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Buffalo Belles Newsletters

Madeline Davis Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,  
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5-1994

### May 1994

Buffalo Belles

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Nu Phi Chi

VOL. III

NO. V

RUFFALO BELLES

MAY, 1994

HELLO LADIES;

At our last meeting we had Denise H, Kathy L, Colleen R, Holly I, Renee K, Jackie Z and Yvette, Janice G, Tammy Z, Patty J, Linda V, Terry from Toronto, and Kelly W, stopped by to say hello.

Rosemary from PFI Fashions put on a demonstration for us and some of the ladies did a little shopping.

Kudos to the Newsletter Editor for such a excellent job she is doing.

Spring is upon us, so I'll make my contribution to the newsletter brief.

*Love To All  
Denise*

Denise Miller, Pres.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Publisher or Club Officer:

Enclosed you will find a letter to the editor about outreach and something that occurred in the daily operation of my business, N.S. PRODUCTS.

I was in the process of updating an old mailing mailing list when I received the letter discussed on page 2. It was a heart breaking, devastating letter, and it has effected me greatly.

I ask that you take the time to read and make the 2nd page available to your readers, club members, or friends.

If you are a publisher, could you please make room in your paper or magazine as either a letter to the editor or under comments about outreach. If possible, please publish the entire page 2 section of this letter.

If you are a club officer, please make this information available to your members thru printing in your newsletter and also at your meetings. If you desire extra copies, I will, at my expense, print and mail them to you. This topic is much too important to quibble over a few dollars.

I wish to thank you in advance for your attention in this matter and I hope that, together, we can reach out and prevent any more senseless deaths because someone feels perverted and alone and that there is no reason to live.

Dave Nurmi  
N.S. PRODUCTS  
BOX 250 669  
GLENDALE, CA 91225-0669  
818-957-2310 VOICE  
818-957-1547 FAX

Reaching out to others  
Dave Nurmi  
N.S. Products

I receive many letters each day, week, month, and year and none has ever touched me like this one did. I have tried for over 10 years, to reach into the closets and reach the person that is feeling alone and unworthy. This came to light again this month (March 94) when I was following up on an old mailing list. I was using the mailing to update and attempt to contact old customers and persons that I have not heard from in quite a while. I usually get back a large percentage of 'box closed' or 'moved-forward expired', but when I opened this letter, I was devastated. I only share this letter with you because I feel that WE ALL need to do more in the outreach area. Vendors, club members, even those that do not participate in organized clubs, WE ALL need to attempt to reach the people like the one described in this letter I received. I have omitted some information for the privacy of the family and I have changed the name of the family involved. Most of you already know me and understand this is an honest effort to open your eyes and take that extra step through what ever means you have. Computer BBS, letters to the editor, letters to 'Dear Abby' or any of those other publications, adult or regular.

Here is the letter. Please read slowly and soak up all of the feelings. It will never leave your mind once you have read it.

FEB. 28, 1994

YOU SAY IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU HAVE HEARD FROM MY SON. WELL, I GUESS IT HAS BEEN. YOU SAY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE HIM BACK WITH YOU. WELL, SO WOULD I. WE FOUND HIM DEAD \*\*\*-\*\*\*-\*\*\*. YOUR LETTER OPENED A LOT OF WOUNDS AGAIN. MY HUSBAND DID NOT KNOW OF OUR SONS CROSSDRESSING UNTIL WE FOUND HIM DEAD. IN A WEDDING DRESS NO LESS. I REALLY FEEL SORRY FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD WHO FIND THE NEED TO CROSSDRESS AND THE EROTIC SEX THAT GOES WITH CROSSDRESSING. PLEASE DON'T SEND ANYMORE MAIL TO OUR HOME

THANK YOU

MOTHER OF 'JOHN SMITH'

Well, there it is. My hands still shake everytime I read it. What could I have done differently to stop this tragedy? What could you have done differently to stop it?

I am not trying to point blame on any of us, but maybe, just maybe, one of us, you or I, could have said one sentence to him to help him understand that he is not alone. He is not a deviant. He is not strange or alone. We are a community, and it is important that we all reach out, touch each other, and say, I am ok, we are ok, you are ok.

Well, enough of my preaching. Please, do not destroy this letter from where ever you obtained it from. Place it in a place where you can read it, see it, remind you about where you were as a young man, how you felt, did you feel alone, different, maybe even suicidal? Not everyone is strong enough to stand up through that kind of pressure.

Dave Nurmi

# DANALYN ( DANA ) DEWITT

3840 E. ROBINSON RD. APT. 234  
AMHERST, NEW YORK 14228

May 1, 1994

Dear Kathy,

It was so nice to receive a personal note with the May newsletter. I'm trying to reduce the size of my CD related collection to a more manageable level, so you now have most of my printed material. The clothes are more difficult. I really hate to discard anything, even if outdated. You must know the feeling.

I fully plan on making use of your library collection but probably not until Fall. We (my family & I) spend most of the summer in Canada which makes meeting attendance very uncertain during those months. That, plus the fact that I don't play golf, would also preclude my involvement with a golf tournament. ( Golfers go to all that trouble to get the ball in the hole and then they take it right out again! Why? But then again, I used to play tennis where the ball ideally goes back and forth forever and never gets anywhere at all.)

You mentioned Linda in your note. I do recall her and will look for her at future meetings.

You're doing a great job with the newsletter, including all those extra little items and cartoons. I look forward to it each month!

Best wishes,

Dear sisters,

Sorry to start our newsletter on such a somber note...perhaps it will help put our own troubles into a better perspective.

I haven't any real subject this month. Have gotten quite busy with work, am back to my regular 60 hour work week. And it is spring, and this gals fancy certainly turns to Golf. So all you will get will be some random notes and thoughts.

I want to thank Jackie for the work she put into making all the video's for our library. There is a tape of Makeup techniques. One of talk shows that had CD'ing as its theme, the same for TS shows. I guess about 12 hours viewing in all!!! We also have another addition to the library courtesy of Dana-a complete set to the Toronto CD Club magqzine from inception to its final issue. In a binder. Also the book TO BE A WOMAN by Jerry/Jerri McClain has been added. I am atill trying toprocure a cabinet that we can put in the library to store our collection in but had any luck for a freebie yet. Anyone have an old kitchen wall cabinet hanging around? Any item wanted untill then will require a note to me and I'll bring to next meeting or mail or whatever. Also speaking of the library/storage area, I think it is high time that we get those boxes of old clothing out of there! They are getting rather musty smelling, and it doesn't create much of an impression on the church members I'm sure. Jackie has an interest in them for used clothing store, can anyone provide a place to keep the boxes until then??

The picnic question didn't get resolved at the last meeting. We pretty much agree that it will be in August, a special event, to be held in a park that offers open access with a reservable secluded spot. So far Akron park has been mentioned. Any other ideas out there. Should we publicize it to Rochester, Erie, Toronto gals?? Perhaps a private Grove? Lets get started as we all know how fast summer time slips away!! It seems to take only two weeks from Memorial day to Labor, remember!!!!

\*\*\*\*\*

CALENDAR

- May 7- Regular Buffalo Belles meeting
- 19- Paradise in Poconos
- 31- Provincetown Spring Fling
- June 4- Buffalo Belles regular meeting
- 8-12 Be All Pittsburg-how many are <sup>going?</sup>
- July 2- Buffalo Belles regular meeting
- August 6 Buffalo BELles regular meeting
- ?13 PICNIC

KATHY'S TAILORING

25 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL  
TAILORING, ALTERATIONS AND REWEAVING  
MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN

162 Cleveland Drive

835-2909

\*\*\*\*\*  
 A Special Thankyou to Collean for writing the following article.  
 How about you writing something on whatever you have some insight into,  
 a trick you picked up, a story?? Ever draw a cartoon? How about your  
 first time out? Your first Buffalo Belles meeting and its impression?  
 Janice's next venture forth to explore new worlds starts on page 8.  
 Thanks again, Collean. Kathy

Breast Correction by Collean

For those Ladies who find them selves lacking in the appropriate development of their bosoms, as I know I do, and can not afford \$200 dollars or more silicone. Might I suggest another alternative. First you will some materials, two 18 inch latex balloons which can be purchased from Balloon Masters at the Though Way Mall, and two foamrubber falsies purchased from Frederick's in the Galleria Mall. Once the aforementioned items have been obtained we need to stretch out the latex balloons. This can be accomplished in several ways, but I have found that filling the balloons with hot water almost to the point of busting and leaving them filled for about two weeks does a fine job so that the balloon will not regain it's original shape. To fill the balloon with hot water preheat the water coming out of your facet and put the lip of the balloon over the spout. DO NOT tie the end of the balloon in a full knot use a half knot tightened only enough to keep it from leaking. Once the balloon has been permanently stretched untie the half knot and let about half the water out. Stretch the neck of the balloon out and as gently as possible insert a foamrubber falsie into the balloon. Wetting the falsie will aid in this endeavor. Let some more water out of the balloon, and holding the neck closed gently squeeze the balloon and falsie forcing the air out of the falsie. Open the balloon and allow the excess air to escape. Repeat the process until all the air is removed. I have found that retying the balloon in a half knot and allowing it sit for a day or two will help in removing the remaining air. Now that the air has been removed, it's time to adjust the size of your breast by letting water out of the balloon. Be careful not to let air back into the balloon. The balloon should not be tightly filled with water, but loose so the water can move from side to side. This will allow your new breast to change shape as you move providing a very naturally look. Now that and you have established the appropriate size tie a full tight knot in the balloon and snip off the heavy lip. Find an old socking and knot off the large end leaving sufficient space to place your breast and fold the stocking over it once. This will keep the latex from rubbing on your sin and allow you to remove the breast from the stocking so that the stocking can be washed. Remember, when making the second breast to keep the size-weight close to the first most Ladies do not identical bosoms so close is OK. Should you remove to much water you can add some back by placing the lip of the balloon back over the facet spout, but be careful to make sure you remove all the air. The total cost should be less than \$15, and will most likely bring back fond memories of water balloon fights in the summers gone by.

The following article is taken from PARTNERS #4

**You Still Don't Understand**  
 (Gender Differences In Communication)

By Linda Phillips

Being a transgendered male has made it necessary for me to not only learn how to be feminine but masculine as well. Most of us have a certain feminine persona but society decrees males are not able to exhibit that persona. So much of our lives we neglect what I consider the better side of ourselves. The ideal transgendered person of course learns how to exhibit BOTH personas.

Unfortunately, most transgendered males want society to think they are really quite macho. This act, performed for public consumption, does not add anything to our relationships with our mates. Since males in our society are supposed to be the strong silent type, (sort of like John Wayne in an old movie, yep, nope!) our transgendered males think any display of sensitivity will "give them away". We often go to great lengths to convince everyone, including our partners, we are as macho as they come! (Even if we do wear dresses!)

One of the more interesting lessons I have learned since I began living as a woman is a lot of males don't really care much for women. Oh, to be sure, men NEED women. They need them for various reasons, but the main ingredients necessary for a happy relationship, love and respect, are seldom among those reasons. Traditional men give short shrift to much of what women say. The fact that many women are more intelligent than a great many men, is something men know and prefer to (in usual male fashion) ignore.

The average middle age male (and this includes a lot of transgendered males as well) would much rather be with his cronies on the golf course, the bowling alley or truthfully, anywhere his wife is not! Society teaches us that males who depend on, or just prefer the company of women, to other men, are somehow not quite as "manly" as they should be!

Oddly, women accept and expect this lack of respect and equality from men. Society (there's that word again) ALSO teaches women to be this way. Of course understanding who has been trying to run society for the last few hundred years makes these things self-evident. Being an apprentice woman, with no interest in men in general, I am privileged to view many things concerning male/female relationships. Daily I see men treat

women in ways that astound me. Unfortunately, that includes many in the transgendered community. Because a male is transgendered is certainly no guarantee he will honor and respect women! Often quite the opposite is the case. Perhaps being this way makes him feel inferior. Perhaps it embarrasses him around women. In any case it works out the same; little or no respect. When you have no respect for someone, you have no use for their opinion. Which brings us to communication. You simply cannot communicate with anyone you don't have a certain amount of respect for!

I often ask my female friends why they put up with this sort of treatment from men. Again, I am amazed at the answers, "men are all that way". "If you live with a man you live with that treatment." "Men are big kids, they have to have their way, it's easier to give it to them." And on and on. One of the running jokes my wife and I have - it is a wonder 90% of the women in America aren't lesbians! Who would want to live with someone who would rather have a discussion with a stranger (male) than his partner?

I recall a fascinating situation with a genetic female, and a "dressed", transgendered male. Involved in conversation during a gender community event they were both attempting to communicate their feelings about a certain matter. The male, ignoring the fact he was supposed to be in a somewhat feminine mode, continually used male upmanship, being quite aggressive in his verbal manner. What action did the female take? Being a "traditional" female she merely stopped communicating with the male and started humoring him in order to ease out of the dialogue! This is usually the technique women use with men when they see communication failing. This same woman carried on an intelligent conversation with my wife a few hours later! The next day this woman told me she was sick of men in dresses who had a desire to wear women's clothes, but no desire to learn to how to act in a more feminine manner. A lot of transgendered males become "Mr. Macho" when they put on a dress. They are scared to death someone will think of them as less than male. "Hey! I just like to wear dresses, I don't want to think like a damn woman!" (Not that he need ever fear that!) Lest you think I am exaggerating. I was told that by a crossdresser just a few months ago.

I have some wonderful women friends, some of whom "know" I am not a genetic female and I have some who don't "know". Because they are women, their treatment towards me in either case is similar. The longer they know me the more they treat me as one of their own. Why do I receive this treatment even from women who know me as a man in a dress? Because I don't ACT like a man in a dress! I figure these women know a whole lot more about everything I am interested in than I have a lifetime left to learn, so I LISTEN to them. I don't stand there fidgeting from one foot to the other waiting to get my unwanted two cents worth in. I have never met a stupid woman. I have met many who were reluctant to express their feelings because they were afraid no one wanted to hear what they had to say. I am never aggressive in my conversations with women, when you are verbally an aggressive confrontational person, you get nowhere with the average woman.

**Something you need to know about the differences in males, females, feelings and how they affect relationships.** Women are concerned with people, relationships, feelings. They really are truly concerned when they ask "how are you?" Most men could care less! Men are concerned with THINGS, objects, facts. Men develop PASSIONS, one year it's sail boating, the next it's skiing! Women are more than aware of all this, and accept it as the nature of the beast.

**What are the characteristics of most crossdressers?** The same as a lot of males - perfectionists, accumulators, seemingly emotionless, uncommunicative with their feeling, etc. Many of these characteristics are what make a crossdresser a crossdresser. He crossdresses with the same intensity he uses to build a model train, or collect stamps.

The transgendered male often ignores his gift. He is able to see his partner's side of things and communicate with her, if only he WILL! The American Indians praised transgendered people. To have one in a family and village meant a lot to them. We were considered the great communicators! The only ones allowed in both male and female areas! When a couple was having problems communicating, they went to the "Berdache" (crossgendered person) to straighten things out. So you see, transgendered people have always had the ability to see both sides of a relationship, but like most things in life, you have to work at it

**Now you know - what do you do ???**

Once you have been told that your partner is a crossdresser and once you have found out what that means in simple terms, then your real education begins. On a personal, one to one level what does it mean to have a crossdresser for a mate?

Well, it can mean many things. There are divisions between simply a crossdresser that is heterosexual, a crossdresser who wants to live full time as a woman (transgendered), and a crossdresser who wants to become a woman in every sense of the word, that is a possible transsexual.

**Dateline: Buffalo, New York**

The Buffalo Belles have, like their colleagues in Chi Chapter, opened their hearts to the needy. For their Christmas Party, their suggestion was that each member bring a \$5 toy or clothing for a needy child. It never fails to warm my heart when a group of Tri-Ess sisters reach out to do good for other human beings. The Buffalo Belles have also been reaching out to educate the public. There was a recent news story in the Niagara Falls newspaper which gave the group a good bit of favorable publicity, and resulted in contacts from new sisters in need of support. Joan C. and Janice G. did a wonderful job of educating the public about crossdressing. Like their colleagues in North Carolina, the Buffalo Belles are also developing a library with books by such authorities as Virginia Prince, Alison Laing, JoAnn Roberts, Jennifer Stevens, Susi Rogol, and Dr. Sheila Kirk.

At the November meeting, Toni T. did makeovers, and gave out styling tips for hair. A large number of sisters were in attendance. It so happens that Denise was away for this meeting. As she says, "When I miss a party, I sure miss a good one!"

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After three years experience, I can address the first scenario. The first thing, I believe, you have to figure out is, do you love this person enough to put the effort into the relationship? This should be easy if you loved him before, you still love him. Yes, there are a lot of questions and for me some of them get answered and then creep back. My favorite question is how far will this hobby go? Will he want to dress all the time when the kids are gone? The problem is that your partner doesn't really know the answers. He can honestly tell you that as of today, this is all he wants, to dress and let the feminine side show itself. He could just want to go to meetings and social affairs with a support group and enjoy having you there. Then because crossdressers communicate with each other (as it should be), they get interested in other activities and other things can come into play; hormones, hair removal (from all over), dressing and going out in public, making the bar scene and it goes on and on.

I said before that you have to find answers to some basics yourself. Do you love him, do you want this as a part of your life? If so, will you accept him as he is, will that be actively or passively (just do your thing but not with me). Or will you find that all the little things over the years will call out to you and say that 'I don't love him' and use this as your way out of the relationship. Well, that's your choice! If you had a solid relationship before this bit of news it will be there after, as long as, this solid relationship was based on trust and honesty. You got there with

**COMMUNICATION and COMPROMISE** and you should continue with **COMMUNICATION and COMPROMISE**. Keep up the good work and this too will be just another activity that you share maybe even with a laugh that only you can share.



Scene from "The Crying Game II: the Rural Version"

**Army rehires ousted thief**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The former top civilian official in the Army was rehired as a Pentagon consultant with a salary of up to \$85,000 a year after he was forced to step down from his job for shoplifting.

John W. Shannon, who was acting Army secretary last month was hired to survey Defense Department inventories, a Pentagon spokeswoman said Wednesday.

Shannon, 59, was arrested on Aug. 26 outside the Fort Myer post exchange in Arlington, Va., with a blouse and skirt worth about \$30 store detectives said.

ROCHESTER, N.Y., THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1993

**Some men's lives are confined by glass walls**



**DEB PRICE**

There's a secret in everyone's closet. Mine is a blue-spangled evening gown that cost half a week's pay. Joyce and I had gone in search of a simple black dress, something nondescript that I could wear to my first Washington power dinner despite a lifelong aversion to skirts. The "black tie" on the invitation irked me — life was always so easy for men, I thought.

But as I tried on a half-dozen boring black shifts, Joyce gazed over at a rack of wild, sequined gowns and remarked, "You know, a lot of gay guys would kill to wear one of those."

It was almost a dare: Could I be as playful as the fellas who see life as a costume party? Or, would my entire self-image be undermined by spending a single evening dressed as a femme fatale?

Well, I ended up buying three-inch spike heels, dangling earrings and a sky blue dress, slit up to here. And, after Joyce dropped me off and locked the car door behind me so I couldn't lose my resolve, I went to the dinner party and had a fabulous time.

I found myself pitying the gentlemen, uniformly roosting in their black-tie pigeonhole. Women could have worn most anything dressy, even a tuxedo. The men were locked in a gender strait-jacket. Too bad if one of them didn't want to look like a penguin.

Who wears the pants in your family? The answer is supposed to tell us something about power and freedom. Perhaps the question should be: Who feels free to wear a skirt — even a kimono or

kilt, even on Halloween? Our society has begun talking about the fact that women are stunted by glass ceilings on the job. We've yet to address the huge problems caused by the way men's lives are confined by glass walls.

Don't cry. Don't play with dolls. Don't play with Mommy's make-up. The rules and walls go up early for little boys. Little-girl limits, which chafed some of us as much as the crinolines Joyce demanded be cut out of her Sunday dresses, tended to be much less strict.

Boys raised to believe in a very rigid definition of manhood grow up to be frightened of their "feminine instincts," fearful they will jeopardize their manliness by stepping outside a very narrow role, according to clinical psychologist Lois Shawver of Oakland, Calif.

These men, who "feel men should be breadwinners and women should mind the kitchen," are more apt than other men — or women in general — to dislike homosexual people, Shawver found while studying heterosexual attitudes toward gay people, for the Canadian government. Most of their antipathy is directed toward gay men, especially ones with traditionally feminine traits.

These heterosexual men see be-

ing attracted to another man as the ultimate violation of the male role. So, they despise gay men and are terrified by their own homosexual impulses.

"The men who have tremendous homophobic prejudice," Shawver says, "are men who don't understand that occasional homosexual feelings are normal (for heterosexuals) and that other men have them, too."

It is as if they feared catching a Frisbee with their left hand would make them left-handed or wearing a bracelet would make them female. They have a "brittle hold" on their masculine identity, Shawver notes.

Straight men with a more secure hold on their identity feel no need to believe little girls are made of "sugar and spice and everything nice" and that a completely different recipe is used for little boys. They know most ingredients are the same for everyone.

Because such a man doesn't live in fear of gay or feminine feelings, he can be comfortable having women or gay men as friends. "He can do things that are less clearly male-defined. He can cook, for example. . . . He can violate the male 'role' in small ways without feeling threatened by that," Shawver says.

"He can wear a pink shirt." Perhaps if we can learn to tailor our wardrobes to fit the diversity within ourselves, we'll be better suited to accept the diversity of others. □

Deb Price appears Thursdays. Write to her at GNS Features, 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22229-00001.



**Pretty Please**  
by  
**Lottie Hatfield**

In this edition I've put together a helpful list of Definite Don'ts of Wig Care.

Do Not use regular hair shampoo, it can damage wig fibers.

2. Do Not rub your wig while washing. A tangle mess will result, also known as a bird's nest.
3. Never wring out a wet wig. Caps and fibers become stretched in this way.
4. Do Not use a head form to dry your wig, again the cap will become stretched.
5. Never use a hair dryer or hot curling iron. Fibers melt!
6. Do Not try to dye or tint your wig, it just doesn't work.
7. Don't brush out a wet wig. Fibers are fragile and may break.
8. Do Not wash your wig in hot water and watch out for any extreme heat like ovens, stoves, or fireplaces. Besides the danger of melting, heat causes frizzing.
9. Never use alcohol-based hair spray. Look for water based spray. Other than water sprays will not wash out of the fibers.
10. Never, Ever wear your wig backwards. Wigs are not meant to be reversible.

I hope you've found these tips to be of help in caring for your wig. See you next time for

EPIC 5/16/93 3/93 "Pretty Please . . ."

**Dateline: Denver, Colorado**

For crossdressers stuck in secrecy and frustrated by not being able to fully explore their femininity, Marla, the Delta Chapter "Bird on a Wire," offers the following suggestions:

- 1) Wear clear mascara, clear nail polish, and either clear lipstick, or a shade that matches your natural lip color closely. (This writer recently discovered a wonderful shade called "Pink Ginger" by Arden. Although it appears a fairly deep red-violet in the tube, it goes on as only a slight accentuation of the normal lip color. In this way you can enjoy the thrill of using a lot of color and getting away with it - provided use a light coat, that is!)
- 2) Get your eyebrows in shape by careful plucking, or have them waxed.
- 3) Enjoy a facial.
- 4) Use body lotion on your skin three times a week.
- 5) Crossdress under your business clothes. This serves as a reminder that your feminine side is always there.
- 6) Read poetry at lunch.
- 7) Go to a jewelry store, just to be impressed by the diamonds, emeralds and rubies.
- 8) Take an afternoon off, just to enjoy the fresh air and nature.
- 9) Get your hair done. Even get a perm.
- 10) Carry a purse. (i.e., a man's leather "organizer")

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- 11) Have your ears pierced.
- 12) Buy male-looking clothes with women's labels. (This works well. I have a burgundy sweater I wear with a delicate silver cross. Only the sales ladies at Shelley's Tall Shop know where that sweater really came from!)
- 13) Use a cologne.
- 14) Expand and reinforce some of your feminine personality traits, such as compassion and sensitivity. This is perhaps the most fulfilling of all. Once, after an extended discussion with a patient in the hospital, she told me, "Doctor, I really feel free to talk with you. You always seem to care, and to know just how I feel." How wonderfully feminine I felt just then!

Marla sums up, "In other words, thoroughly enjoy what you can have, and don't worry about what you can't."

**Where:** Houston Texas 1992

**What:** International Foundation For Gender Education

**Why:** Coming Together - Working Together Convention

by Janice Gnau

The flyer states the Coming Together - Working Together Convention exists to help build a better world in which to live. Our intention is to bring our people and our friends together so we can learn how to better understand each other's needs and issues, learn how to respect each other's differences, to care about each other, and to work together for the benefit of all.

This is my second major event so there will be a quick comparison with The Outreach Institute's Provincetown Fantasia Fair (my first event outside of the Canadian CrossDressers Club) although at times you could insert the Poconos, The Be-All, or a party night at the CCDC in place of Provincetown. Hopefully, before the year is over I will be able to give you a critique of the others. Also keep in mind that I am discussing this from a CD perspective and there is a separate TS program which I was not involved with and thus cannot make a valid comparison.

If you are looking for fun, adventure and a good time, go to Provincetown. If you are looking for makeup lessons, voice lessons, deportment and technique, go to Provincetown. If you are a first timer (almost) barely out of the closet for less than a year (as I am) go to Provincetown.

However, if you have been out for a while, are involved in planning for a club or organization, or wish to obtain some insight or ideas in how to expand your horizons and help within and outside the gender community the Coming Together - Working Together Convention might be just the right place for you to be.

I went mainly due to curiosity and a developing feeling that I should be able to give more to the community. Fortunately, and I still don't believe the other members of the Canadian Crossdressers Club (CCDC) are fully cognizant of the fact that the situation with the CCDC (with many thanks to Veronica and Paddy) is the premier set-up on the North American continent. As you members know, the club room is open almost anytime. Saturday night parties are every Saturday night, not once a month as in most clubs. A boutique and first rate makeup service is available on site. The bottom line is that while they (Paddy and Veronica) have my full hearted support and thanks, they have little need of my time and effort (which is always gladly offered and given if asked). Is there something else I can do for the community?

(text continued on page 10)

This is one of the reasons I was proud and honoured to represent The Canadian Cross-Dressers Club at The Congress of Representatives.

In addition to the above stated benefits for Provincetown, there was also another big advantage, I drove and thus didn't have to worry about what to pack. I had a car trunk that was filled to overflow in the back seat. With the I.F.G.E. convention in Houston, I had to fly and the key questions were, how many pieces of luggage to take and what to pack the luggage with.

There was an additional factor of a week before I left, the temperature hit the eighties in Houston and it was calling for similar weather for the time I was going to be there. And yes, you guessed it, very little of my wardrobe was going to mesh with that temperature range. This gave me the pleasant task of trying to find a couple new outfits to take with me (I bought two and returned one). It turned out I only overpacked by about twenty percent this time.

To give you an idea how the Coming Together - Working Together Convention is scheduled let me give you a run down on the meetings and seminars I went to.

Wednesday:

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Welcome  
12:00 PM - 02:00 PM - Keynote Luncheon  
02:00 PM - 05:00 PM - IFGE Finance Committee

Thursday:

09:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Congress of Representatives  
12:00 PM - 02:00 PM - Keynote Luncheon  
02:00 PM - 03:30 PM  
"How To" The College Speakers Bureau  
03:30 PM - 05:00 PM  
"How To" Regional Organizations, the MAGGIE Way

Friday:

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM  
Estate Planning, Wills, Trusts, Charitable Giving  
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM - Keynote Luncheon  
02:00 PM - 3:30 PM - "How To" Community Outreach  
03:30 PM - 5:00 PM  
Coming Out - Telling Your Wife, Family, Children  
07:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Introductory Seminar

(This was primarily designed to be an open seminar for outsiders although there were more of the converted in the audience than interested outsiders)

Saturday

09:00 AM - 10:00 AM - Hair Removal, A to Z  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Native American Tradition  
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM - Keynote Luncheon  
02:00 PM - 3:30 PM - Religion & Our Community  
03:30 PM - 5:00 PM  
"How To" Finding and Keeping Members  
05:00 PM - 5:30 PM - Congress of Representatives

There was also a total separate and full schedule for the transsexuals in the group and a separately run wives and couples program. Additional IFGE Committees includes Education Resources, Publications, Nominations and Marketing. There was usually at least one other seminar or meeting going on concurrently with the ones I was attending not counting the TS and Wives/couples program. A number of times it was not an easy choice selecting which one I was to attend. There was also a reception social, the Trinity Awards Buffet, a formal banquet, an Aids Benefit and a trip to a downtown location. On Sunday morning there was a non-denominational religious service.

I am not going to bore you to tears about what went on during the various meetings and seminars (that would be worse than forcing you to watch The National) since I'm sure there will be future write-ups in Tapestry (which you can pick up at Wildside) with one major exception and some specific recollections and reflections. The major exception is from the viewpoint of being the Canadian Crossdressers Club member for the Congress of Representatives which I wrote in a separate article that appears elsewhere in this issue.

My strongest recollection is from the Native American Tradition which was presented by Rena Swifhawk. If you ever have a chance to hear her speak of her Native American traditions run, don't walk even if you have to lose a heel, to the presentation.

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The theme of her presentation is as follows; To develop a sense of pride in who we are. Each of us is a shaman. This presentation is to provide food for thought so that we can learn to use the tools of our power. We are the new way of man's evolution. We are the third sex and we need to restore the balance of Mother Earth that we have destroyed.

The far too short seminar concentrated on the great inner spirit which we all have. How to manage our female-like and male-like energies which represent a balancing act between light and matter. We are special people who have two complimentary ways of seeing: First, with our intellect and Second, with our heart, feelings and intuitions. The first way is masculine, the second is feminine. Coming into balance awakens or opens the doors between these two ways of seeing. Each of us as a shaman can alter the way we see reality. When we do, we find that we have altered reality. One of the realities is, by the end of Rena Swifhawk's seminar I don't believe there was a dry eye present in the room because we all felt the wave of great positive energy generated by each an every one of us as a result of her inspiration.

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At one point in time, she introduced a genetic female as a male to female transsexual.

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Some of the Keynote luncheons were made interesting by Dr. Sheila Kirk's (no relation to James T.) introductions and comments. At one point in time she introduced a genetic female as a male to female transsexual. She finally blamed it all on her blonde wig which she then removed after making several other mispronouncements.

A non-convention individual approached me in the hallway and stated he was a deep-in-the-closet crossdresser and truly wished he could express himself the way we all were doing. We talked for close to half an hour

(while I was missing lunch) before he said he had to leave for a business meeting. I wish him (and all the ones like him) the best of luck in the future to find the right path to follow.

An item of interest for all you hockey players is that while the hockey strike was going on there were a couple of hockey teams in the hotel for a tournament. One was from St. Catherines and another from outside Montreal (at least I found some up to date hockey information). It was highly amusing to see them posing for pictures with a number of people from the convention. There were no penalties called for high sticking, elbowing or boarding, although one IFGE member did mention they pack more than someone who was going to a cross-dresser's convention.

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### It was interesting filling out Dr. Richard Docter's Gender Identity Inventory Survey.

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It was interesting filling out Dr. Richard Docter's Gender Identity Inventory Survey. This was unlike the inventory sheets I usually fill out, there was no inventory over/short (unless you count my gender as being one too many) and most answers were true/false. A number of questions gave me some time to reflect upon certain aspects of my cross-dressing. It has been quite some time since I engaged in serious self examination, it's more fun just to accept the facts of my life (crossdressing) and just do it.

There was a fantastic suggestion during the Charitable Giving Seminar about pledging my United Way donation to any registered non-profit organization. Since my company pushes for United Way contributions it will be some inside joke if I pledge it to the IFGE or some other similar crossgender organization.

The College Outreach Speaker's Bureau sound like an area that could be of benefit for the

*concluded next month*