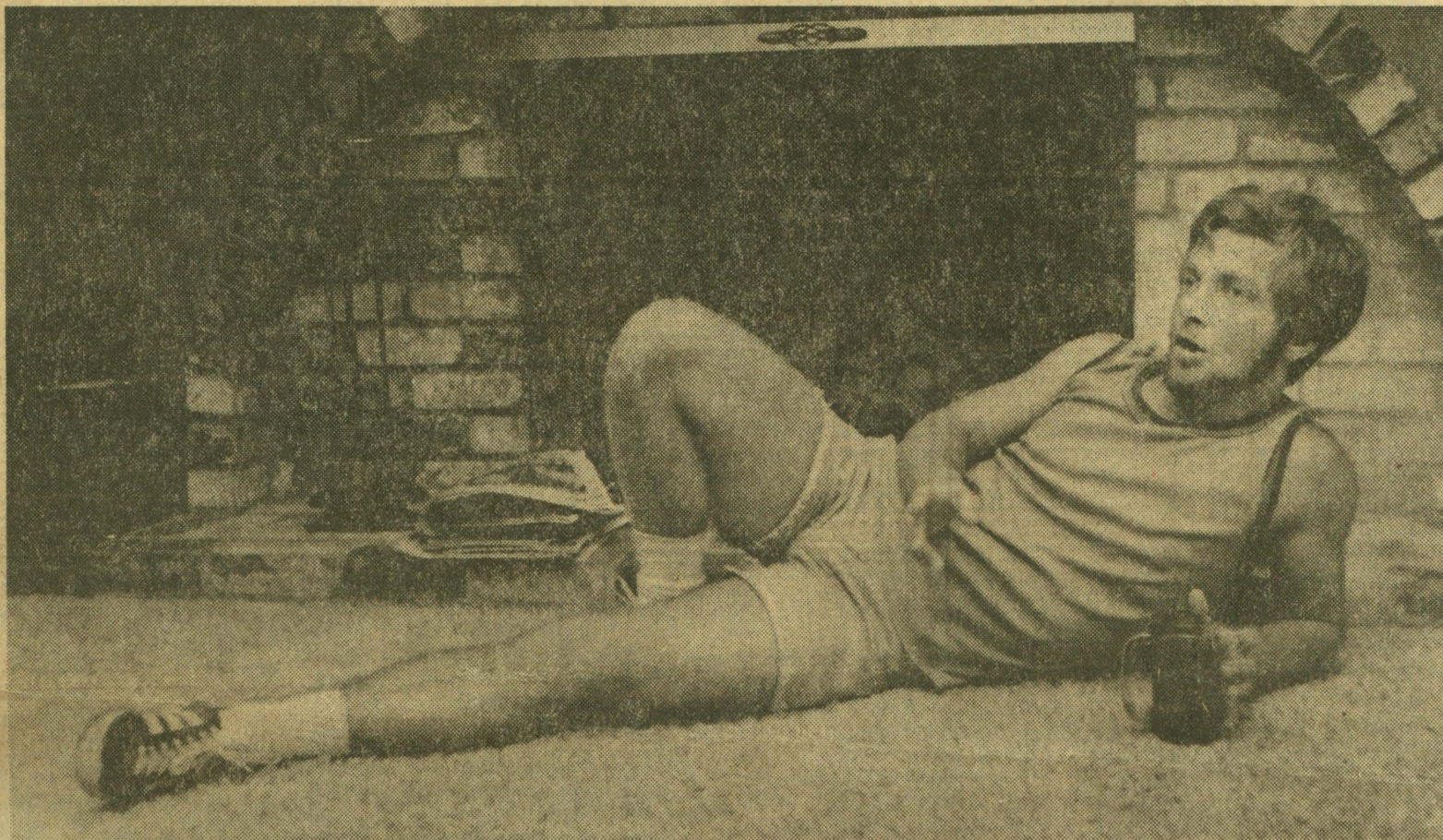


San Francisco Chronicle

# Sex-Change Teacher

Bill Lamb



Steve Dain, in his Union City home, said, 'I am alone in what I am doing. But I know who and where I am'

By Susan Ehmer

## He's Happy as a Man

By Marcie Rasmussen

Steve Dain looks different since his operation, but he says he's the same person inside.

To the kids in his Union City neighborhood, he's the same good friend who taught them to swim in his pool and who lets them play in his game room.

That he used to be a woman named Doris Richards doesn't faze them much, although they do confuse the problems.

But that's forgiven. He does it sometimes himself. He has only lived as a male for eight months of his 37 years, and there are a lot of old habits to break.

Steve says he is happy and at ease with his sexual identity change. He is a warm, attractive person, and he says even the animals in his household — three dogs and a four-month-old raccoon — are more relaxed these days.

Dain said he never intended to try to return to his old job as women's physical education teacher at Emery High School in Emeryville — a misapprehension that stirred up the small East Bay community last week.

"I don't meet the physical qualifications anymore to be a woman in a locker room."

As a credentialed, tenured teacher, he said



DORIS RICHARDS  
Teacher of the Year in 1975

Back Page Col. 5

# SEX CHANGE STORY

## From Page 1

in an interview, he can teach other subjects and would like to try English or science — physiology, biology, health, etc.

Dain has applied for a "subject transfer" to the Emeryville School Board, which promised a decision by September 1. The board meets again tomorrow to wrestle with the issue.

Dain said he had not intended to return to the 280-student school where Doris taught for the past ten years, or even to tell the board of his plans.

But he did confide them to former School Superintendent David Baker, who advised the board without Dain's consent, Dain said. Dain then felt he had to go to the board, and he said he met with board members in May, after he had undergone extensive psychological and physical therapy and some surgery at Stanford University.

He wanted to talk with the board members "so they would realize I hadn't blown my mind," he said. In his opinion, at least some of them understood, and one said, "We'd like to have you back," he related.

"I said I would like to come back . . . if it would not involve a lot of hassle. I knew the kids would adjust."

Dain said he met with a group of students, "to erase any freak-out trip that might be imposed on them by other people.

"They were concerned to see that I was the same person. They were concerned with how I felt about Doris. I said I was proud of Doris."

Doris felt she was a successful woman. She had a four-bedroom home in a quiet, multi-ethnic suburban tract, a pool and barbecue in the backyard. Her students chose her Teacher of the Year in 1975 and she had been head of the teachers association.

She was popular and attractive, but she wasn't entirely comfortable with herself. Her 5-foot-3 frame was heavily muscled. She had enough facial hair to require shaving.

She had a dominant, outgoing personality and felt "I always had to keep it in check and behave more femininely than my real self."

She felt she had been in conflict, "half male, half female" most of her life. As a kid growing up in Oakland, she was a fleet runner, but the boys she ran track with jeered and coaches wouldn't encourage her athletic prowess. She had dolls, but she played with them as though she were a doctor, fixing their scratches.

Doris grew up at a time when there was no room for women with mannish traits. She tried to compensate as an adult by dieting often to stay petite and by wearing makeup and pretty clothes.

Now her 110-pound weight has gone to 145, still trim.

"I had muscles like a male athlete," said Dain. "So at school, it was Mr. Richards . . . If I went to the supermarket, even with makeup, sometimes they would stare at me from behind the counter, and it would be 'sir.'"

Now, he has discovered an entirely different feeling, "being called 'sir' when it really is 'sir.'"

After two years of thinking about the move, Dain applied to Stanford's sex-change program. He began taking hormones that, in a month, gave Doris a man's appearance.

"Very quickly, I was able to live as a man and see if that would solve the identity problem I had." It did, he felt, and he proceeded. During a psychological re-evaluation, doctors found him to be "much more in harmony with the male image I projected. I thought so

psychological testing will also continue.

He said there are other teachers in the schools who have had sex changes, but no one knows who they are. "I'm not trying to make a precedent," he added. "I had not desired this to be publicized."

But now that it has been, Dain vowed he won't quit the effort to remain a teacher at Emeryville in another subject area. "I'm going to stick this out. I don't want to give up what I want for myself."

"I'm not doing anything wrong," he said.

"There's a lot more going on in every school system that is far more detrimental than what I'm doing, and much of it is under the table. This is open. People can cope with it."

His family has had mixed reactions. Dain said he thinks his sister and brother understand, but his mother is undergoing "a lot of trauma. She feels her daughter has died."

Former dates have been "understanding. They say 'hang in there. It takes a hell of a lot of courage.'"

Women's libbers have accused him of copping out. Men "who have difficulties with their own sex identity are fleeing from me." But most people, particularly after seeing him and talking with him, have reacted with more equanimity.

"There's a fellow I used to wave at as Doris. Now I wave at Steve. He didn't know. He came up one day and said, 'You and your sister are twins, aren't you?' I said, 'No. My sister and me are the same person.'"

Steve goes to the same barber as Doris did, with no problems. He sees more of his friends than before. "I'm entertaining more now because I feel more at ease. Everything goes together."

Basically, however, "I am alone in what I'm doing. But I know who and where I am."

He has been chronicling his reactions to the change and intends to publish them if possible. "I wanted to analyze my feelings about living in a male world. It's not just the way you cross your legs, you know. I'm exploring this 24 hours a day."

"I am gentle and loving, but a man can be that too." However, he finds the world of men is "very dry. I feel sorry for them. I have a lot of compassion for men. Their world is so cold emotionally — and yet they have emotions. I can see why they feel they must come home to a woman."

Who will he come home to?

"In all our lives, we have to give up something.

"I made a decision that if (living mateless) had to be my existence, I'd still rather be male than female."

He's tempted to compare his experience to reincarnation. "Do I have to die before I can come back and experience a different thing?"

When he broke the news to his neighbors, in advance, he said they responded, "Our kids love you for who you are."

Fifteen children, aged 2 to 14, clamored outside while Dain was being interviewed. They were anxious about the reporters inside — they have a protective air about Steve.

How do they feel about him? "GOOD," they responded in chorus. "It's what she wants to do," said Sherry Garcia, 14. "She is our best friend." "He," the others corrected. "There isn't one of us she hasn't helped."

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He said others undergoing the same change at Stanford would tell themselves that "you have to feel like a man. But I want to be who I am."

Dain underwent a mastectomy so skillful that he can shed his shirt with confidence, exposing a manly chest. Other operations may follow.

Hormone therapy, which Dain understands to be safe for women changing to males, will continue the rest of his life. Physical and

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