importune job. A job they did Master of Ceremony is no easy job, but the Xpressions did step in and did a job that can only be described as brilliant.

How about Alpha Omega and the Ladies tea or coffee. Yes, those from the medical staff are looking forward to returning next year, but they would like more time. Yes the Erie Sisters may have been the very first to invite those from the Medical community to come to seminars free of charge and pay for their dinner also. The Erie Sisters mission is to educate the public and that is what Riverside does as good if not better than most.

Even with all this, our hats are off to the staff of the Riverside Inn who look forward to our return each year, and now so does the town that surrounds this Old Inn. There is no one with in a fifty mile radius who does not know that we are coming to Cambridge Spring.

I wish I could say that I remember a lot about Riverside, but there is that one special moment that does stands out from all the rest. For one brief second I was just one person in a hallway offering cookies to two little kids and there mothers as I was heading for the ladies tea. "Yes" they took the cookies and politely said "thank you." It may not sound like much, but that moment will stand still in my mind for ever and ever. For once I was just ME.

I am not good at saying what is in my heart, but I will remember and you will not be forgotten. I would like to thank all of you for making Riverside the place to be for '94'

On that note I hope the Xpressions will put on a event in Canada as they were talking about. It could be the next Riverside club meeting for this area, but wouldn't it be great to spend one weekend in Canada? (Not five or six days but just the weekend) Two a year one every six months. I could take that kind of a weekend to meet old friends. Weekends are not that expensive. I can spend more for one meeting out two then I can spend for one whole weekend at Riverside by using the club special.

I would like to say thank you to the gals from Canada who pulled one of our US gals out of a bar that she was not to be in. "Yes" I had heard all about it. Thank you for the many many letters I do really appreciate them.
Diane L.

(ed.)As you may or may not know a couple who planned on attending Riverside was unable to because of a fire at their house right before the event. They called the chairperson, Diane, and asked if they might have a refund on their deposit. Well the board had an emergency meeting at Riverside and decided that ESCC would refund their deposit and at the Saturday dinner and show ask for donations to show our support of them. Here is their reply.

Dear Ann, We received your letter dated Nov. 22, 1994 and we were absolutely stunned by your generosity and concern. We have never been part of any organization with such support, sensitivity, and concern for it's "members." We cannot thank you enough that you would pass the hat for us.

Which leads us to tell you that you misunderstood the gravity of the situation. We live in a large apartment house and yes the fire was on our floor but not in our apartment. We only suffered smoke and soot damage all of which has been taken care of by either insurance or the apartment management company.

As such, we cannot accept the money raised by passing the hat. It would please us no end if you would use that money for the Erie organization. We are delighted that you would refund the \$275 we sent for registration that is more than fair.

We look forward to seeing you next Nov. Yours Truly Jayne & Marla

(ed. the money raised for them has been donated to Cambridge Springs Helping Hands

C A L A N D A R

FEBRUARY 4 BUFFALO BELLES MEETING- Business meeting, Speaking as a Woman Video

21-26 Texas "T" Party

MARCH 4- BUFFALO BELLES MEETING-Revlon Wigs will have representative to show and sell their line. Excellent chance to try new look!

13-19-Comeing together convention Atlanta

31-April 2 Xpressions Spring Gala Niagaraon-the-Lake. Who's going?

Rochester CD Hotline 251-2132- They have bean real busy lately, with several meeting/month.

For those who fear to fenture forth, a little story. I livedthe nightmare! I got caught by the police!!! That's right, the POLICE!! The blue meanies. They got me!!!

I was returning home one late night from a dinner party. I saw the Amherst Police car pull out and start to follow me. Oh God! Be Cool.. Show him there is no reason to pull me over, Don't do anything suspicious like obeying the speed limit! It's only 2 AM afterall, only drunks obey the speed limit. Good thinking? If you agree,Loosen your wig! WRONG. Red lights go on. Oh no. I'm in trouble now....Jail awaits me, television news will be called out, they are calling The News to tell them to hold page one... The officer approaches, shines his flash light onto my madeup face, surveys my dress, takes my liscense and informs of my errors in life... "Watch your speed Sir. you were going 7 mph over the limit." Go forth and sin no more!! NO ticket, no snide remarks, no prison, no humiliation, no nothing but a warning! I went home in a total state of disbelief. Not even the slightest hint in his voice I did anything else wrong. And I wasn't! I didn't do anything but speed abit. And was treated accordingly. But when I arrived home, I still felt it necessary to placate the Gods and did sacrifice a goat!!!

* * * * *

I want to thank the gals who have bean so supportive of me the last few months during my period of illness. It has bean a great comfort in haveing your support! I'm going under the knife of my ?7 th birthday, the 24th. Hopefully, I will have recovered enough to make the next meeting. You may have to put up with me in DRAB one more time. I just haven't felt well enough to get dressed, the last two meetings, but hopefully it will soon be Tiara City for me again! The care and concern that has bean shown me, has made a very strong impression. I thankyou with all of my heart!

Love, Kathy



Conclusion

MY LIFE AS A WOMAN By the time I have shaved both legs, one hour after I started, I have cut myself nine times. Then I notice that my toes are covered with wild tufts.

Halloween night. At 8:30, they'll head upstairs to watch the *Iris Chacon Show* on the tube. I keep going up to the roof to look down and see if they've gone in. One thing tv life has taught me is incredible patience: It's already taken an hour and a half of primping to complete my drag. I creep furtively out of my door and tiptoe down the hall, past the misspelled graffito RAMON IS A FAGET on the first landing. My "costume" rubs along the wall like nails on a blackboard. I feel like a species of crustacean in a coral cave, slowly oozing toward I know not what. I am torn between the terror that I might not pass and the terror that I might.

As soon as I hit the street, I realize that I have miscalculated. I will be less visible under the cover of darkness. Then I realize that I am a woman, and a woman alone on this street at night is prey. A bum from the men's shelter reels

diagonally across the street. "Hey, baby, didn't I see you in church?" In church? I am getting confused.

A guy screeches into the service station in a purple Barracuda and leans out of the window. He's going to say something; I hold my breath. He and his buddy watch me, leering, for what seems like an eternity. I am alone and defenseless, without a genetic woman's experience of how to deal with these morons. I am being examined like a Waring blender, like a V8 engine—like, yes, like a sex object. I am about ten feet from the car and my hearing has grown paranoically acute. He says something like "Cute doll" to his buddy, and they laugh. Finally a cab rescues me. I am sweating. I wonder whether my mascara is running. I keep telling myself to relax. It's Halloween. I'm on assignment. If those Ivy League bruisers in the CIA can do it, so can I.

I know almost everybody at the party, so it isn't exactly an ordeal. In fact, the brother of a girl I know starts coming on to me and asks me for a date. Only one other person is in drag—somewhat clunkily. He came as Carmen Miranda. He thinks my costume is a bit "too good." Petty jealousy.

Afterward, as I am waiting for a cab, a well-dressed man in his late 40s walks over to me. I cross the street as the light changes, and he follows. "I noticed you at the party," he says calmly. "You did?" I answer, my voice thin and terrified. I don't look at his face. Why don't I just tell him it's a costume and have a good hearty male laugh, "Fooled ya, eh? Getting past it, buddy? Heh, heh?" One reason I don't say this is that I am unable to speak. He asks me where I live and I manage to tell him, thinking he can't live that far downtown. It turns out that he's meeting a friend at a bar on West Broadway and it's not out of his way. He'll drop me off.

He's pretty loaded and horny or myopic enough not to notice that my tongue isn't pointed. After about 20 blocks, he casually slings his arm around me. I lurch away. He gives me a pat.

For the time being, he conceals his ardor with eloquence, charming me with his voice as he tells his tale. He's a lawyer, it turns out, and he represents a number of artists. Conceptual artists. "Do you know what conceptual art is?" he asks patronizingly. But I've gone mute, despite what I'd like to tell him. He is interested in forming some sort of commune that would help artists and

left-wing causes and wolves in Minnesota. The more apprehensive I become, the more enthusiastically he sprinkles me with his cherished illusions. His clichés are as bad as my Dynel wig. Much as he loves art, his real love is words. Just had something published in the *SoHo News*. Just happened to have it with him. Would I like to see it? I long to reveal my identity—undercover writer—and arrest him in the name of grammar. Instead, I say nothing and he continues to beguile me with his flatulent fantasies as we hurtle down Broadway in this golden coach of dreams and desires. I am ashamed for my entire sex, for the impotent ideals of the West, for the ludicrous sham of mating calls based on record albums, even, perhaps for primates.

When we reach my street, he tells the driver to go on. Desperately I attempt to protest, but only a shrill, desiccated croak erupts from my larynx. I am overpowered. When we get out, I tell him sheepishly but firmly that I don't want to have a drink with his friend in the bar. To my delight, he concedes. But again I am checked. He's got the keys to the friend's loft. We can go have a drink there alone, put on some records, look at some paintings and talk. I shake my head violently. "Aw, c'mon," he says, almost whining. "Just for a few minutes. Don't say no." It's a very bad line. I don't want to get into a scene on the street. The cab ride has numbed me, but once inside, I think, I will just come out and tell him.

He pours a couple of drinks and puts on a Joni Mitchell album. He comes up behind me, coils his arm around me and feels around. My heart goes into my mouth as I teeter on my heels. I scan his face a bit guiltily. "You—you're a guy?"

He is in shock. Disenchanted and angry. Then he glowers and shrugs: "Well, are you going to give me a blow job?" he demands.

I tell him that isn't my scene. "I'm straight, man!" I say. How can I explain? Should I make him take a semester at John Money's gender-identity clinic, treat him to an introductory lesson at Ms. Traum's academy, or set him up with Eddie, the salacious teardrop in red? He's in a rage. He just doesn't understand.

"Well, you don't expect me to blow you, do you?" He demands to know why I have led him on. I haven't led him anywhere, but I have tricked him. Why? I am about to tell him, when I decide that one trick is enough for Halloween.

End.

A special tip of the hat to Janice, who has been helping me out with the newsletter the last few months. Has made me reconsider my position regarding folks of her persuasion. Just maybe, I'm willing to concede, they shouldn't be made to keep their ways totally hidden away! I'm not saying that with certainty mind you, but am willing to reconsider that point. Of course, I'm referring to her Trekkiness!!! See you in the 10-Forward!