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4-2001

### April 2001

Buffalo Belles

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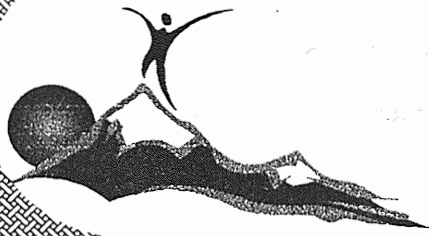
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# THE JOURNEY

NEWSLETTER OF THE BUFFALO BELLES

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-CHANGE THE NAME OF THE BUFFALO BELLES? CAMILLE'S CORNER LAYS OUT SOME OF THE COMPELLING REASONS AS TO WHY IT'S THE RIGHT TIME.

-EVEN THOUGH THE PRIDE PARADE IS IN JUNE, IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVENT. COME TO THE APRIL MEETING TO DISCUSS WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

**TAKING MY OWN ADVICE!**

I should take my own advice! Well, I guess I am just lucky to be here. I did something I have said we shouldn't do and it could have been bad! We had a PEP meeting on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>, which went very well. It run until 11:00 and we stayed around a while to listen to the band and to socialize a bit.

I wanted to get to "Secrets" to see some friends that I knew were going to be there, but didn't get there until about 2:00. They were still there and we chatted a bit. I was curious about how the party in the Falls went. They said there was a good turn out. I'm sorry I couldn't have joined them, but I couldn't be in two places at the same time.

They decided to head to Club Marcella's about 3:15 and I chose to stay and relax at "Secrets". It had been a busy evening and I wanted some quiet time to end the evening with. I stayed right to closing, 4:00, and said goodnight to Frank (the bartender).

I felt safe about going to my car. I was parked on Allen St., just across from Joey's. Just, 75' from the front door of "Secrets". I got my keys out and ready before I went out the door. As I went out to the sidewalk I looked all around and there was no one in sight and it was very quiet. I looked left and I looked right, no one around. I started my walk and as I walked past Joey's I looked in to see if anyone was coming out. Still there was no one around. I now started across the street toward my car. I was just putting my key in the door, when I felt someone coming. I looked around and saw a guy heading right for me. He was walking rather quickly, which gave me a bad feeling. As I

opened my door, I asked "can I help you" (In a harsh tone) "No" he responded and he came right to my door and held it open for me. I was getting very mixed feelings. It happened so quickly. He was a very well dressed guy. Nice clothes and a long business coat. But the look in his eyes was rather cold and with no response to my question. I thought I was in trouble. I got into my car and he closed the door. I then locked it right away and thought "That was strange".

Now the second strange thing happened. I thought he then left, but instead he went around to the other side of my car and tried the door to get in! Thankfully, this too was locked. He tried twice and then stepped back for 5 sec. He then went on his way down Allen Street and down a side street. I still have no idea where he came from! The only thing I can think of is that he was in the alley next to "Joey's". I still don't know what he wanted, but I have a sure feeling it wasn't good. He may have chickened out on his initial plan or who knows. I just know I was lucky! It could have been much worse. I have now come to the conclusion that the danger hour is from 2 or 3:00 on. I feel that there are guys out there that are just watching the places we frequent and shopping for a good time. They just wait for us to leave and then look for an opportunity to make their move. Inside the bar is one thing, but outside, late at night is another. They are only looking for one thing! (Possibly 2, but I don't want to even think about that one!) So far I have been lucky. My big mistake was I thought being so close to "Secrets" that I was safe. This taught me that we are never safe alone. Ten feet or a block, DON'T BE ALONE! I have been told this by Mistress Kali, time and time again. I have learned the lesson well know.

Tina



CAMILLE'S CORNER

Change. Transformation. Transition. Sounds like descriptions regarding someone from the transgender community. But it's not. I'm speaking of the world we live in. A world that is changing, and sometimes for the better.

When the Buffalo Belles came into existence nine years ago, the world was a different place. A world where to be Trans was risky. The founding members decided to form an organization that would provide a safe place to gather for a growing population of crossdressers. Our affiliation with Tri Ess (Society for the Second Self) was important to our early existence. But as the world evolved, so did the Belles. We grew into an organization that acknowledged and welcomed transsexuals. We also did not give emphasis to someone's sexual orientation as Tri Ess does. We were more concerned with an individual having a transgendered nature. As a result, we cordially departed from our association with Tri Ess.

For the last few years we have welcomed all transgendered individuals to the Buffalo Belles. As we increase in numbers we learn, we grow, we evolve. It is now time to take another step forward in our group's development.

More Trans people than ever before are coming out. Due to ongoing outreach efforts, I am hearing from an increasing numbers of F to M individuals. They wonder if there is an organization for them. I tell them that they have found it: the Buffalo Belles. "But your name implies you only deal with M to F's," some F to M's tell me. I explain that's not the case and that all

Trans people are welcome. After informing them they are welcome, a few F to M's have become members. But I can understand many FtoM's reluctance. "Belles" is gender specific. How many others would have become members if a 'friendlier' name welcomed them.

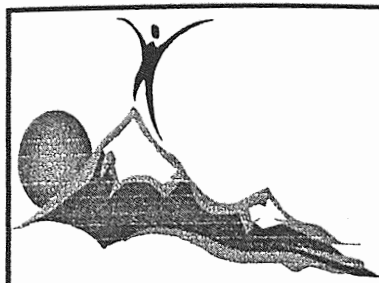
It's time the name of our group evolved to reflect the nature of all Transgendered individuals' experiences. To that end, I propose we contemplate and discuss what that name should be during the next few months. We will have the same purposes and aspirations as before. We'll just be putting out a better "Welcome" sign.

We can change or we can pretend its 1992 again.

A question I've longed to ask is: Is there a lawyer among us? The reason I ask is I'm looking into the possibility of getting the Belles classified as an incorporated non-profit organization and would like some advice and help getting there. We could do more for ourselves as well as creating a better image of Trans people to the general public. If there is a Belle who is a lawyer, please contact me. I'd like to discuss the feasibility of incorporation and future endeavors.

One last thing. Pride Month is June and the Buffalo Belles are marching. Or at least riding on a float in the Pride Parade down Elmwood Ave. I've spoken to some of you and six of you have told me that you'd be interested in being in the parade. That's great considering we have never been in it before. But I'm afraid some will get cold feet and end up watching from the sidewalk. We need at least six more volunteers in order to show that we have a right to be who we are. Nothing more. Nothing less. Are you that person? And if you can't be in the parade, we need people to help decorate our float. Please see me our contact me through the Helpline or email. Help us make a small bit of history.

Be well.



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MY VALENTINE'S DAY ORDEAL CHAPTER TWO

"THE WORRIES"

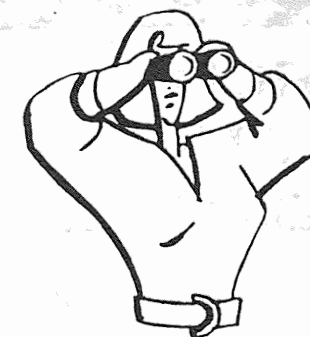
Worry number 1. It is the day after the accident and I'm watching the news and lo and behold my accident is on it! I thought it was okay until I started to wonder if they were going to say anything about how I was dressed on television. It was on all the channels and I was relieved when there was no mention of my name or anything about me.

Worry number 2. The news paper! They were apt to put more information in that! I didn't get a chance to see it, but I was told again there was no mention of me at all. Just the other guy! A few days later it was brought to my attention that I will have to testify in court about the accident. As far as I know there are no reports on how I was dressed, but it might come out in court from witness testimony. So, I had to tell the District Attorney that I was dressed so that there were no surprises. He took it okay and said it had no relevance to the case. However, I felt he should know.

Worry number 3. I will be in court and everyone there will hear my name. If it does come out in court, I will be outed to everyone there. Not a good thought. I will make sure my parents don't know when it is. I would not like them to be there! I know I can count on my friends to be there with me. Last, I was talking with my sister, who lives in Calif., about my accident. It seems she already knew about it. Her friend lives here in Buffalo and she is married to the police officer who does all the reporting to the media. She didn't know it was "my" accident they were talking about until I called. She didn't indicate that she knew I was dressed, but does she? It's now been 3 weeks since the accident and I'm still filling out forms and making calls. I am driving downtown again, but I am very nervous about it. I am triple checking intersections for that unseen big black object. I sure hope there isn't 2 of them. I keep thinking how that one second in my life has changed things. I just want things to get back to "normal." I have a feeling that it will take a long time! All I have heard is that the guy who hit me is out on bail. It won't be over for months. It could take a long time to even get into court! I hope that will be the end! If not, I will have another story for you. I'm still thinking how much nicer those chocolates would have been.

Tina

(PS- I go to court April 12th.)



NANCY'S PERSPECTIVE

Hi Again,

Is it spring yet? If not, it soon will be!

I wanted to start this edition (of my column) by thanking Jo for the extra effort she made with the March snack table. The little touches were evident down to the color of the table cloth, napkins, cups and plates. After all, it was St. Patrick's day last month and a little green never hurts. I wore my green sweater, but aside from Jo and me, I didn't see a lot of girls in the mood. Since we now have an extra hour of daylight, I'm hoping everyone will celebrate Easter at the meeting by coming as an egg at least. Also, watch out we have a Friday the 13th the night before our next gig.

An interesting discussion broke out early into the festivities. Sexuality and gender was the topic, and I admit I got into the center of it. The fact I was the only one standing certainly contributed to my involvement.

Sexuality is defined, "...of or involving the sexual organs." Gender is defined, "...a grammatical classification of nouns and pronouns into masculine, feminine and neuter. Using those slim guidelines, it is easy to see why I'm no expert. I've never been to a doctor, or professional to discuss this topic, but I have talked to a lot of people over the years and formed some opinions. Since I started to crossdress as a child, I have always believed this was something I was born to do. A lot of experts agree that there is no firm explanation why some people crossdress, and some do not. There seems to be a need to crossdress and this says a lot about a person. Sex and gender are two things and should never be used interchangeably. Male and female refer to a person's sex, while man, woman, boy and girl are related to gender.

Somebody once that sex is usually found between the legs, while gender is determined between the ears. Crossdressing is not about a change in sex, but rather it is about changing genders and/or gender roles. It is about gender expression. Most CD's have a "need" to dress in the clothes of the opposite sex. This desire tends to increase with age. To my knowledge no one knows why cross-dressing exists, nor has a "cure" been found.

Continued on page 5

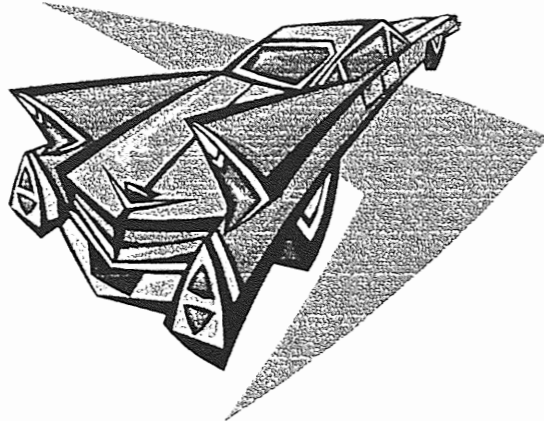
### MARCH MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Brenda H.  
Colleen R.  
Denise P.  
Jean H.  
Jen M.  
Jo S.  
Kathy L.  
Kendra K.

Michelle L.  
Nancy W.  
Rebecca C.  
Susan R.  
Tammy D.-debutante  
Terri & Sue J.  
Tina M.

### WANTED:

INDIVIDUALS TO RIDE IN THE BUFFALO BELLES "TRANNNY" MOBILE FOR THE PRIDE PARADE ON SUNDAY, JUNE 3



CONTACT THE HELP LINE 879-0973 OR SPEAK WITH CAMILLE.

### Rebecca's Column

#### Sociology Class on the Transgender

I was invited to be a special guest at the 9:00 a.m. Sociology course held at D'Youville College on March 6th & 8th, 2001.

It was a wonderful opportunity to help people in the college setting learn a little more about transsexual individuals. I told them that I was not to be construed as representing every transsexual. We are all different, so it wouldn't be right for me to be a representative for all.

On the 6th I was introduced by the professor and talked to the students about my experiences. I explained the term Gender Identity Dysphoria as a psychiatric term which means "feelings of conflict and discomfort felt by a person due to the anatomical gender of their body". I explained to them that as a Transsexual I was born with a perfectly normal and healthy brain of one gender (female), but in a body with a perfectly healthy and normal anatomy of the opposite gender (male). Every day of my life I struggled to reconcile my natural personality, gender identity (being Female), and body image with my physical body and social status (being male). It was finally time to seek medical help to change my anatomy and social role in life. The conflict became so great to bear, that I had to do something.

After I told my wife she couldn't bear the idea and began divorce proceedings. She told me to leave and find another place to live. She told our sons, her parents, my family and everyone at the church that we attended. I was completely "outed" to everyone I had ever known. I was now left with no support from friends or family. Because, I still loved my wife, this made my life exceptionally unbearable. Unless I found help, life would be very short for me. I had tried suicide before because of my Gender Dysphoria, but now I was very depressed because of my loss of everyone who I had cared about or who had cared for me.

I decided that it was extremely important for me to find some support, in order for me to keep from committing suicide. I met a wonderful person who was always there to help me through the tough times. She has become my very best friend and will always be a part of my life.

I joined a support group that had in it other Transsexuals that could help me understand what I needed to do.

I found the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo on Elmwood. The people accepted me as a female. I worked for Women's Society as hard as I could. The chairperson of the Women's Society asked me if I wanted to join. Of course I was ecstatic and now truly felt as a fulfilled female part of the church. I joined the Library committee which is a part of the Women's Society. Now I have people who are able to support me in a congregational setting. I'm not shy so every Sunday I try and make new friends.

On the 8th there were more students there. I was introduced again by the professor and again talked briefly to the students about my experiences. We passed out pieces of paper and asked them to write their questions and place them in a bag. The questions were excellent. I believe that every student asked a question.

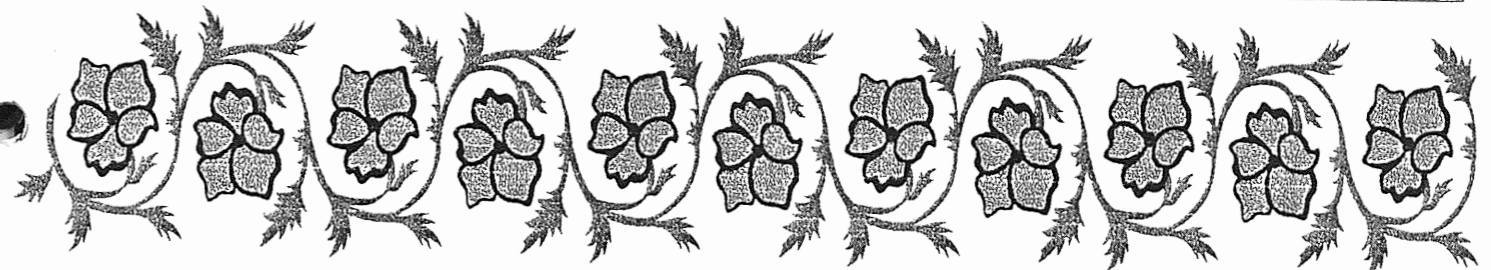
I answered every question to the best of my ability. Next month I'll tell you about my life as a Transsexual and the things that I had to deal with. Love to you all, Rebecca

### Nancy's Perspective

Continued from page 3

I also believe that as human beings, we are each just slightly different from each other. Given that fact, it is no surprise that among transgender people, they find a multitude of ways to express themselves. The frequency we dress-up, the look we achieve, the way we interact, our goals, and our thoughts, all come into play. Do we know who we are under all the trappings? Hopefully we do. A lot of people simply describe the "good feeling" they get when they dress-up. Nothing more or less. Wanting to change our sexuality, or live in the role of the opposite sex is another I'm not up to speed with, that falls into the category of all persons being different.

TAKE CARE!  
Your sister,  
Nancy



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DON'T BE AFRAID OF CHANGE.

YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M GOING TO GET A GENDER CHANGE OPERATION AND MOVE TO CHINA!

I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF SOMEONE LISTENED TO YOU.

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## Talking with your Children about Gender Identity Issues

by Gianna Israel

Emblazoned with various social, moral and religious opinions, disclosing and discussing one's transgendered status with adolescent and adult children is frequently one of the most difficult issues brought up by clients in my counseling practice. Because our western society is polarized with gender and sexual stereotypes transgendered individuals survive relatively closeted familiarly and socially making these issues all the more difficult to talk about.

During our individual exploration of transgendered issues we must decide how much of a public face we wish to reveal to others. Additionally we must decide which values we wish to incorporate into our private lives and ultimately extend to children. Agreed, every parent wishes to provide their child with safety, nurturance, education and the opportunity to build self and social acceptance skills.

Firsthand before disclosing to any relationship of importance, establish the facts, understand how being transgendered affects your life and theirs. Talk with your counselor regarding disclosure options and relevancy. In some cases not disclosing or limited disclosure may be optimum. One frequently overlooked necessity for those who are unable to disclose, is dealing with the feelings surrounding having to keep something hidden from family members, this is another subject that would be appropriate to bring into discussion with your counselor.

If at all possible, choose disclosure when you feel revealing will increase the quality of the relationship.

Being able to speak effectively about gender issues is important. Defining the distinction between sexual and gender identity is a frequently misunderstood process, as well these definitions are commonly misrepresented socially through stereotypes. However, explaining the distinction does not have to be difficult. Sexual Identity or Orientation basically indicates where sexual attraction may lay, whether it be toward the same, opposite or both sexes. Gender Identity basically indicates an internal sense of self and an outward presentation of masculinity or femininity, not necessarily reflecting one's biological gender which is assigned at birth. To simply carry these concepts a step further, Primary Identity reflects an individual's needs in both gender and sexual identification although experience and presentation may not always reflect what actually exists on the inside.

Young children in particular may have some difficulty grasping gender and sexual concepts, thus disclosing with moderation is best. One age relevant option I encourage, is beginning easy-to-understand disclosure when children begin asking gender-related or "personal" questions. "Daddy, why are you wearing Mommy's lipstick and earrings when other Daddies don't," is a pretty obvious indication the child is curious about your behavior.

Because initial comprehension of gender and sexual identity concepts may prove difficult for children, reframing this information into "safe dialogue" is a valuable disclosure tool. If creative, you may wish to create a story disclosing healthy gender concepts. Sadly few fairy tales implement such important information. A wonderful alternative I reviewed and recommend is the children's story *Fluff the Bunny*, which easily understood by children and adults alike, beautifully illustrates Fluff's search for healthy experience and individuality. (Note: The *Fluff the Bunny* book may be ordered for \$12.00, post-paid, Creative Design Services, PO Box 1263, King of Prussia, PA 19406)

It may be anticipated that not all adolescent, teen and adult children are going to be immediately accepting of your transgendered phenomena. Not pushing the issue on an uninterested or resistant individual has its merits. Sometimes just being able to talk about the issue, if the child wants to, is enough. Finally, one vital disclosure point which needs to be emphasized here and in conversation with your child is...

Regardless of age, the transgendered issue is the parent's issue, not the child's, and that your love for the child remains the same.

As a rule of thumb, if it can in any way be avoided, I do not encourage parents to lie about their gender identity issues when questioned by adolescent or adult children. There is a big difference between choosing not to disclose one's transgendered identity and lying in response to questions originating from a child who sees something going on. In the short term lying may cover up the discomfort you may feel surrounding disclosing your transgendered issues. However in the long run, lying may solely serve to foster disrespect toward a parent's inability to discuss self-acceptance issues. Lying also serves in perpetrating the myth that gender and sexuality are somehow dirty or shameful. One option I suggest for parents who have inquisitive children, yet are not ready for disclosure, is to make an appointment with the child and deal with the issue when you are ready.

One important point easily overlooked in some counseling processes during discussion of child/gender-identified parent issues is the examination of the level of support offered by a non-transgendered parent or partner. All too often I have heard of a non-transgendered parent using gender issues as ammunition during disputes or as a means of estranging the child from the transgendered parent. Sadly as much persuading as the transgendered parent might attempt, it is not infrequent that the non-transgendered parent may remain inflexible in their opinions. Whatever the case may be it is not in the best interest of any child to have one parent undermining the love another. I strongly encourage transgendered parents to remind themselves and their partners that their first responsibility as parents is to provide love for their adolescent, teen and adult children.

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Gianna E. Israel is a gender-specializing counselor.

## FTM - MTF MISPERCEPTIONS

by Gianna E. Israel

Recently I overheard a FTM community leader state that he disliked attending MTF-oriented conventions because of the sexual harassment. I listened closely as I had heard similar complaints from some of my FTM clients in the past. So it seems, according to them, if a couple of FTMs enter or participate within a social environment filled with MTF women, they undoubtedly experiencing uninvited romantic overtures from MTFs.

So, some ask, what is the big deal? Aren't men supposed to enjoy a woman's attention? One would think a man naturally would be interested in females. How many non-transgender men would complain about being surrounded by a fan club of admiring females? This article probes the question why FTMs and MTFs don't always see eye to eye on this and other issues.

I am hoping this article sparks some controversy. Not over my exposing a sensitive issue, but rather so that FTMs and MTFs can develop a better understanding of each other. Moreover, I believe it is extremely beneficial for transgender men and women to examine the gender stereotypes which they embrace in order to reconstruct their sense of identity.

One of the most common assumptions FTMs appear to resent, is the idea that being one type of transgender person automatically means one has a unique insight into another's experiences. After all, are not MTFs and FTMs transitioning in similar but exactly opposite directions? Unfortunately having a transgender identity is not always that simple.

Surprisingly, the feelings, ideas, experiences and needs existing between MTF and FTM persons can differ dramatically. FTMs in many circumstances are interested in being or becoming men. They are not likely to experience the same degree of excitement an MTF may feel when discussing female experiences. This is because FTMs are serious about seeking male bonding and rivalry. Sometimes, a woman who gets in the way of this process is likely to get pushed aside or put in her place. Like their non-transgender counterparts, some FTMs can be extremely aggressive, confrontational, even obnoxious.

In defense, it should not however be assumed that FTMs are misogynist or hate women. Quite simply they just don't want to be women. In fact, their once having lived as women does not necessarily mean that they had the same feelings as a non-transgender woman. Unlike non-transgender women, FTMs are likely to have spent the majority of their lives fighting the very feelings and characteristic that non-transgender women readily accept.

Rightly so, FTMs frequently take great pride in the previous point. Many are also often quick to announce that they rejected their feelings and feminine characteristics many years before transition. This generalization, while frequently true for FTMs, is uncharacteristic of most MTFs who often have to struggle very hard to develop feminine attributes. Somehow

the previous dynamic introduces consternation. Who is more valid? Is it the person who blended in easily to society before transition or the one who had to struggle harder and longer after transition?

Another difference which can bring up strong opinions is the issue of victimization. Notably, a woman adopting male attributes is less likely to be victimized than a male adopting female attributes. At times both MTFs and FTMs feel unrecognized, because they believe their population is more overlooked than the other. At times, FTMs may feel that nobody wants to hear about it when a man gets victimized. Men are supposed to just take it. MTFs may feel that nobody cares when a woman gets victimized. Women naturally end up getting victimized more than men.

Over the years I have spoken with a number of FTMs who have deeply resented the romantic overtures of MTFs. Conversely, I have also spoken with a number of MTFs who have felt victimized by an FTM responding hostilely or nervously to the advances of MTFs. It would seem that apples and oranges don't always mix, unless their is a mutual consent to make a fruit salad!

Generally speaking, most males prefer to be the aggressor in male/female coupling. In my experience most men's opinions of a flirtatious female can be that she is cute, however men also know that a woman who flirts aggressively will also likely be flirting with more than one guy. Also, sometimes FTMs have a gay identity, just as some MTFs may have a lesbian sexual orientation. All this adds up to one complex process of people trying to figure out who is attracted to who.

Shoshanna Gillick, MD., a transgender woman and psychiatrist, summed up the preceding process of understanding relationships best when she says that it is truly a beautiful thing when two people among thousands can find love, attraction and companionship. The brain synapses fire, the heart beat increases, biological drives take over and a connection is made. Keeping such a process alive is significant achievement, according to her.

One of the things that naturally set up both MTFs and FTMs for some rocky first time romantic pursuits is the fact that transition introduces a re-examination of both sexual orientation and intimate discovery. Testosterone can do wonderful things to a new man's sex drive. Also, estrogen can remarkably awaken a new woman's sensualities. These biological factors should not be forgotten, neither should a person's sensitivity and manners.

Unlike non-transgender persons who may have a lifetime of experience pursuing intimate and sexual liaison, newly transition persons are frequently just getting started redefining who they are and who they are attracted to.

If you are an FTM and receive an unwanted sexual advance, take into consideration the new woman's predicament. This new woman may have spent any number of years as a male where she was expected to aggressively seek out those rela-

(Continued on page 8)

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE :

I'm writing to let you know about an important event being sponsored by TGIC in Albany. Working in conjunction with a NYS Department of Health program, we have obtained funding to provide a FREE showing of the award winning film 'Southern Comfort' followed by a discussion and Q/A session with special guests from the 'cast' of the film. The film critics at the Sundance Film festival called it "one of the most remarkable documentaries of our time about gender, family, and love relationships." The film will be shown on June 10th, at Channing Hall, 405 Washington Avenue, in Albany.

SOUTHERN COMFORT tells the story of Robert Eads, an "FTM cowboy from the backwoods of Georgia," who died after more than two dozen doctors refused to treat his ovarian cancer. When he least expected it, he fell in love with Lola, a transsexual woman, and the director, Kate Davis, has captured it in this intimate record of their story of love against all odds. The film recently concluded an exclusive engagement at New York City's Film Forum. This is not just a film for the 'Trans' community. Friends, family, and anyone who doesn't fully understand the prejudice and difficulties we face should see it as well. Refreshments will be served. For additional information, call (518) 436-4513, reply to this e-mail (bobbiwilliams@tgforum.com), or visit our web site: <http://www.tgic-albany.org>

ABOUT OUR GUESTS

This special FREE and one-time-only showing of the movie will be followed by an open discussion with two friends of Robert's, Maxwell and Corissa, a trans couple, who also appear in the film. They will participate in an open question and answer/discussion group. They are both authors and lecture extensively at various gender gatherings. Corissa, has a BA in Computer Information Systems is MCSC Certified, and is, a Licensed Cosmetologist and works as a Network Administrator, is both beautiful and smart. Maxwell has a BA with Honors in Business Administration, is a Ph.D. and is a State Certified Notary in Georgia, where he works as an Accountant. Maxwell re-

ceived the Trinity award in 1999 from the International Foundation on Gender Education for his Outstanding Community Service. His photographs and video footage have appeared in A & E's Transgender Revolution, in Rosa Von Praunheim's Documentary Transsexual Menace, and in Southern Comfort.

WHAT THE NY TIMES SAID ABOUT THE FILM:

"The picture is set in Toccoa, Georgia's trailer badlands, which seems fitting given Ms. Davis's limited resources...Ms. Davis's bare-bones shooting lends itself to a gentle intimacy as she focuses on Mr. Eads's thin, craggy face. You've seen his type in W.P.A. photographs of the old South; it's only his voice, with its slightly odd pitch, that is puzzling. But the lilt of his speaking rhythms is so soothing that you're quickly drawn to him. He's like a rocking-chair pappy, and his band of friends — men who have undergone female-to-male procedures — take to him as if he were a corn-cob paterfamilias; they call him "Daddy Robert." (Even his lover, Lola Cola — a male-to-female transsexual — finds his weathered, quiet dignity as attractive as anything else.) At no point does Mr. Eads sink into tears, even when describing traumatic events. He says the only time he felt like a homosexual was when he — as a woman — was married to the biological father of his children. "I am — and have always been — a heterosexual male," he says. When looking at photographs of himself as Barbara, a round-cheeked little girl, he huffs, "That's my evil twin sister." The voices heard in "Southern Comfort" — the title refers to a support group peopled by Mr. Eads and his transgender friends — add to its flavor. As the group talks about botched medical treatments and indifferent doctors, the casual flow of the chatter is in peculiar contrast to the horrors being described. The mistreatment adds up as Mr. Eads tries to find help for his condition. It is his resolute kindness that helps him build a community of friends and loved ones and that gives "Southern Comfort" its punch. In his last days he says of his foes, "I can't hate 'em. I feel sorry for 'em."

Bobbi Williams, Secretary  
Transgender Independence Club (TGIC)

(Continued from page 7)

FTM – MTF MISPERCEPTIONS

tionships she desired. She may not yet have learned that if a man finds her attractive she won't need to worry about being pursued. After all, the most subtle female flirtation will attract the right partner. Afterwards, men do a remarkable job of letting women know when they are interested.

If you are an MTF and a FTM is not interested in you, don't allow this to damage your self-esteem. Generally speaking if a fellow's eyes don't open wide at a subtle flirtation he may be previously engaged or not interested in anyone. Give guys their space and you will find they can be fairly nice, even sophisticated and gentlemanly.

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GIANNA E. ISRAEL provides nationwide telephone consultation, individual & relationship counseling, evaluations and referrals. She is principal author of the Transgender Care (Temple University / in press 1997). She also writes Transgender Tapestry's "Ask Gianna" column; is an AEGIS board member and HBI-GDA member. She can be contacted at (415) 558-8058, at P.O. Box 424447 San Francisco, CA 94142, or via e-mail at [Gianna@counselsuite.com](mailto:Gianna@counselsuite.com).



# FASHION, STYLE ... AND YOU

SKIN CARE

By Rebecca J. Chesnutt

Well ladies, I hope that you all will enjoy the next several articles on skin care. The key to looking good is the proper care of the skin. The skin needs protection from the sun, wind, temperature extremes, pollution, lifestyle choices (smoking, alcohol, medications, poor nutrition and stress), strong lighting, TV, computer screens, and aging.

I'm going into the next step of skin care which is finding out your skin type, **Dry to Sensitive, Normal/Combination or Oily**. ♦Do you have: ■ Fine dry lines around your eyes and mouth? ■ Cheek area that is dull, dry, taut? Are you sensitive to sun, wind and pollution? Then you have a **Dry to Sensitive** skin type. ♦Or, do you have: ■ Slight oily sheen on T-zone? (The T-zone is a T-shaped area of forehead, nose, mouth and chin.) ■ Dry cheek area? ■ Occasional pimple and spots? Then you have a **Normal/Combination** skin type. ♦Or, do you have: ■ Oily sheen on T-zone and cheeks? ■ Enlarged pores, blackheads, pimples or spots? Then you have an **Oily** skin type. The treatment of your skin is based on your skin type. Everything that you will buy for the care of your skin, (cleansers, toners, moisturizers, eye cream, defense creams, exfoliants and masks) will be based on your skin type.

Next month I will be writing about cleansers, toners and moisturizers. These are the three basics for good skin care. I hope that this article will help you begin to have the beautiful and feminine skin that every woman desires.

ASK THE MAKE-UP DIVA

**Q:** I have a whole collection of makeup brushes, and I'm not sure how or when to clean them. What is the best way to care for makeup brushes?

**A:** Caring for your makeup brush investment is much easier than most people realize. I typically wash all my brushes every two weeks. All you need is a good, slightly moisturizing shampoo or liquid soap, and a towel.

Start by wetting the brush bristles thoroughly, then apply a small dab of shampoo or liquid soap directly to the bristles, and work it in for a few seconds like you would shampooing your hair. I like to swish it around with a little water in my palm to work off any stubborn eye shadow or concealer. When the shampoo and water are free of debris, rinse the bristles thoroughly under lukewarm running water, very gently squeeze the excess water out, reshape the bristles to their normal shape, and lay the brush on the towel in a flat position. The brush must be dried flat for two reasons:

1. If the brush is upright, any excess water will run down into the brush and break down the glue that is holding the bristles in place
2. The bristles will bend and flop over into a completely different shape, making normal makeup application very difficult

I usually clean my brushes at night so they are completely dry and ready to go in the morning. Be careful not to over-wash your brushes, as this can make the bristles brittle and scratchy. If you find you are using multiple colors that require the brush to be clean, consider buying more than one of the brush you use most often



# COMING EVENTS



DUE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF LAST MINUTE  
CHANGES, CALL TO VERIFY THE TIME AND  
PLACE OF EVENTS

- MAY 5 ROCHESTER CD NETWORK MEETING 6:30pm**
- MAY 5 PEP BUFFALO "Comptons After Dark" on Niagara St. @ 8:00 PM. - Special Guest, TBA**
- MAY 12 BUFFALO BELLES REGULAR MEETING 6:00pm**
- MAY 10-13 SPRING FLING 2001, Provincetown, Massachusetts**  
For more information see website: [www.tcne.org](http://www.tcne.org)
- JUNE 2 ROCHESTER CD NETWORK MEETING 6:30pm**
- JUNE 2 FIRST ANNUAL BUFFALO DYKE MARCH - March begins at dusk at Kleinmans & proceeds to the Hamlin House on Franklin St. Dance to follow. ALL ARE WELCOME!**
- JUNE 3 PRIDE PARADE & CELEBRATION**  
Parade starts at 1:00 pm, down Elmwood Ave.  
Rally: 2:30 pm to 4:00pm Bidwell Parkway and Elmwood Ave.  
Tea Dance: 5:00 pm to 10:00pm.
- JUNE 6-10 BE-ALL CONFERENCE - DETROIT 2001**  
Detroit, Michigan (For more information see website: [www.xroads.org](http://www.xroads.org) or call 313-719-3267).
- JUNE 9 BUFFALO BELLES REGULAR MEETING 6:00pm**
- JUNE 10 2nd ANNUAL PRIDE GOLF TOURNAMENT**
- JUNE 27-JULY 1 1st ANNUAL GBLT FILM FESTIVAL, Downtown Buffalo**

**"Sometimes, an idea is stronger than you are.  
That is exactly why it gives you the strength to  
carry on."**

**-Oman Namatunga**