

THE CHANNEL



MISS ETVC 1997
Dale Carlson



This year's Miss ETVC contestants: (from left) Sandra Brewer, Jennifer, Elaine Sagant, Dianna, Dale Carlson, Tiara del Fuego, and Stephanie Summers.

See the special Cotillion section starting on page 9 for photos and articles.

Photos by Telzey Adams Digital Imaging by Kevin Anderson

Queen For Five Days — At The Original Queen Mary!

By Elizabeth Walters

Ever dreamed about being queen for a day? How about for five days — and nights!

That is the package being offered in Long Beach this year: the 1997 International Foundation for Gender Education/ California Dreamin' convention is slated for April 15-20 at the Queen Mary — the floating hotel in Long Beach, not the bar in Studio City.

Here's your opportunity to dress, mingle, learn and shop until you drop during a five-day gender blow out in Sunny Southern California.

The event, billed as "California Unity," will feature a full range of workshops and seminars, including sessions for F2M and M2F cross-dressers, workshops in makeup, manner and deportment, classes on hormone therapy,

transgendered health issues and the history of our community and movement.

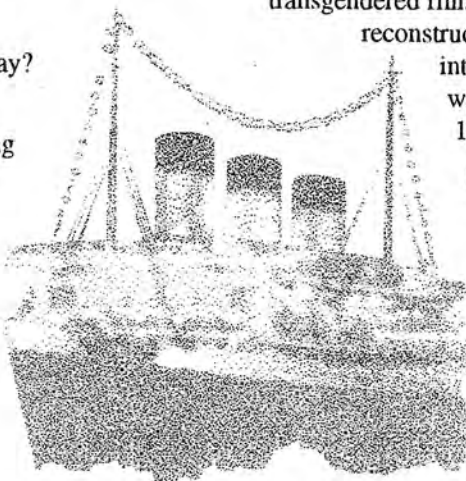
Among other things, the program will include a review of transgendered film, sexual reassignment surgery, cosmetic reconstruction and a host of other topics of special interest to members of our community. It will also feature the presentation of IFGE's 1997 awards.

Perhaps most importantly, it will offer an opportunity to enjoy the transgender experience in the international fantasy capitol of Southern California, a short drive from some of the hottest transgender venues in the U.S.!

For further information, contact IFGE at (617) 899-2212, or write the organization at P.O. Box 229, Waltham, Massachusetts, 02254-0229.

(e-mail the foundation at IFGE@WORLD.STD.COM or visit its web page at <http://www.transgender.org/tg/ifge/index.html>).

See you at the Queen Mary, April 15-20!



THE CHANNEL

ETVC Inc., a non-profit corporation, is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about ETVC programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to: ETVC Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Minutes of all ETVC committee meetings are available to members on request.

OFFICERS

President	Erin Souza
Vice-President	Leslie Bailey
Secretary	Veronica Smith
Treasurer	<i>Please Volunteer!</i>
Education	Nancy Cupps, Juana Smith
Outreach	Telzey Adams, Sandra Brewer
Social	Darcy Leopard, Evette RoqueLaurie

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership (as of 1/31/97)	349
Total 1996 Membership	430
New Memberships this year	64

TREASURER'S REPORT

MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSES	DIFFERENCES
November	\$1,860.00	(\$3,799.87)	(\$1,939.87)
December	\$2,625.16	(\$3,300.30)	(\$ 675.14)

The "Home For ETVC" Fund is now \$1,393.50

ETVC is a non-profit corporation.

Donations to ETVC are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both federal and California income tax returns. Talk to your tax advisor for details

Channel, the ETVC Newsletter, is published the last week of February, April, June, August, October and December. Submissions should arrive at ETVC by the 20th day of the previous month. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and the editor, and are not necessarily those of ETVC. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided ETVC is acknowledged. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission of ETVC.

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Associate Editors	S. Brewer, D. Leopard, Ginny K., E. Souza J. & V. Smith
Advertising	<i>Please Volunteer</i>
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Layout & Design	Kevin Anderson
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AD RATES

	Per issue	Per year
Business Card	\$25	\$125
4" X 5"	\$60	\$300

Personal ads from ETVC members: \$3 for up to 40 words. We will *not* accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 20th of May, July, September, November, January and March. Send ad copy and check or money order to: ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

HOTLINE & VOICE MAIL 415-564-3246
B.B.S. 415-564-4903

Letter from Elizabeth

By Elizabeth Walters

Well, if January is any indication, 1997 is going to be a very good year for this girl!

I started the New Year during a business trip January 8 with dinner out en femme at Hamburger Mary's in Sacramento, followed by a three stop bar-hopping spree including visits to Joseph's Town and Country (home of our sister organization, the Sacramento Gender Association) and Faces, a dance club near the capitol.

The following Sunday I flew to Los Angeles for a seminar and spent four delightful evenings in drag, with a Sunday night visit to Buena Park's Ozz, a Monday stop at Peanuts in West Hollywood, a Tuesday visit to the Plaza, a wonderful Latino club with a floor show starring some of the most gorgeous divas I have seen anywhere, and finishing up with Wednesday's Karaoke night at the Queen Mary in Studio City.

Of course, I had my share of misadventures — so many that at times I had to check myself in a mirror to make sure I wasn't wearing a blond wig! I missed Buena Park entirely on my first pass at Ozz and ended up in Santa Ana before I realized I had gone astray. I made a bum start Tuesday at the Blacklight in Central LA before I found my way to the Plaza, then wasted a half hour looking unsuccessfully for a place called the Circus that a lesbian friend had recommended. Finally, I drove so many miles on my last full day in Los Angeles that I decided to skip dinner and a show at Trilogy, a drag cabaret in West L.A.

Nevertheless, at each stop I made splendid new friends — some of whom I hope to see again on my next trip south in early February.

As I write this, I am looking forward to ETVC's 1997 Cotillion, and the crowning of our new Miss ETVC for the coming year. Another fabulous chance to venture forth in face — and a flawless venue, to boot!

Needless to say, there is no way I can keep up this pace for all of 1997 — which is a shame, since it would be so much fun! Nevertheless, for me, this year has started off with a wonderful rush. I hope 1997 is shaping up equally well for all of you Channel readers. See you at the socials — and stay pretty!

Change Of Officers

Social co-chair Laura Van Nuys resigned from office in early December, citing health reasons. New co-chair Darcy Leopard was appointed and elected to office at the December 26 social at Jelly's.

Treasurer Jano Bogg resigned in early January, citing increased work and family obligations. Treasury duties have since been shared by the president, vice-president and secretary. As of this publication deadline a new treasurer has yet to be found. If you are interested in the position of treasurer please contact Erin Souza at (415) 731-7032.



Da' Prez' Box
ETVC President Erin Souza

Where Is Everybody?

In recent months there has been increasing talk about decreased attendance and member participation at events. While it is true there has been a slight drop in overall membership, many who are members no longer attend events. Theories abound as to why this is: poor choice of venues, poor organization and execution of events at venues, increased public acceptance giving members options of other places to go, ability to socialize safely via the Internet. Each of these reasons, along with others I have not mentioned, are probably true to some extent.

Through the early years of our existence, ETVC was the only safe place in the Bay Area to meet other transgendered people.

We were in a sense, the larger closet and the best choice by default. Much has changed from our origin in 1982. We are still in some ways that larger closet, hopefully we are other things as well, but we are no longer the only place to go. What should ETVC be doing now and for the coming twenty-first century?

Early in June the outgoing and incoming executive committees will have a retreat, date and location to be determined, to address the issue of ETVC's future. What can we do better? What are new things we need to do? What should we stop doing? These should not be the decisions of a select few. We need to hear from the entire membership. Your responses to the enclosed survey will help those planning the retreat better prepare an agenda upon which to focus.

Beyond that, I urge you to contact me and other officers with your suggestions and comments. All committee meetings are open to members. We greatly appreciate your attendance and participation.

This organization has a lot of potential. The question remains how best to fulfill it?

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• • • • • Special Events • • • • •

Mid-Month Socials

Wednesday, March 12th and Wednesday, April 9th

Our mid-month socials at the Line Up, a very good Mexican Restaurant, are beginning to catch on and we're having a fun time between the salsa and the Margaritas. Come add your own spice to this low key social gathering with your friends. The Line Up Restaurant/Bar, 7th and Harrison, SF, 8 PM. No party fees.

Education Seminar:

Humor and Cross-dressing

Wednesday, March 19th

Don't let them laugh at you. Have them laugh with you. Prez' Erin Souza hosts a panel of comic "experts" in an open forum about the role of humor in the transgendered community. Come hear about the unique brand of humor we have, how it helps us cope and how we can use it as a valuable interpersonal tool. Come share your favorite insights and anecdotes. 8PM, Upstairs at Kimos, Polk & Pine, SF \$3.

Have a Ball with the Mad Hatter

Thursday, March 27th

The March Hare invites you to adorn your own hair with a beautiful hat of your own creation. The March Hare in this case is your Social Committee chair Everett/Evette, who will be bringing straw hats and decorative raw materials for us to create chapeaus with at the end-of-the-month social at Kimo's. Will you be the one to create the most beautiful hat, or the one who creates a hat so scary that you will be able to use it for your next Halloween costume? Bring some of your own materials if you wish to add a special flare. Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF, 8 PM, Members \$5, Guests \$7.

Easter Egg Coloring Contest

Saturday, March 29th

Everyone is invited to Ginny and Nancy Ann's home in the Parkside District of San Francisco to color dozens of Easter Eggs for the Tenderloin Tessie Easter Meal-event held every year at the First Unitarian Church near Geary in SF. They serve over 700 dinners to needy families and our eggs go into the Easter Baskets the children take home with them. All the details are in Ginny's "Tales from the Other Side" column in the "Other Voices" section of this newsletter. Call her at 415-664-1499 for location and directions. Starts at 8 PM. Admission is one dozen already HARD BOILED eggs.

SF Imperial Court Investiture

Saturday, April 12th

ETVC will once again have a table at the Holiday Inn on Van Ness for the Investiture of the newly elected Emperor and Empress of San Francisco. If you are interested in joining us at our table for this fun and elegant affair, please call Ginny at (415) 664-1499 for times and ticket prices.

Transsexual Seminar:

Advice From Your Big Sister

Sunday, April 13th

As you've found your way along the challenging path of being transsexual, you probably wished there were more people who could give you advice and guidance. You might have thought "if only I had a big sister who had done this before, I could ask her for help..." We are inviting TS members who seek advice from their "big sisters" to bring their questions to this open discussion. We especially encourage everyone who has experiences and tips they can share to attend in order to make this a successful event. The topics might cover a wide range of subjects, including where to shop for the best deals, health care professionals and counselors you can recommend, and tips on improving your appearance and passing. By collectively sharing what we know, we can provide a wealth of advice that no individual speaker could offer. It would be wonderful to see another full house at Kimo's again like we had in October! Please come! 2PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Sts. SF FREE

Let's Make a Deal Dance Party Night

Thursday, April 24th

Will it be Door #1, Door #2, or Door #3? Bring a purse-full of every imaginable woman's accessory to the end-of-the-month April social at Kimo's to trade for a great prize. Inspire Monty to Haul out something better than Samsonite luggage by bringing creative items. If you get the booby prize, it just may improve your cleavage. Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF, 8 PM. Members \$5, Guests \$7.

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TV/TS/TG GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

OTHER GROUPS

March

3	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
6	ETVC	Newsletter Committee	Meets at 7 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
6	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
7	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
7	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
8	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
9	ETVC	Executive Committee	Meets at 5 PM	Los Altos	(415) 731-7032
9	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(510) 287-2646
10	ETVC	TS Committee	Meets at 7 PM	Kimo's Mtg.Room	(415) 664-1499
10	ETVC	Education Committee	Meets at 8 PM	Kimo's Mtg.Room	(415) 664-1499
12	ETVC	Mid-Month Social	Starts at 8 PM	The LineUp, SF	(415) 731-7032
13	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	Pleasant Hill	(415) 664-1499
14	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
14	S.Bay	Gender Discussion Group	Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
14	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 7-11 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
14	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
17	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
18	ETVC	Social Committee	Meets at 8 PM	The LineUp, SF	(415) 641-8169
19	ETVC	Humor and CD'g	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415) 731-7032
20	ETVC	Outreach Committee	Meets at 7 PM	Berkeley	(510) 443-9938
20	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
21	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
21	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
22	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
23	ETVC	Library Committee	Meets at 1 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
27	ETVC	Mad Hatter Social	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415) 641-8169
28	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
29	ETVC	Easter Egg Coloring	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499

April

3	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510) 937-8432
4	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
4	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
7	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
9	ETVC	Mid-Month Social	Starts at 8 PM	The Line Up, SF	(415) 731-7032
10	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
11	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
11	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 7-11 PM	San Francisco	(415) 664-1499
11	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
11	S.Bay	Gender Discussion Group	Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408) 984-4044
12	Imperial	SF Investiture	Starts at 6 PM	Holiday Inn, SF	(415) 664-1499
12	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742
13	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(510) 287-2646
13	ETVC	Outreach Committee	Meets at 1 PM	San Francisco	(510) 443-9938
13	ETVC	Big Sister Seminar	Starts at 2 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415) 664-1499
13	ETVC	Executive Committee	Meets at 5 PM	San Francisco	(415) 731-7032
14	ETVC	TS Committee	Meets at 7 PM	Kimo's Mtg.Room	(415) 664-1499
14	ETVC	Education Committee	Meets at 8 PM	Kimo's Mtg.Room	(415) 664-1499
15	ETVC	Social Committee	Meets at 8 PM	The LineUp, SF	(415) 641-8169
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21	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510) 937-8432
24	ETVC	Let's Make Deal Social	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415) 641-8169
25	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510) 841-6224
26	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916) 482-7742

Pacific Center for Human Growth. a counseling oriented growth center: sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00 PM. 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call: (510) 841-6224.

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA) meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00 PM at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Write: RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose. CA 95170. Call: (408) 984-4044

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA) Blue Rose Chapter meets 8 PM the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write: PO Box 215456, Sacramento. CA 95821-1456. Call: (916) 482-7SGA for meeting locations.

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG) Meets first and third Monday of every month. 8 PM at Just Rewards Nightclub, 2520 Camino Diablo in Walnut Creek. Write: DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885. Call: (510) 937-8432.

FTM, a support group for Female-to-Male crossdressers & transsexuals, holds both open, Informational Meetings, and closed, Support Meetings. Write: FTM, 5337 College Avenue #142, Oakland, CA 94618. Call Voice Mail: (510) 287-2646.

TGIF (TransGenderism Is Fun), a social group for transgenders, meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4 PM until early evening. For dates, location and reservations, call Diane or Anne at (707) 544-1540.

San Joaquin Gender Association. a transgender support group meets twice a month. For dates and times, write to 1141 Catalina Drive, Box 163, Livermore, CA 94550 or call their hot line (209) 466-9198

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA), a new transgender support group, meets at the Billy DeFrank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month from 7PM to 9PM. For more info, call (408) 293-2429.

Please Print

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Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Name: _____ Family Member's Name: _____

Birth Date: Month _____ Day _____ New Member: _____ Renewal: _____

How did you learn about ETVC? _____

Part year membership from January 1 - May 31 is \$13.00 (Family - \$18.00) (New members only).

Full year membership June 1 - May 31 is \$25.00 (Family - \$35.00)

Please remit by check or money order to:

ETVC, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486

A New Vision for RGA From Its New President - Jamie Faye Fenton



Jamie Faye Fenton

The former president of The Rainbow Gender Association, Trina Bloom was transferred suddenly to the Sacramento area (lucky for them!) and after many years of wonderful service from Trina, we are really sorry to lose her. We hope you drive on down often for our events, Trina, and wish you the best of luck and much happiness in your new job and location.

As a result of this change, the members of RGA elected Jamie

Faye Fenton as its new President and we send warm wishes and congratulations to Jamie. We know she will be an excellent leader for RGA and look forward to working with her on future gender events. Jamie, of course, already has served as Secretary of ETVC for a year (1995-96) and has given so much to us in the world of cyberspace by setting up our Voice Mail System, BBS System and is an active partner in the web site TG Forum.

When asked what her vision of the future for RGA might be, Jamie Faye responded, "RGA has recently been blessed with the publicity from the new Crossers store which has brought into our fold many new members. My goal is to develop leadership and RGA regulations, resources and procedures that will bring these new members easily and happily into the gender community."

Good luck, Jamie — we know you will do it, and do it well!

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Sandra Reaches Out

By Sandra Brewer

Outreach has long been at the forefront of ETVC activities; indeed, it rates its very own committee. The important function of outreach efforts is to provide information and maintain a positive image of the transgendered community to the outside world. Through the Outreach Speakers' Bureau, the ETVC hot line, participation in community events, media broadcasts and outside publications, we have made considerable progress over the years.

Very little of this has received much coverage in our newsletter. In a previous issue I gave a short ETVC outreach activity update. To keep our members informed and to encourage active participation in our outreach activities, I want to make these updates a regular feature. As such, I hope this column will reflect outreach efforts much like the Prez Box reflects the efforts of our prez. I thought about calling the column the Sand Box, but I hope you'll agree the present title is more appropriate for matters concerning outreach.

Some of you have noticed I've done several other articles, especially reports on our educational seminars. These are separate efforts I expect to continue as long as they are needed and I can find the time to do justice to them. They should taper off as I will refrain from reporting on presenters I've reported on previously, and as I concentrate more effort on this column.

We held our first speaker training session in coordination with the Pacific Center at the Rockridge Library in Oakland in November. The session was attended by about 20 speakers of diverse experience and background. We discussed the ground rules needed when making presentations, what an introduction should include for the best results, how to deal with unexpected and sometimes hostile questions, how to best use the limited time available, and techniques that command respect and communicate a positive image for our community. Practice exercises also comprised a valuable part of the session. More speaker training is being scheduled. All speakers and potential speakers are encouraged to attend at least one training session. Advance scheduling is difficult so I will contact interested speakers when future sessions are scheduled.

If you're interested in participating in outreach presentations or other outreach activities such as the ETVC hot line, please contact me at (510) 443-9938, or through the ETVC post box.

Barbara J. Anderson

Ph.D., L. C. S. W.

Clinical Sexologist
Certified Sex Therapist

1537 Franklin St., Suite 104
San Francisco, CA 94109

Ph (415) 776-0139
Fax (415) 441-0936

In Memoriam - Barbara Jean Bowden

The San Francisco Bay Area transgender community mourns the passing of Barbara Jean Bowden. Barbara was born on May 21, 1945 in Plymouth, England. She died on December 17th, 1996 in San Jose, of natural causes.

Barbara came out three years ago and immediately became active in the gender community. She served as Secretary of ETVG for a time and helped organize many educational activities for the Rainbow Gender Association. Later, Barbara became an active member of the Metropolitan Community Church transgender support group.

Enlisting the support of management and co-workers, she undertook a successful transition at Sun Microsystems, completing her SRS in 1995. She shared stories of her transition with the press and



Facial Imaging by Kevin Anderson

on local television programs relating her experiences. Barbara's story helped inspire the collaboration of Chloe Rounsley and Mildred Brown, producing the book "True Selves."

Happiness was elusive for Barbara — her best moments were when she was active in the community. While sometimes cranky, Barbara was always willing and eager to help others.

Barbara's last public appearance was at the book release party for "True Selves" on November 8th, where she was honored for her contributions. In a sense, this valuable book is her epitaph and her legacy.

Jamie Faye Fenton
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Transgender Forum,
(<http://www.tgforum.com/content1.html>)

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DALE CARLSON TAKES TIARA AS MISS ETVC FOR 1997



Photo by Telzey Adams Digital effects by Kevin Anderson

Miss ETVC 1997 Dale Carlson flanked by her first runner-up, Tiara del Fuego (left) and second runner-up Sandra Brewer (right).

By Elizabeth Walters

ETVC's 1997 Cotillion was billed as a "Roman Holiday" and that is exactly what it was! From the delicious chicken dinner prepared by Toni Genalo and her hard-working kitchen crew to the fast-paced and highly entertaining show produced by Trauma Flintstone and Lulu Blau, the annual coming-out party for transgendered debutantes was a fabulous event that delighted all of the 300 or more ETVC members, guests and friends who crowded into San Francisco's elegant California Club for this year's festivities.

The high point of the evening was the crowning of Miss ETVC 1997, Dale Carlson, a long-time activist with the organization who charmed both the judges and the audience. The judges' job was made particularly difficult this year because all seven contestants were talented, poised and a visual delight.

A ROMAN HOLIDAY

Selected first and second runners-up were Tiara Del Fuego and ETVC Outreach co-chair, Sandra Brewer, while the lovely and talented Dianna was named Miss Congeniality and also won the talent competition.

Special kudos went to all ETVC members who turned in many hours of diligent labor to make the evening come off flawlessly. Deserving special notice was Toni Genalo, who not only prepared a scrumptious meal for the gala, but also had food service organized so methodically, that those present were able to pick up their dinners more quickly than they could have ordered a fast-food hamburger.

For her extraordinary effort, Toni received the Joanna Caron Award, a silver platter conferred each year in honor of Joanna, who was instrumental in developing the Cotillion. The award is given each year to the person who has given the most energy, time and effort to the Cotillion.



Lulu Blau flips her wig backstage at the great show she co-directed with Trauma Flintstone.



Tiara del Fuego and Elaine Sagant take a breather backstage during the show.

The Miss ETVC competition itself was co-hosted by Emcees Donna Sachet and Steve Rascher, who kept the event rolling along at a rollicking pace. The audience was not only entertained by Ms. Sachet, but also enjoyed the performances of Connie Champagne, Ethyl Merman and Luciano Papparazzi — not to mention the fine acts of the contestants vying to wear ETVC's tiara for the next year.

A special thrill was the presentation of this year's debutantes — many of whom were venturing forth en femme for the first time at the 1997 Cotillion. All were lovely and charming.

ETVC Vice-President Leslie Bailey — who was faced with the daunting job of taking over the gala after a changing family situation forced her elected predecessor, Tedra Thomsen, to leave Northern California on extremely short notice — brought off the party with grace and aplomb. To her, all ETVC members owe a heartfelt "Grazie!"



Stephanie Summers belts out a tune during the Cotillion talent competition

Contestant Jennifer responds to the probing questions of Cardinale Claudia during the final phase of the competition. The supplicant to her left is Brenda (aka Di Di Mau), wearing more clothing than most of us have ever seen on her!



Co emcees Donna Sachet and Steve Rascher kept the show rolling along



1997'S Cotillion featured a bumper crop of debutantes, some of which are shown here preparing to take their spin on the runway.



The inimitable Ethyl Merman and Luciano Pavarazzi performed for the crowd.



Outgoing Miss ETVC 1996 Valerie Genalo entertains Cotillion celebrants with a rendering of '60's rock classic "Venus."

chance this past year to try to portray that image by being involved in the walk-a-thons, fund raisers and particularly in educating college students through our outreach program. I have also been overwhelmed by the love and acceptance I have received from the members of ETVC, RGA, DVG, the Imperial and Ducal courts . . . I'd also like to thank you for the friendships I have made by getting to know transgendered people from Santa Rosa to San Jose and all the way to Walnut Creek. I am inspired by their acceptance and courage.

ETVC is an outstanding organization . . . dedicated to promoting and encouraging the freedom that allows all of us to live our lives and to providing social and intellectual opportunities for all of us. Along with the work and the commitment has been a great deal of fun and a lot of love.

Those of you who know me think that Miss ETVC is perhaps the wrong title . . . after all, I was named rookie of the year by Erin, called a spoiled princess, told I was a bit of a priss . . . but tonight I feel much like a Goddess . . . perhaps the Goddess of Love. So, on that note, I would like to say "Arrivederci," "Grazie" — and to sing you this song.

Valerie's Arrivederci

By Valerie Genalo, Miss ETVC 1996

(Our outgoing Miss ETVC gave these parting remarks to the audience and contestants at the 1997 Cotillion just before singing a smashing rendition of "Venus.").

As I listened to all our lovely contestants answer their questions just a few minutes ago, I remembered being in their position last year. At that time, I was asked how I would educate the public about our community as Miss ETVC.

I felt that my role would be to let the public know that we are not so different from them: that we all need love, understanding, respect and the ability to maintain our dignity. I wanted to show others that we are real, normal people. I also wanted to set an example for new, young members to show that they can feel secure about expressing themselves and walk tall and proud, even if they are in four-inch heels.

I thank ETVC, and each one of you, for giving me the



ETVC Vice President Leslie Bailey congratulates and thanks Trauma Flintstone for her hard work in co-directing this year's fabulous show with ETVC's own Lulu Blau.

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OTHER VOICES

Other Voices is a newsletter within the ETVC newsletter by and for Significant Others. Send letters and articles to: Other Voices, c/o ETVC, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

The Wife and Times of a Crossdresser:

by Juana Smith

For Want of a Nail

As I've related before (Nov.-Dec.), on our second time out with Hubby en femme, his water balloon breast burst and his outfit got soaked. After I had calmed him down, fixed his breast forms and got us into the Chez for dinner, Hubby became less and less the up-tight guy in a dress and more and more the girlish Veronica. In fact, too much!

Now usually my husband is masculine in a quiet way, not overly macho, but assured and strong. However, when he first started cross dressing, he was in awe of everything feminine; he'd play with his press-on nails or constantly feel the material of his dress. Also, he didn't know how to act. Every time we would try a new outfit or different look, his manner would change. One minute he'd be a fourteen year old valley girl and then with a change of costume he was a disco drag queen imitating Bette Davis. I'm sure part of this was his early attempts at sounding like a woman, but I feel that another part of it may have been that my acceptance of his long-suppressed desire to cross dress somehow gave him the permission to let all his pent-up femininity come gushing out. Since that first year, Hubby has calmed it down considerably, and established more balance. But I think a lot of crossdressers at first have a period of exaggerated response, almost as if they are making up for years of denial.

The theme of that night's social was Leather and Lace, and we had put together a lacy red and black top, a leather skirt and fishnets. We were trying a black curly wig which gave him a lively almost Latina look. He loved the wig and was constantly looking at it in the mirror or touching it slightly as if to reconfirm that it was there. Again, new wig, new outfit, new manner. He seemed daffy and giddy (maybe too much curl in the wig). But also, just getting to the Chez that evening had been such a hassle that when we finally settled down, Hubby had a few more cocktails than usual; and those cocktails went straight to Veronica's head!

Before long, Veronica was bubbling away in a voice that wavered between Julia Child and Miss Piggy, and with an odd, high pitched laugh that sounded like Jack Lemmon in "Some Like

It Hot." As usual, Veronica was being genuinely funny, but she was giggling at her own jokes much more than Hubby ever laughed at his. In fact, she actually started bragging about what a clever girl she was as if she was real knowledgeable about being female. Finally, when I told her she was sounding just a little silly. Veronica sat up like she'd been slapped (or burst another water balloon), but only for a moment. She got real prissy and said that this was her night to be silly, that tomorrow she could go back to being her old drab self. I was about to tell her I was only trying to help when I noticed a little red beetle-like thing in her hair. I patted her hand, blew her a kiss and happily told her she was right. This was her night to be silly; and I also told her she had lost a nail.

She immediately checked her fingers, then checked around her plate, to her left and right, even glancing down at either side of her feet, completely oblivious to the bright red thing bouncing about her head just out of her line of sight. But after a slight pause, this only allowed Veronica to brag even more! She cheerfully explained that — smart girl that she was — she had spares and little glue pads in her purse! And she cheerfully went about her repair like she was changing a flat. I must admit I found it much easier listening to her go on and on about how smart she was and what a prepared little girl she thought herself to be with that shiny, scarlet shell shimmying about her head with every movement. I just smiled, supportively, all the while knowing that soon, not just yet, I would show her where that nail had been all along. And I knew that when I would tell her, I would do so with a little love, a little understanding and lots of humor.

My Story

By Anne Giles

I had some good and some bad preparation to be the wife of a transgendered person. My parents put a premium on not offending others and my only experience with cross dressing was as a young teen when I overheard whispers of the neighbor whose husband came to the door in a dress. "so of course she had to divorce him." On the positive side, my parents tried to teach me to think for myself, so that when I "accidentally" found out about Diane's preference for wearing women's underclothes two years after we were married, I was shocked but had no intention of giving up on an otherwise fine marriage over such a thing.

Thirty years ago there was not the information available that we have now, but also Dick's "deep, dark, hidden secret" approach did not encourage our even discussing it, much less researching the subject. So, for thirty years it was a very private matter for us which caused some problems but took a back burner to the constant activity and frequent crises of parenting ten children, eight of whom were adopted and had such "special needs" as autism, physical, learning and language disabilities, and emotional adjustments.

Significant Other Support Group invites all Significant Others to attend our meetings. Group members define Significant Others as wives, lovers, friends, children and others close to TV/TS persons who are themselves not TV/TS. We encourage you to ask the SO in your own life to attend, particularly if she or he needs support from peers in dealing with feelings about the TV/TS in her or his life. All meetings are kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL to help insure that a safe, supportive environment is

created in which all attendees feel secure enough to freely share and talk about their feelings. We are frequently assisted by a helping professional with a specialty in our area of concern. Our next meetings will be Thursday, March 13, and Thursday, April 10. On March 29 we will hostess a special Easter Egg Coloring Contest at Ginny's in San Francisco — all couples and singles are invited IF you bring a dozen already HARD BOILED eggs to color. You are welcome with open arms. Call (415) 664-1499 for more information.

As the years went by I increasingly recognized that the "hiding" of Dick's behavior — long pants on hot summer days at the beach because of shaved legs, no kids jumping into bed with us in the morning because of the nightie — was more annoying than the clothes themselves. What I did not realize was the degree to which Dick's rather rigid personality and in recent years his increasing irritability and depression were symptoms of his inner battle to control what he thought was transvestism.

The matter came to a head after his year of "purging" and the emotional backlash it caused in him. As I rather unsympathetically said, "If you are going to act like this, I'd rather have you cross dress." But then when he was finally able to open up and express his real anguish, I was able to be more supportive. The Internet, DVG and ETVC then came along to help both of us to understand and get more comfortable with many of the aspects of the trans experience. When I read the article on things SOs get upset about and found I matched something like ten out of twelve complaints, I was able to laugh and not feel so alone. Then we started going out in public as Diane and Anne and the floodgate was open.

Dealing with the public turned out to be easier than I had dreamed. I was accustomed to being "looked at" due to our multiracial and sometimes behavior-challenged children. What surprised me was how accepting and even kind people were when "Diane" and I went out. Dealing with my own feelings was harder. As it became increasingly obvious that Dick preferred being Diane, I found myself supporting and even encouraging what felt to me like the piece-by-piece disappearance of my husband as little bits fell away. There goes the hair on his arms — what next? Everyone said he/she was so brave, but they failed at first to realize what I was going through. I was grieving over the "death" of my husband and angered at what I thought would be the loss of the kind of life I had expected. So I spoke up for my own needs for a change, and Dick passed the word to our children — now young adults — that I, too, needed support. Their wonderful response was immediate and really helped. One son sat up talking with me until 4:00 a.m., and helped me to realize that the most important thing in my relationship with my spouse is that we are best friends.

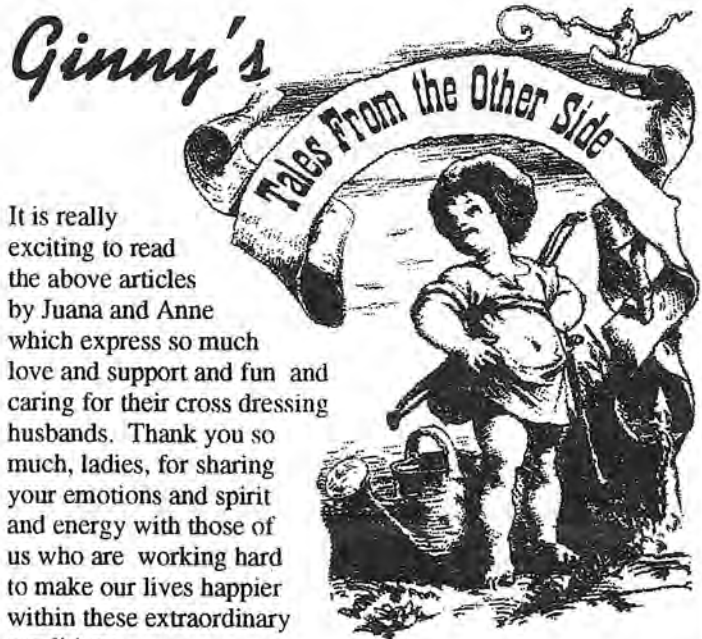
Dick was careful to ask if I was O.K. with changes and usually did not proceed faster than I could adapt. His willingness to really hear my needs and respect them and his sincere and often voiced appreciation of my support for his need to crossdress were what I needed to enable me to give him that very support.

When Dick finally admitted that he had wanted to be a girl since he was a young child, things fell into place for me. Dick was transgendered. The reason that "he" was so happy as Diane was that Diane was the true personality that belonged here. I was able to accept her, at least in theory. Shortly thereafter Dick and I had two weeks in Hawaii and he dressed as what he thought was androgynous "D," but what I saw was Diane with no makeup. It was the time I needed to get used to a feminine spouse. When we got home I suggested that Diane stay and we agreed that since Dick had always liked Hawaii, we should just leave him there on the beach.

Ironically, I got the most concern from others when I least needed it — when Diane started living "full time." In many ways, this has been the easiest for me. I no longer have the back-and-forth tug between Dick and Diane. The best part is that Diane is

a delightful person to live with, much happier and more caring and thoughtful than Dick. Although she did go through a rather intense period of learning to be a woman, it was rather like having a teen daughter who actually followed my suggestions. Because she dresses and behaves conservatively (she says "like a middle-aged grandmother") I have no cause to feel embarrassed. Because she is six foot one and some people do "read her," we used to go out with the attitude, "O.K., let's go make someone's day." Now, we don't even think about it anymore.

Life is settling down, at least as much as it ever can for a family with ten grown children and a dad named Diane.



It is really exciting to read the above articles by Juana and Anne which express so much love and support and fun and caring for their cross dressing husbands. Thank you so much, ladies, for sharing your emotions and spirit and energy with those of us who are working hard to make our lives happier within these extraordinary conditions.

Just a note: again this year Nancy Ann and I will be hosting an Easter Eve Egg Coloring Contest at our home. The event begins at 8 PM on Saturday, March 29, 1997, and the purpose is to color dozens of eggs for the children of the Tenderloin in San Francisco. Every Easter Sunday for many years, the gay community has given Easter dinners to hundreds of families at a San Francisco Church, and the children are given Easter Baskets to take home with them. Last year we donated almost three hundred colored eggs to be put in those baskets, and would like to give even more this year. You can help and have fun, too. Please bring a dozen **HARD BOILED** eggs to the party. We will have all the coloring supplies set up as well as fun things to use to decorate your eggs such as sequins, little feathers, cotton, toothpicks, tiny jewels and lots of glue for you to create beautifully decorated eggs in three categories — Most Beautiful Egg, Most Creative Egg and Most Outrageous Egg will take home the simply super prizes.

At the end of the evening you can take two eggs home, and ten of the dozen you brought and colored will go to the Tenderloin children on Easter Sunday. All singles and couples are welcome. We can set up lots of tables for you to work on. Please come (you must bring one dozen already **HARD BOILED** eggs for admission to the party). A buffet and piano entertainment will be provided for your pleasure.

Shape Your Body!

by Veronica Smith



On Wednesday, January 15, about 25 people interested in shaping their bodies to imitate the feminine silhouette gathered at Kimo's to hear five presenters demonstrate their different techniques. Nancy Cupps hosted this Educational Seminar and started off with a description of the mail order house with which she has been very pleased. Nancy was thorough in giving the "how-to's" about choosing the right sized bra and breast forms. Nancy was followed by Joyce of Joyce's Perfect Fit, who added her own suggestions and advice about finding the best breast for you. Joyce's demonstration was aided by the numerous examples of breast forms and enhancers she had brought. She also showed some really beautiful bras ranging from lacy push-ups for maximum cleavage to full coverage for comfort and security. She reminded ETVC members that she also has corsets and ETVCers receive a 10%

discount. Next, I displayed my cleavage-developing technique. I have to admit it was a strange experience to put on my bra in front of a room full of people. But the demonstration seemed to go over pretty well. I also demonstrated some exercises that I use to develop muscle tissue in the right areas to aid in the attempt of achieving the illusion of having a somewhat feminized form (*well, as much as a 190 pound six-foot guy can*). Unfortunately, this was the only physical exercise demonstrated that night, because the personal trainer who was supposed to give a presentation did not show up. I was followed by our own Vice President Leslie, who showed her homemade hip pads. There was serious discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of various foam rubbers and how to cut them correctly. Leslie was followed by former Miss ETVC Tiffany Woods who referred to herself as a "cheap queen." Tiffany wanted to point out economic ways of achieving some of the same effects produced by the more expensive products. For example, she showed how to make breast forms with balloons and hair gel. She also showed how to put torn panty hose to use, gave tips on hiding leg hair, and counseled us on wig and hair care.

All in all, it was an informative evening. Perhaps for the more advanced cross dresser, a lot of this would have been review, but it's always possible to get a different perspective on old tricks, and a lot of fun, too.

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Out on the Town with Darcy

By Darcy Leopard

A Comedy of Errors



Despite the glowing reviews I have given of my adventures en femme so far in this column, things don't always go so perfectly. Veronica and I are still laughing about the chain of failed events we experienced in December while attempting to terrorize the town. It sort of terrorized us instead.

Veronica arrived at my Noe Valley TV Transformation pad at about six o'clock on Saturday, December 7th. We proceeded to get ready together, enjoying some white wine and interesting conversation about each other's eclectic pasts. The plan was that Bree would show up at 8:00 PM and we would all head out to dinner at a Thai restaurant called Manora at 12th and Folsom streets. After that we were going to have cocktails at Cat's Grill at 8th and Folsom, proceeding afterward to the Girlspot venue I mentioned in my last article.

By nine o'clock there was still no sign of Bree. We called her house and her girlfriend said she hadn't heard from her and didn't know what was up. We decided to head out anyway, and planned to call again later. We also decided to skip dinner, saving time and preserving our waistlines in one fell swoop.

We arrived at Cat's Grill around 9:30 PM only to find that it wasn't open yet. Bummer. We made a quick decision to burn some time having a drink at Hamburger Mary's, a really fun place where I modeled my corset during a show Romantasy Boutique had last Valentine's day. We called Bree again, but her girlfriend said she still hadn't heard anything from her.

We returned to Cat's Grill, and had some difficulty finding an

On the Road with Debra

by Debra Darling

My name is Debra Darling, and I'm one of the 41 lucky new people who joined ETVC in 1996. After many years absence, it's exciting to once again be a member of such a wonderful group. I have been a traveling TV, visiting different cities and enjoying the fun, trials and tribulations of being a TV on the road for years now. My experiences have been recorded in the Emerald City newsletter (my home chapter for years) in a column that had many names over the years. Now I am seeking another name, one more descriptive of this new chapter in my life. Ideas are welcome.

Those who know me know I tend to visit some pretty strange places by our community's standards - places where you might not expect to see a TV. Recently, I made a quick trip to the Bay area. I started out in male guise, for business reasons. Thus, as a guy I flew to SF, rented a car and drove to the airport Vagabond Inn. I checked in and promptly asked for the shuttle to the airport. That alone was enough to make certain I would be remembered.

After a quick round trip to Fresno, I was back, in the mood to boogie, and ready to become Debra. I picked up an iron at the front desk and started. About an hour later, dressed in a pretty frock and sporting four inch heels, I returned the iron. Eyes went up, but only a smile from the clerk, not a word.

Downtown is always my destination. The evening started out

active entrance. It turned out to be in a back alley; not where I remembered it from a previous visit. The doormen sized us up rather suspiciously, and asked politely if we were sure we had the right night for the venue.

"We have Trip-Hop tonight, ladies. Probably not your scene. Are you sure you're not looking for Litterbox?"

After assuming they didn't mean the restroom, we asked them what other clubs they would recommend. They mentioned that The Stud at Ninth and Harrison would be a good bet. We made note of it, but first we decided to check out our original plan of Girlspot.

As it turned out, Girlspot was canceled. They had lost their lease at Club VSF, but were relocating to the Endup at 6th and Harrison in January. Didn't do us a whole lot of good for the moment. Well, at least our parking Karma had been good so far! On the way back to the car, a strange little guy who looked suspiciously familiar to me begged us with a 3-mile smile to let him be our slave. In retrospect, I realized he was someone I saw everyday downtown at the top of the Montgomery BART station escalator panhandling with equal charm.

The Stud turned out to be another dead-end with some cryptic event we were not interested in. But in passing, I must mention to all of you girls that this is the infamous home of "Trannyshack" on Tuesday nights, a rip-roaring drag show which is always a wild time. It provides outrageous entertainment, cheap, strong drinks, and a very friendly Nina Hagen lookalike TV bartender.

Exasperated, Veronica and I kind of wandered about for a bit in the car trying to decide what to try next. We cruised up Polk street for a bit, but didn't feel any particular vibes calling us. I mentioned a favorite bar of mine called The Lone Palm at 22nd and Guerrero, where I have had nice experiences a couple of times en femme. But

with a stop at my favorite light dinner place, Biscuits and Blues. The folks there are getting used to me. The food is more or less Cajun, and actually pretty good. The band during the week is loud, varying in talent, and often rock-a-billy. The crowd does not dance much, they just come to listen.

The weather was wet so I decided not to stray from Union Square and my coveted parking space. I selected an old favorite, The Gold Dust, just off the Square. It features Irish coffee, Dixieland jazz and a mix of locals and tourists. The band recognizes me now and plays my favorite song when I arrive. There is usually a seat at the bar in front of the band where I can flirt with the trombone player and watch the crowd (and be watched of course!)

Tonight a full band was playing, and we soon made friends, tied together by a love of good jazz. Inevitably, someone in the crowd will strike up a conversation and off we go. This is my own personal form of outreach. This night, I met a woman down from Marin for her holiday shopping spree. We shared experiences from Nordstroms. Then a woman from Germany and another from London.

The waitress liked my choices of songs for the band to play and we began to talk. It turned out she once worked at Earthquake McGoon's, and even remembered Turk Murphy's club (I'm dating both of us for sure.) She went out of her way to make certain I knew I was always welcome here, a fact I already knew. I even have a picture of me with the owner to prove it.

The next morning I got up, spent a good hour and a half putting



Photo by Veronica Smith

Bree and Darcy outreached at KQED Pledge Night.

then I realized it would be standing room only at this time of night. (Veronica also expressed concern that perhaps her fishnets would be a bit too racy for this venue).

Suddenly Veronica suggested Marlena's which I had heard of several times but had never been to. Our parking Karma still intact, we found a place right outside the door and strode on in. We found ourselves inside a cheery little gay bar with a few drag queens to make us feel right at home. As it turned out, a drag show was just about to begin.

Although the stage was quite small and sound system too weak to really give the performers the volume they needed to

project, the performances were quite good and fun to watch. We chatted with the performers between their acts, and found them very friendly. There were only a few patrons and the place was really rather quiet, but at last we had found SOMETHING. At 1 A.M. we finished our cocktails and decided to call it a night.

As a footnote, I would like to mention that I have since eaten at the Manora Thai restaurant with a genetic girlfriend of mine named Shariya. The food is excellent; award-winning in fact. It is right across from the previously mentioned Hamburger Mary's at 12th and Folsom. Secondly, Girlspot is indeed functioning at the Endup. Shariya, Veronica, Bree and I just checked it out on Saturday, January 18th. I can't say that it is up to the level of the previous locale, but we had a great time just the same and danced with an exuberant crowd until closing time.

And if anyone is still wondering about the mysterious disappearance of Bree, it turned out she had to work some unexpected overtime. I guess she was just too busy having fun with those drably dressed tourists to be able to hang out and strike out with us. At least we did it in style!

on my face and prepared to head for home. At check out, the desk clerk was absolutely sure this was not the person he had rented to the day before. After working our way through the normal preliminaries, I signed the bill, he sighed and wished me a nice day and a good trip. Then he offered the comment that would assure a return visit—We hope to see you again on your next trip, ma'am.

Every time a plane falls out of the sky, it gets more difficult to get on one. Today, your name has to match the name on the ticket. (no first initials) and your ID has to be approved by the FBI. That means a driver's license or a passport or an armed services ID card. Your gender community card won't work any more. I use my real name, and my real driver's license, complete with that ugly male picture, and I have never had even a second glance. One other point. Anyone walking through an airport in a skirt and heels will attract attention. If you try this (I heartily recommend that you do!), be prepared, you will be noticed, and a pair of attractive legs will receive an admiring glance. Since people in the waiting area are bored, they will be interested in anything out of the ordinary. Be on your best behavior, keep your legs crossed, or your knees together.

I will try to share my travels with you as they occur. I usually get in at least one trip a month, often to a west coast city. If this works, and you enjoy learning about new places to visit and hints about dealing with the general public while crossdressed, I'll need a column title. Any ideas should be sent to me at P.O. Box 1152, Duvall, WA 98019. Thanks, and I hope to meet you soon at an ETVc function.

Is My Child Old Enough to Know?

By Luanna L. Rodgers, MFCC



Many parents wonder at what age a child is best able to accept the news that their parent is transgendered. Young children accept parents' behavior as the norm, but lack the ability to be discreet and will pass through other stages of understanding or conflict as they develop. Teenagers have the conceptual ability to understand gender, but are embroiled in developing their own sexual identity and gender relations.

Adult children may be more mature, but can feel betrayed at not having been told sooner. A child of any age can receive and adjust to this information if there has been a loving and consistent parenting relationship, which has included good communication and respect for the child, providing the disclosure does not interrupt this relationship. Too often parents mix gender change or disclosure with divorce, leaving the child shaken and conflicted about separate events, which jumbled together are interpreted only as pain and loss. It is important, following disclosure, that you do not make abrupt changes in your behavior or expectations of your children. They will benefit from your consistency and the opportunity to adjust over time.

Each age group faces its own set of developmental challenges and needs. The young child who calls out, "Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!" while you grimace and faint in the shopping mall in your best rayon dress, is not trying to humiliate or defeat you. He or she is trying to accomplish a lot of very complex age appropriate tasks: comforting himself, seeking to belong, incorporating a sense of you into himself, dealing with stranger anxiety. Make sure you allow him to feel secure with frequent physical and verbal contact as you work toward a solution, such as using a chosen gender congruent or neutral first name when in public.

Toddlers and teens rule the age of narcissism. Toddlers won't notice your gender. Their focus is on themselves and how well you attend to them. Teenagers, also focused on themselves, may wonder why you are doing this to them: "Dad, I'm on the football team this year. Like, duh, couldn't you have done this some other time?" Teens often have the maturity and are developing the abstract reasoning ability to work with a complex construct like gender fluidity, but they are going through puberty and are very self-conscious, especially around peers. Discussing how and when your teen's friends discover your gender transition (or, if your gender expression is periodic, whether their friends need to know at all) is important.

Young children, aged 3-5 and sometimes older, will need to reassure themselves and be reassured by their parent that their own gender is constant — that they will get to remain a boy or a girl. Children of this age are working on their own sense of gender constancy and will have questions and assertions about their own gender. They will also need to hear that just because daddy, for instance, changed from a boy to a girl that boys are not regarded with disdain and girls preferred. Watch your

language in front of your child for your own gender bashing. Your child must feel good about his or her own gender and not feel that it is a betrayal to you to enjoy being the gender they are.

Despite your best efforts and assurance, your child may feel ambivalent about your disclosure until he or she sees over time that the quality of your relationship hasn't changed and that you are still there for them as their parent. A child of any age can go through a sense of loss, especially with a transsexual parent making a complete gender change. In a sense, they will have lost their daddy — or mommy in the case of the female to male transsexual. Part of their grief will be for the actual dad or mom you have been; Part will be for a collective sense of dad or momness — firm confidence, master of rough and tumble or nurturing, soft lap and cookies — which may not be who you ever really were. Your child, however, probably got or expected some of these things from you and may now feel these needs will never be met. Continue your caring parenting. In your wholeness, you will be able to bring a wealth of fine qualities to your child. In time, your child's fears will pass.

The best time to disclose to a child is when he is in a secure place in his life. If he is having trouble in school, there has been a great deal of familial tension, the child has moved to a new school or neighborhood, lost friends or relatives, it would be best to wait until equilibrium is reestablished. It is not age but inner security and the security that you provide for your child as loving parents that will help your child adjust well to your disclosure.

(Luanna Rodgers is a licensed Bay Area Psychotherapist specializing in work with the gender community.)

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Making Resolutions in Our Lives as Transgendered Individuals

By Jennifer Alexander

In December, Lin Fraser, Ph.D. led a seminar with a group of ETVIC members discussing New Year's resolutions and the TG community. Lin is a well-respected therapist in the Bay Area transgender community and has led many other seminars for ETVIC. We all had our reasons for coming to listen to her. For me, it was an excellent time to reflect and take stock in some of the changes I have made in my life as a transgendered individual, and I came away from the session with some good thoughts.

Lin began the seminar by discussing some of what is on her mind when making resolutions in general. Lin also discussed why we decide to make changes in ourselves during the New Year's period. There are a lot of outside influences from all parts of society and it is a season of reflection in which individuals contemplate on their own lives. It is the beginning of a New Year and many feel it is a good time to tell someone what they are going to do to make a change in their lives. People may take stock about what they are doing all year long but think about it more in the month of December. Typical New Year's resolutions are more external, such as deciding to quit smoking, to lose weight or to begin an exercise regime.

Lin was up front and said she doesn't make New Year's resolutions because she couldn't keep them if she tried. She takes a lot of stock in what she gets in her office from her clients and she related some of the general things she sees in people making resolutions. Some of her observations are that people generally do not make an abrupt change in their lives; rather, they go through a gradual thought process of change.

So how do we get from point A to point B? We all have an

image of what we want to be and we go through some sort of process to get there. For the most part, a person may have thought about changing for some time. A point that came out in the seminar was that an individual has generally "stewed" about a desire for change for a long time, so it is not a sudden decision. The entire "process" is very important, and it includes the "stewing," thinking and reflection. It is not a concrete point — it is an inner image of yourself and what you want to be. This is particularly true in the transgender community. For most of us, we didn't one day decide to become a transgender individual.

There is a desire to be happy with who and what we are and to be so much more open and confident. There is also a desire to be comfortable and to have a freedom to be and like ourselves. Attempting to achieve these goals is a life-long process. As transgendered individuals, it seems we are continually contemplating and going through constant self-analysis in coming to be happy with ourselves.

Being true to yourself, reaching out and not being trapped are the real tasks of coming out in the transgender world as one follows this process of change. It is a process of determining how we fit into the dance of life.

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Four Book Reviews

by Archbishop Perry Rist

The Bisexual Option by Fritz Klein, MD

1993 The Haworth Press

Many sex experts claim that the bisexual does not exist. They claim that anyone engaging in bisexual type behavior is really on their way to becoming homosexual. This book does much by way of proving that bisexuality does indeed exist as a separate sexual behavior.

There are theories that no matter what sexual lifestyle one lives, your real sexual preference is made known by the sexual fantasies you use to turn yourself on. So if you have same sex fantasies you are homosexual; if fantasies include both sexes, you are bisexual even though you may never act on these fantasies.

The bisexual is not seen in a positive light by heterosexual or homosexual people because they are not sure where the bisexual fits into human sexuality, i.e., which side are they on.

The Bisexual Option ends with a very interesting chapter containing a bisexual survey which tells a lot about our culture and the hidden sexuality within. The book is written by a doctor and is very clinical, but has many personal stories which help to keep it from being too much of a text book.

Transgender Warriors by Leslie Feinberg

1996 Beacon Press

I've learned a new word from this book — at least it's new for me — "Bigender". Bigender stands for people who have both a feminine side and a masculine side to their personality, and have a desire to express both facets of who they are. The title of this book, "Transgender Warriors", refers to people who have led battles throughout history for their sexual identities. It gives us a look at sex and gender through history in class, nationality, race and sexuality.

Many photos from different eras seem to show that transgendered people have always existed. Chapter after chapter the author shows transgendered people in many cultures — some being more accepting than others. Even in our own country some States are more accepting than others.

What difference does it make which sex one sees oneself as or portrays themselves as? If someone is born into one sex, but can live more comfortably as the other sex, why should they not do it? It makes you wonder why we need to put labels on others — is it so

we will be more comfortable dealing with them? A good "food for thought" book.

A Tale of Two Sexes

by Carolyn Jane Munroe

1993 Bonden Publications

This is the autobiography of a Transsexual and the many problems she faced along the road to self discovery. The first and biggest problem, of course, is to decide ones own gender. One cannot just sit down and make an arbitrary decision on what gender they wish to be today, especially a transsexual who is thinking of surgery. Once the surgery is done, the die is forever cast.

This story reflects on all other sexual minorities as well, since all are subjected to the same hate, prejudice and violence from a public that does not understand.

The author also addresses the Catholic and Protestant problems of northern Ireland where she grew up. It takes you through her childhood to adulthood and even the alcohol and drug abuse experienced by her in later life. In marriage and fatherhood it seems the author was desperately trying to fit into the male lifestyle, and by getting married no one would think he was "one of them". It didn't take long to realize you can't hide from who you really are.

Ms. Munroe continues on with self discovery, on to the sex change operation and finally the many problems that face a new woman after the fact. A real eye-opener was to find that surgery is not the end after all, but the beginning.

Crossdressing, Sex and Gender

by Vern and Bonnie Bullough

1993 University of Pennsylvania Press

A serious study of crossdressing across History and Mythology, the authors carry the reader through the Middle Ages to modern times, and in doing so also touch on transsexualism.

On page 333 there is a six step process which they feel develops transvestites. Chapter 13 is a very interesting study in gender and gender roles as they relate to population norms. Gender identity is viewed as an interaction between (1) genetic predisposition, (2) physiological factors and, (3) the socialization process.

This study also ends up with a modern approach to therapeutic work with transgendered people. Also discussed here are various coping mechanisms of transvestites' wives.

The book is done as a clinical type study but is worth reading because it is full of information and ideas that will make you think. It provides a pretty full view of crossdressing in all its facets.

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