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Buffalo Belles Newsletters

Madeline Davis Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,  
Transgender Archives of Western New York

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7-1997

### July 1997

Buffalo Belles

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# BUFFALO BELLES



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JULY 1997

SISTERS IN CHARGE:  
  
JEAN H.  
PATTI J.  
KATHY LORRAINE

Dear Sisters,

A nice turnout was had for the June meeting. Our streak of rainy, cool weather continued, unfortunately. Hopefully that one will be broken by the older running streak of gorgeous weather for the picnic in August. Then again, who will complain if it ends next meeting! Sure would be nice to be

able to get outside and enjoy our meeting place's lovely gardens and grounds.

Our meeting topic was about discussing various items. I'll try to give the best report I can about this, but I didn't arrive in time for the discussion session. I am relying upon what others have told me in giving this report.

The BIG topic was whether to "break" up the Belles. The answer given, was a vote acclimation NOT too. Nobody spoke in favor of the idea. A question was asked. "What exactly are the needs of the TS that require such special support?"

Certainly there are special concerns; such as hormones, electrolysis, legal, surgical, etc.

However, when a sister has reached this point in her life, she already has her support in place. She has been in this for awhile now. She has experienced all the feelings and had the problems that any CD faces. Most were/are married, have Children. Jobs. Mortgages, etc.

Then it was asked: "What are the special needs of the CD that requires such special support?" Why of course, Wifie, Kids, Job, etc. Sound familiar?

## ATTENDEES

JANICE G.	ALICIA &
PATTI J.	DOROTHY
HOLLY I.	CRYSTAL & TONYA
KATHY L.	SHARON F.
MICHELLE G.	CAROL S.
JOY S.	FRAN
ANGELLA A.	JEAN
CAMILLE H.	DINISE
SUSAN B.	

**RIVERSIDE WEEKEND:** Diane didn't make it as hoped. She was to explain what might be needed from us. She did tell me in a phone call a

**JULY MEETING:** Only one vote was received (sorry Jamie!!) for switching to our regular meeting date for the holiday weekend. Therefore we will keep with our usual unusual meeting date of the 2nd Saturday, the TWELFTH. For those confused, **THE NEXT MEETING IS JULY 12.** OK?

**JULY MEETING:** Only one vote was

wish to make your interest known, any submission to the newsletter by Aug. 10 will be included in Sept. newsletter. OK, any other rules needed??

We'll have a ballot in the Sept. newsletter to mail or bring to the meeting. If any of you

Or at least volunteer to help out in some way. You have the next two months to think about it. If you can't make the meetings, call or write.

It is up to YOU to decide. There are no rules. Nominate yourself, nominate another sister.

Whoever did whatever was someone like you. They reached a point where they wanted to do more. Simply put, they cared! There are a few of you reading this who feel the same. That's all it takes. Heart. The one feminine trait that there can never be a panty check for. But the one we CAN reach, if nothing else.

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few days before the meeting that the location will probably be changed. But will remain in the same general area. Hopefully more information will be forth coming soon and we'll have it before printing deadline.

**AUGUST MEETING: THE PICNIC:** Our annual event will be on the usual first Sat., the second. This has always been right up there with the Christmas party, as our finest meeting.

Please come out and join us for this affair! Bring some food to pass. Bring the wife, kids, etc. But do you really need to bring your probation officer? Come join our family picnic!

Please call the hotline and tell us what you would like to bring, if you have a specialty! We always seem to have plenty to eat. And don't forget your camera.

We will also be extending an invitation to our nearby friends in Rochester & NW PA to join us in our summer celebration. And maybe the fox will pass by again this year! Certainly we can count on the fire flies and Katie did's/didn't's.

**50/50 SPLIT:** Patti was the lucky winner of \$9.00 this month and graciously used it in buying the first round in the ladies later respite.

**HOTLINE:** It was also suggested that we

update our message and its name. The first is easy, the second a problem. What do we call it? As pointed out, it is not really a "hotline", as that means it will be answered immediately, like poison control, or suicide prevention. So what should we call it? Answering Machine Only line? That lacks panache, for sure, good buddy. Got a suggestion?

**MISSING VIDEO:** Our old friend

Frances Lee has requested that we return a video she says she lent to the group several years ago. It was a copy of "The Operation" by Dr. Schrang. If you have it, please return it so we can forward it to Frances. It was not in our library.

**ENDA NEEDS HELP!:** Please read the two articles about the lobbying efforts for passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. And then write/call/E mail your representative in support of it's passage. It IS for your benefit!!

**ELECTROLOGY 2000:** While I (Jean) was in Texas having my electrology treatments, I met Ison From an Ohio group. I intended to come home and write an article about my trip. However she sent me a copy of her summation of the procedure and our trip. She put it into words so much better than I could, I decided to share her letter with you!

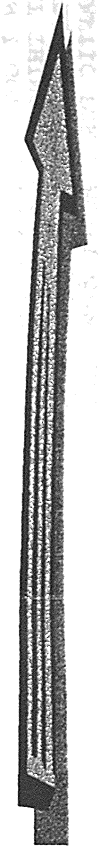
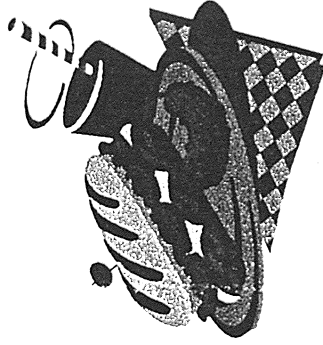
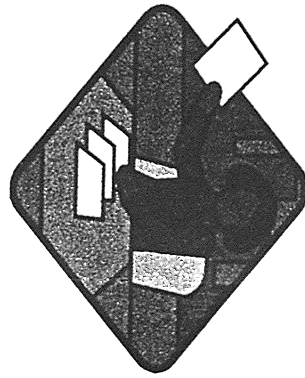
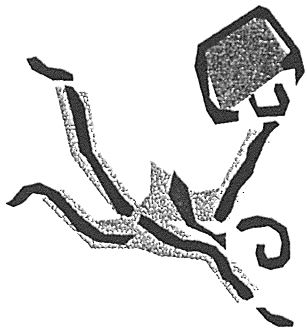
It is certainly nice to see that we haven't developed any "Us" vs. "Them" divisions in our little sorority. As long as we can all respect and CARE for each other, regardless of what degree one has chosen as their level; we shall succeed. Whether your need is just a place to go once a month and dress up, or has become something much deeper that becomes a full time existence.

Because this question was raised for the need for a separate group, it may indicate that we have NOT always provided the support that a sister needed. Perhaps if we all try harder to really talk to each other, some of these needs will be met. The idea of having more discussion meetings is certainly valid and should be implemented. What seems to be lacking is someone willing to be the moderator for such a group. Who is willing??

**ELECTIONS COMING:** Jean and myself (Kathy) have simultaneously and unrelated both decided it is time to step aside.

The timing is just perfect as it will coincide with our fifth anniversary, coming in September. Five years, five leaders. Joan, Denise, Janice, Kathy, Jean. And like the first three, we'll both also be with you helping out in any way we can.

Patti certainly belongs in the same list as one of the originals, but has taken a more formal role in the last year and will









# Estate of transsexual with AIDS awarded \$30,000 in prison suit

By DAN HERBECK

News Staff Reporter

A federal jury awarded \$30,000 to the estate of Dana K. DeVilla, a transsexual convict who died of AIDS in Albion State Correctional Facility.

After an unusual trial in which lawyers used a deposition from Ms. DeVilla to help her speak to jurors after her death, the jury found that former women's prison Superintendent Sunny Schriver failed to train her employees properly on the handling of inmates with AIDS.

"I was treated rottenly," Ms. DeVilla said in a transcript read into the court record. "Because I had AIDS, I was to be exploited and made to live like I was a freak." Ms. DeVilla, who died in 1995 at age 36, claimed she was abused and mistreated in the prison, located in Orleans County. The prison has since been the target of numerous other allegations of mistreatment, raised by Amy Fisher and other inmates.

"We're very gratified," said James Ostrowski, who represented Ms. DeVilla's estate with co-counsel Salvatore P. Abbate. "The jury spent a lot of time deliberating this case, and they came to the conclusion that they believed Dana's story. I think Dana would feel she was vindicated."

Assistant State Attorney General Joseph F. Reina said Thursday he is planning to appeal the verdict.

"We feel the verdict goes against the weight of the evidence," Reina said.

Ms. DeVilla claimed prison officials held her up to ridicule by illegally circulating the word that she had AIDS and had undergone sex-change surgeries. Ostrowski read jurors a 200-page transcript from a deposition she gave years ago.

Ms. DeVilla described how she was born as a male in the Bronx and named Kevin Otis. She said she grew up in Westchester County, had a series of sex-change operations in the 1980s. She told how she later moved into a life of crime, passing bad checks and at various times using almost 20 aliases, male and female.

Abbate told jurors that, under state law, prison health officials could not tell anyone — including other prison employees — about Ms. DeVilla's illness.

MIND, just want to know  
us Alone! — 6/9/97

**ASK ANN**

## He won't change, she won't leave

**Dear Ann Landers:** I am a frustrated woman who is married to a cross-dresser. I have read your columns saying some wives and girlfriends enjoy their cross-dressing sweethearts and husbands and promote their "hobby." This certainly is not the case in our house.

For the past several years, I suspected my husband was wearing my clothes. I have had to discard many items that were stretched out of shape or torn. When I couldn't find a bra or a blouse, I knew that "Don" had acquired it.

Our home life is miserable. Don's mother still continues to manipulate him even after all these years. He has never been able to stand up for himself, which infuriates me and has caused some hot arguments. Counselors have suggested I leave him or "take him as he is" because he will never change. We've been married for 25 years, and I don't want a divorce, nor do I want to damage Don's image. His friends and family members hold him in high regard, and the people he works with think he is wonderful.

My woman friends are under the impression that we have the perfect marriage. I don't know what to do, Ann. Our family life is terrible, and I cry a lot.

— *Lonely in the Metropole*

**Dear Metropole:** There is no way I can help a woman who tells me her home life is miserable, she is frustrated and unhappy and cries a lot, but she does not want a divorce.

You say counselors have suggested that you accept Don as he is or leave him, but you don't want to do either one. It appears to me that you are going to be miserable either way. Your best bet is to develop some outside interests, stay in therapy, put a lock on your closet door and keep your underwear where Don can't find it.

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO WEAR A PRETTY DRESS?

What would it be like to sit while I pee?  
To put ribbons in my hair, without mommy scolding me!  
I'm going to have to hide, I guess.  
What would it be like to wear a pretty dress?

What would it be like to have a doll of my own?  
You know, someone to hug when you feel all alone!  
Dad keeps saying to me "You're different than the rest".  
But he doesn't know how I look in a dress!

Why can't I play with the girls at school?  
Hopscotch and jump-rope seem really cool!  
The boys are too rough, and everything is a test.  
I wouldn't want them to see me in a dress!

What would it be like to kiss a boy?  
To have him call me on the phone, after he walked me home.  
Coach says I should play football, a game I detest!  
He's trying to stop me from wearing a dress.

What would it be like to make love to a man?  
To feel the strength of his arms, and the softness of his hands!  
But my marriage is really the best.  
She doesn't even mind my wearing a dress!

What would it be like to give birth to a child?  
To feel her inside you, while you wait for her smile.  
Since the kids have been born, our life has been full of duress.  
She doesn't want them to see me in a dress!

Forty years have gone by and I'm still waiting to live.  
My thoughts and feelings are mixed, something has to give!  
There is no one left to impress.  
I spend a lot of time in public wearing a dress.

I'm desperate now, and my back's to the wall.  
I feel like a woman, but I'm so damn tall!  
The only way to get out of this mess.  
Is to change my body to fit this pretty dress!

Charlegne Millet