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Buffalo Belles

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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,

The February meeting was held on the worst weather day of the year. Atleast,so far! Single digits, 40 MPH winds, snow a falling and a blowing. A great night for a meeting!I thought so. So did Janice G., Denise M., Patty J., Holly I., Frances L., Jean H., and guest Kurst and Collean D..

The March meeting is going to have a representative from Revlon Wigs. The eight who came to the February meeting have the first places in line for a wig fitting!! I hope that is the reason for the madness shown by venturing out. Or is it we now know who the testosterone laden real manly men types are? The more gentile types knew enough to stay home!

I checked our attendance records and found we had to go back to Feb. 93 for the same low turnout. Back then we had Joan C., and Dana D., in attendance, they stayed home this year to be replaced by Collean and Frances. Last year we had 12 at the Feb. meeting. By this time last we were so used to wintry weather, it didn't slow us up so much, I guess. Atleast most of us showed the good sense to wear pants suits, jeans, etc. Collean heads the line for the wig adjustment!

It was a good business type of meeting. We got to go over the figures that Denise has spent much time gathering. She has been looking into the cost of staging an 'event'. A weekend long affair at the McKinley Inn. She broke the costs down in great detail. It took a full typewritten page to list all of the costs involved. We discussed her work for quite awhile. The bottom line on the cost was if we had ten attendees it would come to 360 each, thirty would drop it to 285 each. It was decided that this was to costly a venture for us to attempt. If anyone desires a copy of the figures, drop Denise or myself a line and we'll send you a copy.

Let's see how many show up for the Niagra on the Lake weekend in late March. Janice will have more on this elsewhere in the newsletter. There was great interest shown in attending this event on Saturday April 1st. The cost of just a "day pass" will be about \$35. (US). We have moved our meeting date to accommodate those wishing to attend. Therefore let it be known the April meeting of the Belles is on the 8th.

Maybe we can subtitle April 1st as BUFFALO NITE OUT 111! It is time for one again, I think. Janice should have more elsewhere, and a brochure was in your newsletter a couple of months ago.

We broke up pretty early for us. half of the girls went out for dinner, drinks and so forth, while the rest probably went straight home.

* * * * *

I was remiss last month in telling you the good news! Jackie and Yvette were finally able to overcome some legal hurdles and were able to tie the knot on Dec 22nd. They have been the most active couple in our group. They seldom miss a meeting and often bring their delightful daughter DeeDee along with them. We wish them all of our best. May they have a long and happy life together! It would be so nice if more of the wives would participate like Yvette in supporting her spouse!!

* * * * *

Elsewhere in this issue is a letter written to us from Michelle S.. She gives an introduction to herself and thoughts on attending her first meeting, in December. I can also tell you that she is a golfer. So Jean, Patty, Collean, Denise & myself will have another player this summer.

Thankyou Michelle for taking the time to write down your thoughts. I sure hope this will inspire some of the other sisters out there to put quill to paper on whatever subject they should choose.

* * * * *

Speaking of ideas. The thoughts and going on's of other groups like ourselves, are available in the library. We now exchange newsletters with: Erie Sisters, Rochester CD, Xpressions-Toronto, Sigma Nu Rho Trenton, En Femme-Minneapolis, Southern Belle-Atlanta, Chi Tribune-Chicago, Tau Chi-Houston.

Interesting reading. See Jean, our librarian, to check out items. We have a half dozen video now. And a growing sortment of books, magazines, catalogs, etc..

* * * * *

I want to thank Frances R. for a challenge gift she sent along with her renewal. She doubled her dues, and issued a challenge to other sisters to do the same!! This was especially touching, being Frances has never attended a meeting!! She is an original member but works on Saturdays and hasn't been able to attend! Thankyou, Frances!!!!

* * * * *

We received a brochure recently from another local vendor, soliciting our business. Called Queen Custom Shoes. They custom make ladies shoes to men's foot forms in sizes 7-14. Their number is 1-800-42COMFY (4226639) or can be written to at: Q.C.S. 735 Delaware Rd. #124, Buffalo, NY 14223. A video catalog is available for \$10. The have a half page ad in the latest edition of Femme Mirror pg. 65

* * * * *

While I am giving out plugs, I wish to let you know that Kathy the Tailor is back in business. She has relocated to W. Seneca and can be reached at 827-5931. She is very talented, friendly and discrete. I have been very happy with her work for me in the past.

Last month I told a brief story about being pulled over by the police while dressed. Buffalo Transition Support sent us a copy of their first newsletter and has a top ten list of what to tell the officer to explain your mode of dress. Clip and attach to your sun visor for quick reference in the future.

- 10. Life hasn't been the same since menopause.
- 9. Funds have been low since the circus left town.
- 8. On the way to a costume party as Princess Di.
- 7. I'm blind, so only God knows what I'm wearing
- 6. Doing community service as a midwife.
- 5. Trying for lead part as Mrs. Doubfire in local play.
- 4. Spilled minoxidyl all over my face.
- 3. Was runner up Miss Universe in body building. The steroids helped!
- 2. My mother dresses me funny.
- 1. I'm a democrat and am hiding my identity.

I want to thank all of you sisters out there whom have been so supportive of me for the last couple of months. Your calls, cards, visits, flowers all mean't so much to me!!! The care and concern shown by you will always be deeply felt and remembered.

The surgery went very well, and I am well on the way to complete recovery. Heck, ten days after surgery, I went to the meeting and was dressed again, after two months of coming in Drab. Before, just the pressure of a pair of control top hose would start the kidney pain. So one can get to thin!

Thanks, again for caring so.

LOVE, *Kathy Lurane*

C A L A N D A R

- MARCH 4 BUFFALO BELLES-Revlon wig representative & Image/color consultant
- 12-19 Atlanta Action-IFGE Convention Atlanta
- 31-4/2 Xpressions Spring Gala-NIagra on the Lake
- APRIL 1 Saturday day trip to Xpressions, carpool from meeting site?
- 8 BUFFALO BELLES-Avon cosmetics representative at meeting
- 20-23 California Dreaming Burbank
- 20-23 Moonlight in Manhattan-NYC
- MAY 6 BUFFALO BELLES-regular meeting
- 18-21 Paradise in the Poconos
- 30-6/5 Spring Fling-Cape Town Ma.
- JUNE 3 BUFFALO BELLES-regular meeting
- 7-11 13th Be-All-Cincinnati, OH. this year

My first Buffalo Belles meeting
by Michelle

Back in September of 1992 we had six crossdressers at the first meeting of NU PHI CHI (Buffalo Belles). It is with a small bit of apprehension and a great deal of exhilaration that I announce the demise of one of these first members, James F Gnau, which was noted in the paper during February. This demise was after a brief period of time of exploration (both external and internal) and education. A portion of this education was from a poster, "All I need to know about life I learned from STAR TREK" which included the following among the fourteen truths:

Seek out new life and new civilizations.
Infinite diversity in infinite combinations (IDIC).
Even in our own world, sometimes we are aliens.
Having is not so pleasing a thing as wanting;
it is not logical but it is often true.
When going out into the Universe, remember,
"Beldly go where no man has gone before!"

Based upon your interpretation I find these can be pertinent in who we are. I know this was true in Jim's situation in the past and is true for me at present and will be for the future. That and the following, "There is a galaxy of stars waiting out there to be explored and they all can be ours if we only wish them to".

... Engage

* * * * *

Back in our January newsletter we had a flyer to Xpressions-1st annual spring gala at the Pillar & Post in Niagara-on-the-Lake. In addition to the schedule weekend (3/31-4/2) it is possible to attend Saturday (4/1) only. The cost is 50 Canadian (about \$35) and some of the days events which includes vendors, seminars, shopping expedition in town, dinner and entertainment. I was told the hospitality suite can be used for a changing room. There has been some discussion about some members car pooling there; if you might be interested or wish further information please leave a message with our new phone number and the best way to get back to you. I will be there.

* * * * *

"613-2626"

As noted several times elsewhere we now have a voice mail box phone number which is 613-2626. We have the possibility of 1 1/2 minute greeting, a 1 minute reply and a 3 day retention period.

The family and I moved to Buffalo about two years ago. In the NYC area, where I lived previously, I knew of places for Michelle to go. Bars where we girls could gather for some 'girl talk'. The problem of men making advances was one I have no interest in!

With the move to Buffalo, Michelle could only come out while I was away on business trips. I have become quite an expert on Up-state New York regarding out of the way, easy access motels in Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Binghamton, Corning and Ithaca! While on the road Michelle gets to come out to go shopping, makeup to try out, outfits to try out etc. But what I was really missing was friends. Would there be a life for Michelle again? Or was she basically going to be kept home almost like the woman of yesteryear, although gratefully atleast not barefoot and pregnant!

One day in Rochester, with a few hours to kill, I decided to scope out a thrift shop. After parking my car, I was walking to the store and past by an adult bookstore. I went in and found a copy of Tapestry. And there I found Nu Phi Chi. Michelle wrote and got a fast response from Denise and Kathy. I sent in my application and was advised to contact Janice for an interview. I phoned Janice. She was so pleasant and accommodating. What a wonderful gal. We had We had a quick interview and Michelle was accepted. Was given the date, time, and place of the next meeting in early December.

We could hardly contain our excitement but the day finally came. The meeting started at 6 PM but Michelle was unable to get started dressing until 5 and since it takes me over an hour to do my make-up and can take longer to pick what outfit I am wearing! I was lucky to make it by 7 PM. I had planned to park and race in, but cold feet or in my case, cement feet were mine. I remained in the car and envisioned every calamity known to womanhood falling on me. The police would arrest me, my wife, who doesn't know about Michelle would be there, friends and other relatives also in their waiting for Me!!! While sitting there fidgeting with my hands I broke a nail. Ahh-the perfect excuse to leave. Back to the motel. Fixed the nail. Touched up the make-up. Resolved to try again and drove back to the meeting place. This time my courage was stronger and in I went. As soon as entering, I bumped into Collean, whom I did not read at all. She is so pretty and so thin (Envy, envy-

(Michelle's letter cont.)

the prettiest clothes never go beyond 12/14. I'm so jealous of those who can wear them). Timidly, I asked her if she knew where the Nu Phi Chi meeting was. My feminine voice is, I think, equivalent of Pavaratti's tenor and a dead give away. "yes. your in the right place" she said, and we introduced ourselves.

I then entered the meeting room and met the other girls. I wasn't the only newcomer that night, as Nancy was making her first appearance also. She is a great piano player. We compared notes on our impressions several times that night. Holly came by, what a terrific gal. We did our best to cheer her up from some tough times she is going through. I reacquainted myself with Janice who explained the ins and outs of a meeting to Nancy and I. Conversations, some brief and some long followed with Jean, Frances Jackie and his wife and daughter- who had a great time giving out the gifts at the exchange. I met Joan. And that Patty, a reincarnation of a delicate "China Doll".

All too soon the meeting was over and it was time to go out into the night; which by this time had produced 3" of new snow and icy roads. I hadn't any boots-it wasn't snowing when I arrived. So I tripped as daintly as possible to my car in my 3" heels.

Michelle was finally out in Buffalo! The only problem (other than the snow) had been what I think is a problem many of we girls share-overcoming our own fear. If any of you who are reading this are trapped on that square, I can only tell you from my own experiences that this is a wonderful warm welcoming group. As Winston Churchill once said "The only thing to fear, is fear itself" If I can help anyone in that regard, it would be my privilege. Michelle

MEETING WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER

It was agreed that Teresa and myself would meet with the photographer in about four hours in front of the Walden bookstore at the Boulevard Mall. That time span gave Terry and myself plenty of time to get ready and maybe have something to eat at the food court before the photos.

In the time we were getting ready Terry was nice enough to give me the choice and opportunity to change my mind and be the one to have my picture taken. This was even after our conversation with Kathy where Terry was given the specific instructions to find some duct tape and tape me up in some closet. I thought this warning and instructions was totally uncalled for since it is well known that I am notorious camera shy and nervous about going out in the general public.

Terry wanted to eat after the photos so we left the house with about 20 or so minutes to spare by the time we arrived at the mall. I decided on the bookstore as the meeting place because I wanted to check out the Si-Fi section and it was close to the food court if we decided to eat.

The photographer, James McCoy, arrived right on time. With that much camera equipment and trying to read his job assignment he was easier to spot than a crossdresser going to her first CD convention. I caught Terry attention in the bookstore and went out to introduce myself and Terry.

His first statement while he was shaking his head and my hand and smiling the whole time was, "I love this job sometime". We talked a few minutes about the photos and I suggested we go into one of the women clothing store and take the photos there. I was surprise when he said he wasn't sure if that would work. I immediately told him that Terry and myself would have no apprehension or problems into going into any store. Jim's reply was a classic and the most memorable of the occasion, "I'm not talking about you two girls, I'm sure you wouldn't have any problems, I'm talking about myself". We finally decided he would go in one of the stores and inquire if he could a few photos and see

It's ROMANCE...



...when he loves the way you dress

It's LOVE...



...when he helps you pick out clothes at the store

It's a RELATIONSHIP...



...when he asks you if sometimes he can wear them

what develop. The Limited was one of the first clothing store from the food court and the manager had no problem with the Buffalo News photographer taking pictures so we did most of the pictures at that location. While walking to The Limited I inquired of Jim if I could take some pictures of him taking pictures of Teresa. He said that would be no problem.

We spent maybe 10 to 15 minutes in The Limited, Terry was moving from one clothing rack to another, holding them up for size and fit, and looking at a couple outfits in front of the store full length mirror for a reflection feedback. This was the photo, out of some 20 that were taken which was used for the article. During all this time I was moving around both of them trying to get both of them in frame at the same time. After the store he spent about 5 minutes taking photos of Terry walking through the mall.

Afterwards we spent a few minutes talking about the transgender situation in general and ourselves specifically. He eventually wished both of us the best and left for his next assignment. He did not follow-up on Terry's invitation (she thought he was cute) to come down to the Stagedoor later that evening for a fact finding mission to gather more information.

1995 accounting as of February 15, 1995

Balance as of January 20, 1995 (see prior newsletter)		\$274	
Yearly full dues	2 @ 25	\$ 50	
Yearly associate dues	2 @ 15	30	
Meeting fees	9 @ 5	45	
Extra donation - Frances Lee		45	
Frances		25	195
Phone (see note)		104	
Copies		29	
Refreshments		16	
			149
			\$320
			====

The above phone costs was a one time connection fee (\$10), one month charge (\$16.75), last two month charges (\$33.50), security deposit (\$33.50), and applicable sales and excise taxes.

The regular one month charge will be \$16.75 (plus taxes) billed on a quarterly basis.

FROM "CROSSTALK" 6/92
SOME THOUGHTS ON PASSING

by Anne Blackwood

You'd make a terrible looking woman. How many transvestites have heard that statement and thought to themselves, "how true"? How many transvestites have heard that statement and thought to themselves, "if you only knew"? On the whole I suppose you'd have to say that most transvestites make neither attractive nor repulsive females, they would be average looking. Just like the genuine female population.

While there are a few facial types that work on men but not on women, and a few facial types that work on women but not on men, by and large what is attractive in a woman with a few secondary features altered -- most notably eyebrows -- is attractive on a man. This is not to say that a particular facial type would be necessarily unattractive on the opposite sex, just odd. The fact is that what makes a face attractive does so regardless of the owner's sex, and conversely what makes a face repulsive does so regardless.

If you doubt me start examining faces of attractive men and women, note the nature of their features and how they relate to one another. You will find that an attractive face with only minor alterations will still be attractive whether on a woman or a man. As I said, you will also note that certain faces work well on men and not on women and vice versa. A man could look like Richard Boone and be considered ruggedly handsome but a woman with that face would be plain at best. And while Doris Day was cute in her heyday, a man with her face would be said to appear boyish, not handsome. Now, take Christina Ferrare's face: there is no question that this is the face of a very attractive woman, but without makeup and with slightly heavier eyebrows and neck it is also the face of a handsome man. This is not to say that it is an androgynous face -- it is not, for it is clearly either female or male depending on its context. While the neck is not specifically part of the face it is part of the face's context. Thin necks are associated with women because of their usually lighter muscle mass. A woman with a thick neck is often seen as appearing somewhat masculine.

As an aside, androgynous faces usually are not. That is the face itself is not androgynous, but the context it is put in makes it so -- the dress or hair style of the individual, or the body type, or both. Androgyny is a function of conflicting signals to one's expectations. Expectations are a cultural phenomenon.

After you've studied this subject for a while and come to similar conclusions to mine you may make an off hand comment to the effect and the person to whom it was directed will most likely look at you like you are nuts. Most people are of the impression that what makes a woman attractive is uniquely female and can never be so for a man and so the converse is also true. Expectations. So what does all this mean? you ask. It means one or two

things. One, it means that people will tend to accept things at face value which also means that a transvestite should be able to pass if only as a plain woman. I've forgotten the second thing. Oh! If some one finds what he or she thinks is woman is in fact a man that person becomes disoriented because their expectations have been violated, this violation brings forth a negative reaction in most people though not in all, in some it awakens that individual's curiosity. I suppose the greatest negative reaction will come from the sexually insecure person, especially if they thought the person in question was sexually desirable. I think you can fill in the blanks there. The reason I brought this up, and was thinking about the subject at all at the moment was a recent event I have heard the opening statement on several occasions and thought the second thought. The event was that the other day some real estate people were showing my

apartment to some potential buyers; I was gone when they arrived. They happened to see a few photos of me in drag, yet they didn't know it was me. They asked if it was my girlfriend or wife. The one fellow said, "I saw the picture of that woman; she's very beautiful." I said, "Thank you" as if he were complimenting my taste and photography. Of course photographs are not real life and they put the face into a very different context. Still, the incident reinforces my contention that keeping the face in the proper context is key to passing.

Another situation occurred even more recently when I went to an audition for a play and the part that I was reading for was a transvestite murderer. When I was called to set up the audition they said that it would be helpful if I came dressed and so I did. While waiting to be seen I sat and waited in the lobby of the theatre where every actor and actress had to come to check in. The lobby was small, more like a walk-in closet, and so the camouflage of distance was simply not there. I sat quietly, studying the scene they'd given me. Seats shuffled around and a couple of actresses ended up sitting in the lobby as well. After a while I asked how long until I would read, in my normal voice -- I have a rather deep and resonant one -- and was told it would be a while and so I said that I was going to my car to get a change of clothes so I could put them on after the audition. When I got back not one but several actresses told me that until I had spoken they had thought I was a woman. I was a bit surprised that I had fooled anyone considering I was seen in the harsh light of day, and I was quite naturally flattered. The point here is that -- my surprise aside -- until I had altered the context by speaking I was taken for what I appeared to be, a woman. Had I used a feminine sounding voice I might not have revealed myself. So, where do most transvestites fail in attempting to pass? Context. Wrong clothing for the place or time of day. Too much apparent makeup. Exaggerated gestures.

Transvestites often present themselves as caricatures of women and not as women. Perhaps even the wrong place. Voice. If one is in an area where TVs are not unusual one is more likely to be spotted simply because people are expecting to see them, whereas, if a transvestite goes to an area where no one thinks of seeing TVs then no one will be looking to see them and so the transvestite will more easily pass. Halloween would not be a good day to try and pass.

Assuming that one has the makeup right, what does one do to create the "right" context? Hair is probably one of the most important parts of context, the wrong hair style whether it is your own or a wig can be very jarring and while a genuine female might get by a man attempting to pass probably wouldn't. One should use wigs which closely approximate ones natural hair color. A blond wig on a dark haired and complected individual looks very artificial and draws the kind of scrutiny that makes it hard to pass. Hair style is also important, choose a style that fits with your apparent age. I say apparent age because if you are say thirty-five but look twenty-five when dressed due to makeup and other factors use a younger looking hair style; if you are unfortunate enough to be thirty-five and look forty when dressed use a more mature hair style. While older women may try to wear younger styles it only makes them look older because it accentuates their age rather than attenuating it. While you can wear an older style it is not a good idea for it too draws an unwanted kind of attention.

The neck may be one of the trickiest areas to deal with. If like me you have dark hair you can use black makeup to thin the appearance of the neck, but only for photography taken front on, otherwise it will look like you have black makeup on the sides of your neck. Careful blending of a darker foundation with your standard foundation/beard cover on the neck can create the illusion of a thinner neck. Use a shade only slightly darker for you don't want to look like you never wash you neck. Blush applied on the sides of the neck can also help. Taking estrogen will naturally reduce the muscle mass through out the body including the neck, that and the subcutaneous layer of fat it causes to form are perhaps the two most

feminizing aspects outside of altering the personality. The change in the neck alone would have a remarkable effect on the feminization of the face

Finally clothes finish off the context. Like your hair, your clothes should fit with your apparent age. Clothes that are too young will draw unwanted scrutiny. Also clothes that are excessive should be avoided. Too loud, too bright, too short, too long, too sheer... all of these should be avoided in public. Have fun with them at home but don't wear them in public if you expect to pass. *Tasteful, fashionable clothing are what you should be wearing.* By fashionable I do not mean trendy. Trendy clothes tend to be extreme, and personally I find rather unattractive anyhow. By fashionable I mean classic, slightly conservative, and well made. By slightly conservative I mean that at least one of the dimensions --

out, color, fit -- should be conservative. If the fabric is bright then the cut should be conservative, if the fabric is dark then it is OK to hike the hem up if you've got the legs to carry it off.

Your clothes should also be selected to hide your body faults. For example, I have broad shoulders and narrow hips, this figure makes it impossible for me to wear slinky knits. What does work for me are fitted dresses with full skirts and padded shoulders. If you are tall, don't wear vertical stripes, wear dots or solids or textured solids. What applies to the genuine article (GA) applies to the impostor. Fashion magazines or books on dressing for success will be more helpful than I can be.

I spoke of giving myself away with my voice earlier. I used my normal voice in that situation because I didn't think anyone was taking me for the genuine article (apparently I erred in judgment there). If you have a deep voice such as mine, one need not necessarily raise the pitch to affect the feminization of it; instead it is more important to change the tone. A lighter tone, one with less resonance makes the voice sound as if it is pitched higher than it is. Also there is a cultural bias that says that women have "smaller" voices, that is theirs have less body, less complex harmonics. Women also tend to use a different phrasing and vocabulary than men, nearly as different as the English and Americans in general. Adopting their language will go a long way in helping you pass, either that or keep quiet.

END.

