

Coronation '97 Glamour Gala "Extraordinaire!"

by Ginny Knuth

"If you ain't got elegance, you can never, ever carry it off!" These lyrics are from one of my favorite songs in the Broadway show, "Hello Dolly." Those of us who partied with the San Francisco drag community at their annual Imperial Court Coronation this year added our own special elegance to a glamorous group of gorgeous beauties from all over the U.S.A. and Canada at a most elegant affair held in the Gift Center on February 22. A packed house of gowns and crowns and tuxedos and sequins — coupled with the friendly, fun-loving faces and conversations with many of the friends we have made over the years — created a loving, pleasurable evening for all.



Newly elected Emperor Jacques Michaels and Empress Veronda Lanai. Photo by BAR.

Empress Cockatielia and Emperor Steve Valone put together the program, which included upbeat musical presentations with costumes and choreography created by Empress Cockatielia. I was most privileged this year to serve on the Imperial Council as their Secretary and learned a great deal about the incredible amount of work and dedication it takes to put together a coronation. They really work on their plans for it all year in between all the other fund raisers, traveling to support other Courts around

Continued on page 6

Hello Parade Marchers!

by Leslie [REDACTED]

Sunday, June 29th is the big day for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Parade in San Francisco. This is a wonderful chance to show our solidarity, our pride in being transgendered and to advance ETVC as a group.

We will have an information booth and possibly a beer booth. We need volunteers for the booths and to serve as parade monitors. It's fun, it's spirited and it's important. Call me and let me know if you can march and/or help in the booths. (510) [REDACTED]



"Wonder Woman" Tedra Thompsen sets bystanders wondering at Gay Pride Parade '96. You go, Princess Diana!

New Miss ETVC Shares Her Thoughts:

"We Have Many Talents and Insights As Transgendered Individuals"

By Dale Carlson
Miss ETVC 1997

It is hard to really express the joy and happiness that I felt upon being named "Miss ETVC 1997." Surprised, thrilled, excited — these were some of my immediate thoughts that were quoted in San Francisco Bay Times (February 6, 1997) after my selection. It is a great honor that I wish I could share with each and every person connected with ETVC. Many feelings went through my mind when the results were announced. I felt great pride in being transgendered. This pride was even more pronounced when there was a large crowd there to celebrate the unique specialness that we share as transgendered individuals. Even though we all have struggled with this in our own lives, I have yet to meet a person at ETVC who feels that they would trade the life that they have for one without this quality. Probably the most special part of being "Miss ETVC" has been the opportunity to meet so many of you and get to know the many wonderful people who have been connected to this great organization. With this role comes a great responsibility to reflect as positively on our image. I feel that there has been so much misunderstanding in the media from the way we have been represented. It is very special to me that I now have an opportunity as a professional musician to have a platform to give transgendered people more of a positive image — to show that we

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It's Time To Renew Your Membership!

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.

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President	Erin Souza
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Secretary	Veronica Smith
Treasurer	Open
Education	Nancy [REDACTED], Juana Smith
Outreach	Telzey Adams, Sandra [REDACTED]
Social	Darcy Leopard, Evette [REDACTED]

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership (as of 3/31/97)	379
Total 1996 Membership	430
New Memberships this year	93

TREASURER'S REPORT

Account Balance as of 2/28/97	\$4,038.24
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ETVC is a 501(c)(3) 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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	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- [REDACTED]
B.B.S. 415- [REDACTED]

Letter from Elizabeth

By Elizabeth [REDACTED]

As this issue arrives, spring should be in full bloom — with summer not far behind. Some of our community's best events of the year will be coming up shortly, and here's hoping that you will have a chance to participate in them.



Almost as soon as you open this newsletter, the Closet Ball will be coming up, so hurry and get your best party outfit together for one of San Francisco's most flawless events. This year's Ball will be held at the San Francisco Gift Center on May 3, and should offer loads of fun. For those unfamiliar with the affair, the Ball features handsome representatives from San Francisco's hottest clubs and bars as contestants for the title, "Miss Closet Ball 1997." Each appears in full male regalia at the beginning of the evening's festivities, then disappears backstage for a timed transformation into high drag. In the meantime, some of the city's best performers knock your socks off with a terrific show. Then, at the evening's conclusion, the boys return en femme — and one is selected Miss CB, based on the quality of the transformation.

The show is a past Cable Car Award winner and a guaranteed crowd pleaser. I went to last year's edition, and let me tell you, honey — I had the time of my life!

The Gay Pride Parade also looms in the near future, and is an event for which ETVC has managed to field a substantial contingent of participants in recent years. In addition to the parade, special Pride festivities will be held all over town. The parade also has the virtue of bringing thousands of visitors to the Bay Area from all over the nation. It offers a transgendered person a perfect opportunity to meet his or her neighbors from around the U.S., and should be the high point of the summer.

In addition, there will be ETVC's own "Big Shew," an evening of song, dance, music and comedy featuring our own talented performers, plus the usual panoply of ETVC socials, seminars and other events. Altogether, there should be plenty to keep you busy until July — when a whole new cycle of events and extravaganzas will begin.

Here's hoping you'll be among "the seen" we'll be seeing on the scene!

The New

KIMO'S

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(415) [REDACTED]

SHOWROOM & SPORTS ARENA

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Da' Prez' Box

ETVC President Erin Souza

Our Upcoming Retreat

My previous column and the accompanying survey in the March/April Channel made mention of an officers retreat in the near future. Here are some details:

Member funds are not financing this retreat: Each participant is paying out of his/her own pocket for lodging at the Asilomar Conference Center near Monterey.

This is a business, not recreational, retreat. We meet from 8:30AM until 6:00PM May 10 and from 9:00AM until noon May 11 to discuss issues facing ETVC and plan for the future. This will be a non cross-dressed event during these hours. We are here to work, not to party.

As we prepare to celebrate our fifteenth anniversary, we have much in which we can take pride: An excellent newsletter and speakers bureau; a variety of educational and social events each month; a comprehensive book, article, audio/video library; and a corps of talented and hard working volunteers who keep this organization functioning.

But there is much we can improve. Some of the issues we plan to address at the retreat include: How do we make ourselves more accessible to closeted new members? Do our events meet the needs of both new and established members? Out of nearly 400 members, only 25-30% attend an event during the course of the year. Are the events boring? Poorly scheduled? Poorly located? Poorly managed? Are they too intimidating to the newbie member venturing out for the first time? How can we alleviate this fear and discomfort?

Are we using our non-profit status to its full advantage? What are our rights and responsibilities as a non-profit? We

need to clearly define these responsibilities so that current and future officers are not caught off guard nor learning the hard way via costly mistakes.

What can we do to raise funds? And for what specific purpose are the funds being raised? The "Home For ETVC" is talked about but what form should it take? Meeting space for socials and seminars? Accessible storage for library materials? Lockers and changing space? An information office for prospective new members and visitors? Will we need a paid office staff person? Will enough members put the space to use often enough to make it worthwhile? Do we rent space in the planned l/g/b/t Community Center for San Francisco? Can the funds spent on a home be better put to use in other ways such as printing and distributing an annual resource guide?

How do we maintain continuity in leadership? Should officers serve two year terms? Should the terms be staggered, with half the committee elected in even years and half in odd years?

How do we develop and maintain a strong volunteer base? Are too many events burning out volunteers? How do we structure tax benefits for volunteers?

How effectively are we educating the general public? Can we and should we increase awareness of the transgendered experience in the larger, mainstream community? To that end, does the name ETVC and what the letters stand for, help or hinder that goal? Should we have a more inclusive sounding title to acknowledge those who do not identify with the label "transvestite"? Do we need a permanent public relations officer to promote our events and act as media liaison?

Should our bylaws be revised to give us a clearer definition of our purpose and responsibilities?

This is a lot to tackle in just one weekend. Your completed surveys and my fellow participants will point out things I have overlooked. Not all, if any, of the answers we seek will come out of just this one meeting. Subsequent meetings, on a smaller scale, will take place. I hope to gain a clear understanding of what ETVC officers, current and future, can do to insure this organization stays stable and vibrant to better meet the needs of more members for many years to come.

REBECCA AUGÉ, Ph.D.

Clinical Psychologist
License PSY 6644

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• • • • • Special Events • • • • •

Mid-Month Socials

Wednesday, May 14th and Wednesday, June 11th

We're bouncing back to The Cinch for the May and June mid-month socials. Enjoy the cozy back patio, a game of pool, or just plain socializing at the bar. Our attendance at the mid-month gathering is growing, so come join all the fun! Lead pipes optional. The Cinch. 1723 Polk Street, SF, 8 PM. No Party Fees.

Education Seminar: Walk This Way

Thursday, May 22nd

Please note that Kimo's is no longer available for educational seminars on Wednesday evenings. Until further notice, seminars will be scheduled on other days of the week, most likely Tuesdays or Thursdays.

Don't let the way you walk give you away! We are pleased to welcome back Augusta Moore, who will give individual advice to each attendee on how to walk like a woman. Augusta is a former runway model and former member of the San Francisco Ballet. She has choreographed fashion shows and been a judge for ETV C Cotillions. She is currently teaching ballet and is a certified practitioner of Feldenkrais. To get the maximum benefit from the advice Augusta will give you, wear the kind of shoes you would normally wear when you go out, and bring a purse and other accessories that you might be carrying so she can give you feedback on how to hold them while walking. 8PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Sts. SF \$3

Officer Elections, Member Awards and Lingerie Show!

Thursday, May 29th

This is our annual gathering to choose which new and/or returning officers will lead the way in keeping our club strong, reaching out to new members, and continuing to support the transgendered community at large. It is also our night to recognize members who made the extra effort to contribute their time and talents to us. After the elections and awards, jump on the stage if you dare and strut your stuff in our lingerie contest! Prizes to the sexiest, sweetest, and most creative. Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF, 8 PM, Members \$5, Guests \$7.

SF Imperial Court Presents: Return to Tara

A Pre-Civil War Costume Ball and Fund Raiser for Breast Cancer Care and Research

Saturday, May 31st

Working together with every other Court in the Imperial Court System in the Western United States, the San Francisco Imperial Court invites you to attend a blockbuster fundraiser to culminate a month of pink ribbon special events to raise money for Breast Cancer Care and Research. Yes, ladies, pull those hoops and petticoats out of the back of the closet and prepare to live a fantasy from the carefree days of parties and southern hospitality as you waltz around the room in your most sumptuous belle of the ball costumes. Bring a box lunch to raffle off to the highest bidder. It might be the most interesting dinner date you've had for a long time! There will also be a silent auction of some special prizes, raffles and

you might get a chance to twirl in the Virginia Reel. It's only \$10 at the door, but bring lots of money so we can raise lots of \$\$\$ for this important cause. It's going to be a great party so don't miss it. Trinity Church on Bush at Gough in SF. Lunch boxes will be raffled off at 7:30 PM, and entertainment and dancing begins at 9 PM. Auction at 10:30 PM. Will YOU be the Scarlett of the evening?

Education and Transsexual Seminar: Finding Your True Voice

Sunday, June 8th

Whether you're afraid to open your mouth at all, or simply want to improve the way you sound when you speak, help is on the way! Dr. Carol Fleming, Ph.D., a San Francisco personal communications coach in private practice since 1975 and author of the best-selling cassette series "The Sound of Your Voice" and "The Serious Business of Small Talk", will be our guest speaker. Dr. Fleming points out that "what you say, how you say it, and how you look when you say it are the only tools you'll ever have to create an impression - and your own success." Her approach to communication is one that appreciates the powerful contribution of the more subtle communication tools: facial expression, gesture, posture, tone of voice and pitch level. Dr. Fleming has taught at several universities, among them are: Purdue, San Francisco State, and San Jose State. She continues to lecture through University of California Extension. 2PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Sts. SF FREE

Education Seminar: Color Me Beautiful

Thursday, June 19th

Have you ever wondered if the makeup and colors you are wearing are really right for you? Consult with professionals who can answer those questions and give you the advice you are seeking. Our guest speakers for this interactive seminar are as follows: Kimberly Blake, a makeup and image consultant in San Rafael who has received glowing reviews from transgendered customers who have used her services. Linda Koch, a makeup artist at Macy's in San Francisco who has done private makeup consulting for ETV C members. Jim Sturgeon, a former makeup consultant at Macy's who is also a portrait photographer. Linda will also discuss skin care. Please bring your makeup with you, but do NOT apply it before coming to this seminar. You will be able to get advice and helpful suggestions from Kimberly, Linda, and Jim while you apply your makeup at Kimo's. Extra "warm-white" lighting will be set up to provide the illumination required to simulate natural light. If you have a portable makeup mirror, please bring it. Additionally, we are hoping to have a professional on hand who can provide advice on clothing colors that are suitable for you. Please bring two or three outfits you would like to get an opinion on. 8PM, Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk & Pine Sts. SF \$3

The Really Big Shew VI

Thursday, June 26th

Following on the heels of last year's success, ETV C returns with the variety show styling of The Really Big Shew. Singing, dancing, playing an instrument, stand-up comedy, you name it. We put it all together for this show. We are currently seeking performers, whatever your talent. If you are interested, please call Darcy at (415) [REDACTED] Upstairs at Kimo's, Polk and Pine Sts., SF. Stay tuned for further details. We have some great ideas brewing!

TV/TS/TG GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

OTHER GROUPS

May					
1	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510)
2	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408)
2	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
3	—	Closet Ball	Show starts 8 PM	Gift Center, SF	(415)
5	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510)
8	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	Palo Alto	(415)
8	ETVC	Newsletter Committee	Meets at 7 PM	San Francisco	(415)
9	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415)
9	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 7-11 PM	San Francisco	(415)
9	S.Bay	Gender Discussion	Group Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408)
9	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
10	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916)
11	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415)
13	ETVC	Social Committee	Meets at 8 PM	The LineUp, SF	(415)
14	ETVC	Mid-Month Social	Starts at 8 PM	The Cinch, SF	(415)
15	ETVC	Outreach Committee	Meets at 7 PM	Berkeley	(510)
15	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510)
16	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
16	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408)
18	ETVC	Executive Committee	Meets at 3 PM	Albany	(415)
19	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510)
21	ETVC	Library Committee	Meets at 1 PM	San Francisco	(415)
22	ETVC	Walk This Way	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415)
23	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
24	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916)
29	ETVC	Awards & Lingerie	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415)
30	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
31	Imperial	Return to Tara Fund Raiser	Starts at 7 PM	Trinity Church, SF	(415)
June					
2	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510)
5	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510)
6	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408)
6	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
8	FTM	Informational Meeting	Meets at 2 PM	San Francisco	(415)
8	ETVC	Outreach Committee	Meets at 1 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(510)
8	ETVC	Finding Your Voice	Starts at 2 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415)
11	ETVC	Mid-Month Social	Starts at 8 PM	The Cinch, SF	(415)
12	ETVC	Significant Others	Meets 7:30-10 PM	Pleasant Hill	(415)
13	ETVC	Poker Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Francisco	(415)
13	ETVC	Lending Library Open	Hours 7-11 PM	San Francisco	(415)
13	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
13	S.Bay	Gender Discussion Group	Meets 8-10 PM	San Jose	(408)
14	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916)
14	ETVC	Executive Committee	Meets at 4 PM	Montara	(415)
16	DVG	Social	Starts at 8 PM	Walnut Creek	(510)
16	ETVC	TS/Education Comm.	Meets at 7 PM	Kimo's Mtg. Room	(415)
17	ETVC	Social Committee	Meets at 8 PM	The LineUp, SF	(415)
18	ETVC	Library Committee	Starts at 1 PM	San Francisco	(415)
19	ETVC	Color Me Beautiful	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's Upstairs	(415)
19	DVG	RCC Rap Group	Meets at 7 PM	Pleasant Hill	(510)
20	RGA	Social	Starts at 8 PM	San Jose	(408)
20	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
26	ETVC	Really Big Shew VI	Starts at 8 PM	Kimo's, Upstairs	(415)
27	Pac Ctr	TV/TS Rap	Meets 8-10 PM	Berkeley	(510)
28	SGA	Social	Starts at 7:30 PM	Sacramento	(916)
29	—	Gay Freedom Day	All Day	Embarcadero, SF	(510)

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) [REDACTED]

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) [REDACTED]

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) [REDACTED] 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) [REDACTED]

DVG Rap Group (RCC) meets first and third Thursday of every month, 7 PM at Rainbow Community Center, 2637 Pleasant Hill Rd. at Taylor Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. For more info, call (510) [REDACTED]

FTM, a support group for Female-to-Male crossdressers & transsexuals, holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write: FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission St., Suite 200, SF 94103 or call Voice Mail (415) [REDACTED]

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) [REDACTED]

San Joaquin Gender Association, meets in Tri-Valley area. For dates and times, call Winifred at (209) [REDACTED]

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) [REDACTED]

Please Print

ETVC Membership Application

Mailing Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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Preferred Name: _____ Family Member's Name: _____

Birth Date: Month _____ Day _____ (If Applicable) New Member: _____ Renewal: _____

How did you learn about ETVC? _____

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

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

Please remit by check or money order to:

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

How Hormones Affect Our Bodies

by Sandra [REDACTED]

On March 2nd, nearly thirty of us gathered at Kimo's to learn what effects we can expect taking female hormones to have on our bodies. The speaker was Dr. Robin Dea of the Kaiser Redwood City facility. Robin has extensive experience with transgendered patients. She is both a medical doctor specializing in endocrinology and a psychiatrist, so she can both recommend hormone therapy as a therapist and prescribe the treatment as a doctor.

Robin began the presentation with a technical but easy to follow discussion of how gonadotropic sensing of the presence of either male (testosterone) or female (estrogen) hormones takes place in the brain. The presence of either hormone in sufficient quantity over a period of time shuts off sensing of the presence of the other hormone (that may still be present in a lesser quantity). Also, additional dosage of the same hormone beyond a needed level will have no further effect, as all the 'receptor sites' in the body will be filled.

Robin went on to describe the secondary sex characteristics that result from the presence of the gonadal (male and female) hormones. These consist of breast development, softer skin, reduced body hair, mood shifts, and decreased libido from the female hormones; and muscular development, increased facial and body hair, pattern baldness, deeper voice, and increased libido from the male hormones. The amount each symptom is experienced by a person on hormone therapy varies widely depending on the genetic factors present.

Taking pills is the most widely used method of hormone therapy. Hormones taken orally are metabolized by the liver. This is usually safe, but in some cases serious damage to the liver can result, so regular liver panel blood tests are needed. Estrogen comes in many forms. Premarin is the most common, and it is more potent than Estrace; still another form Estinyl comes in two dosages, but one is too weak while the other is too strong. Progesterones such as Provera are sometimes prescribed in an oral form along with estrogen to increase its effectiveness. Based on the technical discussion above, Robin feels anti-androgens such as Spironolactone are unnecessary.

Once a needed level of hormone dosage has been established, exceeding this just makes the liver work harder unnecessarily. The liver can also be adversely affected by hepatitis, and by excessive alcohol. Taking hormones orally is not often recommended if a liver problem persists. Transsexuals, especially post-operative, with no adverse effects are encouraged to continue a needed dosage of hormone therapy indefinitely. This may increase the incidence of blood clotting in the veins slightly in male-to-female transsexuals. It will, however, decrease other longevity risk factors such as the incidence of osteoporosis and cardio-vascular problems, just as it does for post-menopausal women; and it will maintain the secondary sex characteristics.

As with any medication, hormones should only be taken under the strict supervision of a reputable medical doctor. Taken properly they can add much to the quality of our lives. We thank Robin Dea for sharing this information with us.

Coronation '97 *Continued from page 1*

the country and good works they do for charities and the general San Francisco community. Hats off to our hard-working friends!

This year ETVC helped a little bit at the polls on Voting Day by taking 3-4 hour shifts and handing out ballots to voters. The Imperial Court would like to thank Erin, Leslie, Geri and JoAnn [REDACTED], Joan [REDACTED], Diane and our Miss ETVC, Dale Carlson, for volunteering to do this work. Coronation week was a busy one as usual with the In Town Show at the Bahia Cafe on Thursday, the Emperor's Silver Jubilee Anniversary Cocktail Party at The Giraffe on Friday followed by the Out of Town Show at the Holiday Inn, the



ETVC Glamour Girls pose at Coronation '97. From left, Veronica, Lulu, Joan, Erin and Juana. Photo by Telzey Adams.

Coronation itself on Saturday. Then bright and early Sunday morning we made a return performance at the graveside of Emperor Norton in Colma, along with another 150 or so brave souls to present once again seven of our lovely "Vestal Virgins" in a rather irreverent, but tender romp on Empress Jose's cemetery plot, which we consecrated last year. Many thanks to our good sports, dressed all in white with crowns of flowers in their hair, and somehow making it work, after all. The pure ones included our Miss ETVC, Dale Carlson playing the sax, and our dancers, Erin, Nancy Ann, Chris York, Virginia Dare and Leslie. It's all in fun, folks, and has to be seen to be believed. What a blast!

We are happy to announce the reigning monarchs for 1997 are Veronda Lanai and our old friend, Jacques Michaels. You may remember Jacques was a judge at our Cotillion in 1996 and has been a strong supporter of our people for some time. We are confident that 1997 will be an exciting year for the Imperial Court with Veronda and Jacques at the helm. Congratulations from everyone at ETVC!

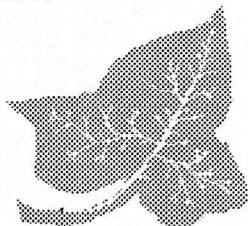
The Uninvited Dilemma

A Question of Gender

by

Kim Elizabeth Stuart

Research Supplement available separately.



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(Across From Newark Pavilion)

Night Man From the Outskirts

By Francis Vavra
Channel Editor Emeritus

For the past year, I have not been visibly active at events, although I have been working behind the scenes, as an outreach speaker, hotline volunteer and liaison when out socially. A grueling work schedule plus a long physical recovery for my significant other, Roxanna, have kept me quite busy. I wish to thank all those who inquired after her and have sent their thoughts and love to us both in this difficult time.

For you who do not know, Roxanna had surgery in late October to remove a malignant tumor in her thigh. It has taken five months of recuperation, radiation, and physical therapy to be finally walking on her own, and you may see her out dancing soon! February was her first social since the surgery, and she was especially happy to be able to cross-dress and get out again. I learned how to cook (formerly Roxanna's department), and took over all the chores she had done, like shopping, laundry, and getting the car tuned (all the girl things), while continuing to hold down a full time corporate job. My book has been on hiatus, but is soon going back into production.

At the recent Imperial coronation of Emperor and Empress, I was happy to see my friend Jacques Michaels crowned Emperor (I worked on his unsuccessful but fun campaign last year), along with the lovely Veronda as Empress. I rotated between Jacques' table and ETVC's, and was honored to escort our new Miss ETVC, Dale, introducing her to various royalty including Empress Jose. Dale and I have been friends since the time I was Roxanna's S.O., attending socials as my femme persona. Dale asked me to escort her at future Court events and I will when able. (The reason for "Mr. ETVC" was originally to provide an escort for Miss ETVC, and unfortunately, there is no "Mr." this year). I may even drive the car in the Parade, as I enjoyed doing so in years before my own reign.

An ETVC officer recently asked me why there isn't more interaction between the FTM group and ETVC, also asking what occurred several years ago when ETVC considered a merger with FTM when ETVC went non-profit.

The discussion is in the minutes (1994 or early '95), which are accessible to all members. FTM declined a merger as they wished to remain autonomous (and have since gone non-profit on their own). Every other month, FTM holds an "open"

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Our beautiful Miss ETVC 1997, Dale Carlson, is joined by her charming escort, Mr. ETVC 1994 Francis ("Night Man") Vavra, at this year's Imperial coronation. Photo by Telzey Adams

meeting (much like our TS seminars), open to all interested in FTM issues. Past Ex Comms have attended those meetings, with Jane Kamper Bentley and Lisa Maxwell being particularly active. At least two FTMs are on our speakers bureau, the group gets a copy of our Newsletter as we do theirs.

Several years ago I chaired a panel of FTMs for an education seminar when I was Education Co-Chair; perhaps another such panel would be a good idea. The bridge between the groups is well-established, it just needs to be walked across. For those who are new or may have forgotten, all FTMs, from cross-dressers like myself to transsexual New Men, prefer (insist on) the pronouns "he", "his", and "him", just as you Ladies prefer "she" and "her" when dressed accordingly. Thanks! So I am still around, doing outreach from the Outskirts.

Miss ETVC's Thoughts

Continued from page 1

have many talents and insights as transgendered individuals that many could benefit from.

I very much believe that we are not really that much different from others, but also that we have a special "Fabulousness" to share with the world.

The role of Miss ETVC has already given me a chance to attend several events in the gay community. It has been a fun and special experience to get to know the new Emperor and Empress of San Francisco and the many people connected to the court. I would strongly recommend that all who can, attend next year's San Francisco Coronation and the next morning's ceremonies at the Woodlawn Cemetery. The Sunday morning event at the gravesite of Emperor Norton was some of the best comedy material I have ever heard. It was very fun to take part in ETVC's role in the event as a Vestal Virgin.

Thank you again for letting me represent you this year as Miss ETVC. I will do my best to live up to the challenge of showing how special we are as transgendered people and to get a chance to know all of you in this most special year of my life.

Confessions of a Straight Girl

By Andrea [REDACTED]

Coming out is one of the hardest things that anyone can do. You bare your soul and reveal your deepest held secret, all the while hoping that the other doesn't reject you and walk away in disgust, or somehow feel hurt, betrayed and deceived. It's even more difficult because it's your true self that they would be rejecting and not the "shell persona" that you had presented to the world to keep yourself safe. Our families are always important to us, as much as we would sometimes like them not to be, and our hometowns and childhood friends give us part of our sense of who we are and where we came from. To risk losing all of that is terrifying; to actually lose all of that can be devastating.

At some point, though, we reach an impasse. If we don't live as who we really are, then we live in isolation and despair — if we continue to live at all. We accept the risk of being ostracized, of losing the love and acceptance of our families and friends because that is our least painful alternative.

I reached my impasse in early 1996. On October 7th of that year I essentially put my entire life on the line and came out to my family, close friends and co-workers. It was the hardest decision that I had ever made, but the only one that I could make if I was to have any chance at a meaningful life.

Coming out as TS and living full-time in your true gender is quite a bit different from coming out gay, lesbian or bisexual. I look, dress, speak and even behave in ways that I never did before publicly. In others' eyes I am truly a different person with a new and strange name, and there is no pretending otherwise. Also, I must insist on them treating me as my true gender, as well as addressing me by my proper name and gender pronoun. So, I don't have the luxury of being too selective about who in my previous life I tell or when I tell them — they know the moment that they see me, speak to me or correspond with me. Nowhere

to run to baby, nowhere to hide...

In every sense of the word, I am "out" to the world, and sometimes the world can be cruel. My family initially rejected me, as did a few of my close friends. My remaining close friends and the overwhelming majority of my coworkers were and continue to be very supportive. I was very patient with my family and kept the lines of communication open. After a month or so, my father reached the point where he could agree to see me, and I flew to the East Coast for a few days. By the end of the visit, he was beginning to accept me, although he was and remains less than thrilled with my decision. Still he did acknowledge that for years he had known how withdrawn and unhappy I had been, and was glad to finally see me so open and cheerful. However, my brother remains very uncomfortable seeing me, my younger sister refuses to see me or attend any function where I might be present, and my older sister has yet to tell my nephews about my change of status.

I pass much of the time, but still get read a lot — there is just so much gender ambiguity in San Francisco, and most people know all the subtle signs. The high school students on the Muni bus can be a bit annoying when they are bored, a few of the gay men that used to dance with me at the club I frequent won't anymore, and I do get odd looks now and then as I walk down the street, shop and otherwise go about the business of just living. It's hard and it's scary at times, but I have never been happier. I truly feel that I am a complete person now, and I am finally at peace with myself and the world. When people ask me if I might ever "go back," I simply reply, "Go back to what? There was never really anything there."

So that's my story. I am who I am and I like myself for the first time in decades. I know just how hard it is to live while being true to yourself and just how much courage and patience you need to survive in a generally unsympathetic world. I wish everyone all the best in their journeys!

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Look Your Best for the Camera

by Sandra [REDACTED]

On February 19th, a dozen of us came to Kimo's upstairs to learn numerous tips from an expert to help us take our best portraits ever. The speaker was San Francisco portrait photographer Jim Sturgeon. Jim has extensive experience capturing the best qualities of our members and local celebrities alike on film. Jim has a keen eye for detail, and he was more than willing to share some of his best photographic techniques with us.

Our own Jamie Fenton was also on hand to show us how to capture our best images in a digital form. This form offers the advantage that after an initial investment in equipment there are no further costs for materials and processing. In the digital form, images are displayed on a video monitor by computer, and they can be distributed and viewed on the internet.

Thanks also go to our always photogenic model Jennifer Hope of recent Cotillion fame; she sat patiently while all the technical adjustments and narrative took place. San Francisco makeup artist Linda Koch helped to bring out the most beautiful qualities of our model. Linda has assisted several in our community to look their best both on and off camera.

I'll describe only a few of the many photographic tips offered. A 35 mm camera with an adjustable lens is ideal. A fast film such as 400 ASA usually gives the best results in portrait conditions, especially for a long exposure. Using a tripod is also important to assure the best results. When taking close-up shots, the 'bleached out face' effect can be reduced by covering the flash with a white handkerchief. A wide sheet of black velvet supported by a stretched line makes an excellent backdrop. A photographer such as Jim can insure your best portrait but if this isn't possible, a cable release bulb may help you take your own.

Two lamps on tripod poles are recommended as the best light source. A third fill light placed strategically can be used to reduce shadows on the subject. Soft white bulbs no brighter than 100 watts usually work best. A piece of nylon placed over the camera lens may help diffuse the light. Butterfly lights, mirrors, or reflectors simply made from aluminum foil draped over cardboard can be situated to achieve the most realistic or desired effect. Jim suggests we consult the photographer's bible 'Photography' by Upton & Upton for an excellent discussion of lighting and other considerations.

Makeup should be subtle for color photography, and obvious but sometimes overlooked details like lipstick on the teeth can ruin an otherwise perfect portrait. Umbrella lighting may help to reduce the glare for subjects photographed while wearing glasses; but removing the lens is the only technique sure to work. Always try to select a time you are feeling good about yourself, and when you are free from other sources of stress for your portrait. It's important to feel your best to look your best.

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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.

“Mommy, I’m Sorry”

by Ginny Knuth

“Young lady, you take those patent leather shoes off right now! You’re not going to church like that!,” my mother screamed at me. Tears welled up in my eyes. I couldn’t believe it. My mother was screaming at me. She had never raised her voice to me before, not ever. She loved me, didn’t she? Why was she screaming at me?

It continued. “Don’t just stand there ... do what I tell you! You look like a little slut!” I began to cry out loud and screamed back, “I’m not a slut! I wanted to look pretty for you ... you’re mean and I hate you!” I stormed out of the room, sobbing and ashamed. My mother had called me a slut. She didn’t love me anymore. What had I done wrong? I tore off my black patent leather shoes and threw them in the garbage can, replacing them with my usual brown oxfords, and cried all the way to church.

I was eleven years old and my mother was 48 years old. It was 1946 and my mother had been in a special hospital-type bed set up in our front parlor for the past six months since her return from the hospital. In those days, eleven year olds were not very aware of what went on in the world. I only knew she was very sick and I always had to be very quiet. I was never told why she was sick or what she was going through. When they let me in the room to see her, she was always very loving and kind to me until that morning. I truly didn’t understand her pain and agony. When I came in the room, people would stop talking and pretend everything was all right. I had no way of knowing the ordeal she was suffering.

When I returned from church that day, I was feeling very, very sad for telling my mother I hated her. The first thing I wanted to

do was to see her and hug her and tell her I really loved her and I was sorry. I ran into the house and burst into her room before anyone could stop me. My mother appeared to be sleeping. I said, “Mommy, wake up; I want to tell you I’m sorry.” Only then did I realize there were others in the room, quietly sobbing. My father put his arm around me and said, “Honey, she’s gone with the angels.” I looked at my mother. She was so peaceful, so calm. Totally the opposite of how she had looked earlier when she was so angry with me. My aunts led me out of the room and to their home to stay the night. I didn’t want to leave my mother, but before I knew it, I was at their house, tucked in their bed, with my eyes wide open. It finally hit me that my mother was dead. At that moment I felt abandoned and alone. I felt that way for many years. As if she was stolen from me. As if it wasn’t fair. From then on, I was truly “on my own.”

How different my life might have been if she had not been taken away from me. She wanted so much for me. I was the apple of her eye ... a little girl that she wanted so much after having two boys. I was spoiled and loved and made to feel like the most special little girl in the world ... until the tumor grew and breast cancer claimed her very life. There was little information available fifty years ago to warn women about breast cancer or be aware of the signs to watch for, nor was there such a suggestion as having a mammography to catch the disease early. By the time my mother went to the doctor (I remember her saying she didn’t know what that lump was, but she was sure it would soon go away), it was too late. She had a double mastectomy and was dead six months later. She had never been sick a day before in her life.

So perhaps you can understand how important it is to me to be a part of a very special month this year which is being designated “Pink Ribbon Month.” In May of 1997, the Western Conference of the Imperial Court has decided to donate all funds raised by the Courts to “Women’s Health Issues, esp. Breast Cancer Awareness, Care and Research.” If you are interested in learning more about these issues, there will be a seminar on May 4rd at the Women’s Building where specialists from local hospitals will speak and answer your questions. Call me for details (415) [redacted]

There is another wonderful fund-raiser being planned for March 31st at Trinity Church in SF which will have a Southern Plantation theme. If you ever wanted to be Scarlet O’Hara, here’s your chance. There will be circle and square dancing, a box lunch raffle and a grand silent auction with all proceeds going to Breast Cancer Awareness and Care. We could use some help on this one if you or your partner would like to volunteer.

Throughout the month of May, we will be selling pink ribbons for one dollar at most ETVC events. Please be generous ... please buy and wear the ribbons to make everyone aware of how important it is to know the facts about breast cancer. Do it for me and my mom ... do it for you and your daughter .. do it so your grand daughter won’t have to say good-bye to her mother before she gets a chance to say she’s sorry.



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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 on Thursday, May 8th and Thursday, June 12th. Please don’t miss the grand “Return to Tara” Costume Ball and Fund Raiser on May 31st at the Trinity Episcopal Church, Bus and Gough Streets in San Francisco. We need your support. You are welcome with open arms. Call (415) [redacted] for more information.

Ginny's



This year
the 5th
Annual

Spice Convention is being held in Southern California and it would be a great opportunity for some of you gals to meet and talk with other wives and significant others from around the country in a pleasant, warm and friendly setting. A group of truly lovely women who understand what we deal with every day living the transgender lifestyle share their knowledge and kindness because they have also experienced these problems and joys with their partners.

SPICE is an acronym for Spouses & Partners' International Conference for Education and is a program of The Society for the Second Self, Inc. (Tri-Ess). It is put together by Peggy Rudd, whom many of you will recognize as the author of important books for SO's such as "My Husband Wears My Clothes" and "Crossdressing with Dignity". Just meeting Dr. Rudd is probably worth the trip... she is quite a great lady.

The entire convention which runs from July 16-20 is a non-crossdressing event "in consideration of women's needs." Your partners are welcome, but you will also feel very comfortable if you go alone and will make many friends there, I'm sure. For details call Diana at 1-888 [REDACTED]

The theme for SPICE '97 is "Getting to Know You" — "Getting to Know: Yourself, Your Spouse, Your Friends. Registration costs for the entire convention are \$150 and reservations at the Ontario Airport Hilton can be made separately at the rate of \$68 if they are made at least 21 days before the convention. Airfare is pretty reasonable for us right now to fly to Southern California, so it might be the time to take advantage of this Seminar, if you have issues you would like to discuss at length with caring and understanding people. They have a lot of fun, too, at the lunches and going out on the town, if you want to do so. Sounds like a refreshing breakaway to me. Give it a try!

Once again we are looking for writers for the Other Voices section of the Channel Newsletter. If you have something to say about the feelings you've experienced as a significant other of a transgendered person, write it down and send it to us at the ETVC PO Box 426486, SF, CA 94142-6486. Whatever might be on your mind will probably be of help to someone else out there who feels the same way. For us, this is not a fantasy, this is a reality, and sometimes we just need to talk about it out loud. Use this forum to express yourself... that's one of the reasons why we are here.

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Facts about Breast Cancer that may surprise you ...

1. All women are at risk. Approximately 70% of breast cancers occur in women with none of the currently identified "risk" factors such as family history, early menstruation or late or no childbearing.
2. Breast cancer is the leading killer of American women ages 35 to 54.
3. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in American women today — more common than lung and colon cancer.
4. There are 1.8 million women in the U.S. who've been diagnosed with breast cancer. One million others have the disease and do not yet know it.
5. One out of four women who are diagnosed with breast cancer die within the first 5 years. Forty percent will be dead within ten years.
6. The incidence of breast cancer among American women has been rising for the last 30 years — an increase that cannot be explained by wider use of mammography alone.
7. Mammography fails to detect as much as 20% of all breast cancers and recent studies show that it fails to detect as much as 40% of breast cancers in women under the age of fifty.
8. 185,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year — almost 50,000 will die of the disease in the same period.
9. One out of every eight American women will develop breast cancer some time in her life. That rate has more than doubled in the past 30 years.

Share these facts with women you know and help fight this deadly killer; support the Fund-raisers and wear your Pink Ribbons during the month of May.



On the Road

with Debra
by Debra Darling

There will be lots written about California Dreaming, but there's so much more going on in Southern CA. Here are some highlights from a recent sojourn to La La Land with my friend Karen Williams from Seattle. We often travel together and this time we were planning a week in LA doing what girls do when they play tourist. *Shop.*

Our adventure started at the valet car park with the shuttle to the airport. The standard greeting, "How long will you ladies be gone?" makes me feel so – well, femme. The driver not only removed our bags from the bus, but carried them to the check-in counter for us. It seems like I always get this kind of service when I fly in skirt and heels. Karen was in a conventional travel outfit of jeans and a top with low heels, but I wore my best Pendleton business suit with jacket and matching skirt. A pale blouse and three inch heels completed the outfit. Heads did turn.

At the counter we learned more about the current airport rules. My ticket was in my male name, and my male identification matched, even if I did not. No problem. Karen was using a free ticket issued in her femme name but her femme ID was not FBI approved, and the ticket agent told us it was a \$10,000 fine if they let someone on the plane without proper ID. The rules are much more lenient if you do not check luggage so they checked her luggage through on my ticket.

I had a couple of first class upgrades which we used to enter the Alaska Board Room while waiting, where we were treated very well by the folks in charge. They kept trying to bring us more coffee, juice, etc. – I think they just wanted to see which bathroom we might use. (They found out, as Karen cannot pass a ladies room without going in).

We stayed, this trip, at the Glendale Red Lion. Very nice, though straight and up-tight, but they soon loved us. At check-in we had to negotiate room rates, parking, location and finally free breakfasts. I don't think the desk clerk ever had to go face-to-face with a gentle, polite, but very firm cross dresser before. She seemed a little non-plussed, but we finally got everything we wanted.

At the hotel nightclub several men wanted to dance with Karen, so while she lit up the dance floor, I played pool. We had a wonderful time and educated many folks about the differences between cross dressers and drag queens. The second night, we encountered a much cooler crowd. No pool, but they still asked Karen to dance. I watched until the DJ played a macarina. (Why I'll never know, for it was obvious none of these folks had the slightest idea how to do it – must be a Republican stronghold). [Ed. Note - It is even further right than that.] Having won a few macarina contests myself, it was too good an opportunity to pass up. The dance is really supposed to be done on a bar stool by a girl who is inviting the guys around her to come up and—well you know. I soon had those I could make eye contact with smiling, and one even came up to me afterwards and returned my

watch which had come off during the dance. I don't think they had ever seen anything like us before.

We also went shopping every day, hitting the Revelry Mall, a Jewish flea market, and a lot of strip malls. On Saturday we played tourist, and went to Hollywood. Karen said my skirt was so short that I was the only one who saw any footprints at the Chinese Theater. I think she was just jealous. At Frederick's of Hollywood, we checked out shoes, and the lingerie museum. Next door is a great costume shop, and I showed Karen the source of all my outrageous costumes. As we were leaving, one of the Frederick's sales girls came up and said she thought I had chosen just the right outfit to show off my legs and she thought they were gorgeous. So there!

We were invited to a television show taping, and decided to go. We arrived, and had a ball standing in line, talking to the other tourists. Inside, we found they had saved us two seats near the front, and right beside where the host would be standing. It was a lot of fun, and I have seen the show on TV since. We got a lot of camera time and no negative comments at all.

We visited the Trilogy restaurant which is owned by drag queens who serve and entertain in drag. The food is excellent, the show is clean, and the girls are friendly and very entertaining. Try to include it on any trip to the area. It's in Santa Monica, and easy to find.

Our last day was spent at Venice Beach. This is a must for any tourist. Walk the boardwalk in your finest outfit and strut your stuff among the others. You will be noticed – everyone comes here to see or be seen, so be prepared. Almost anything goes. We previewed the Queen Mary with a long talk with one of the staff. She assured us that a stateroom would be big enough for two. Then I explained that a six day trip required eighteen changes of clothes, including six evening gowns, matching lingerie and shoes for each outfit and lots of accessories. Plus we each were on a first name basis with our Avon Lady. She shook her head and said, "Girls, you'll never make it." She wanted the dates for IFGE and was really looking forward to this convention.

Coming home was no big adventure. We knew the rules by now, and just checked Karen's bag on my ticket. The airline even took her Esprit ID. Enough said.

Oh, yes. While we were in L.A., we went to the other Queen Mary, stopped by Jim Bridges shop, and went out with Gina, Kitty (Jim), and a few others to Dragstrip 66 (That's a party deserving of its own story – it's the second Saturday of each month and you simply must go if you can).

Well, that's about it for the latest West Coast adventure. San Francisco is coming up again soon, and I look forward to seeing many of you at an ETVC event. If anyone is visiting the great Northwest, give Karen or me a call on the Emerald City hotline and we'll find someplace for you to enjoy in our fair City.

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Retail Rave

by Erin Souza

*First in a series of profiles of
community friendly vendors*

Piedmont Boutique:

Celebrating 25 Years of Outrageous Support

The north side of San Francisco's Haight Street, half a block west of Masonic, is home to a store that many consider cross-dresser and drag queen heaven, Piedmont Boutique. From simple rhinestone necklaces and opera gloves for that understated touch of elegance to fluorescent pink wigs and feather boas that are anything but subtle, Uti and her helpful staff at Piedmont have it all. And if they don't, they will custom make it for you.

Originally from Missouri, Uti came to San Francisco in 1967 and founded Piedmont Boutique in 1972 with her husband, and co-owner, Sahaj. The small store, whose name

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Marilyn, David and Piedmont Boutique's Uti smile for the camera at Coronation 1997. Photographer unknown.

comes from the street where they lived, started at Castro and 18th-Street, where they sold incense and consignment clothes around the corner from Harvey Milk's camera shop. Over time both the content of the store and the surrounding neighborhood changed. "We started dressing all kinds of people and all kinds of more colorful people started coming," says Uti.

They relocated to their current location in 1978. In 1985 they started producing their own clothing for the store and now produce everything for the store without buying any outside clothing. Uti cites her father's influence as a carpenter in shaping her ability to design and construct fashions for customers. "I look at everybody's angles. If you do it by the correct angles, no matter what the style, it will fit perfectly every time, the first time." She picks out her own materials, an extensive array of fabrics from glitter embellished velvet to patterned lycra to lame, for her creations. Accessories abound, from shoes and hosiery (I love the fishnets with the daisies), hats, purses and jewelry, jewelry, jewelry.

When you duck into the dressing room, don't be surprised to see pictures of your friends. "We go to events, take pictures and then create "event walls." A lot of customers for whom we design clothing bring us pictures which become part of our Celebrity Wall or the Wall of Fame." Look for that fetching brunette in a purple witch costume from a couple Halloweens back. Also, the Wall of Fame will be gracing the internet as Piedmont prepares to showcase and preview community events on their new web page at <http://www.sirius.com/~Piedmont/>

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Sex and the Single Cross dresser

By Luanna Rodgers, M.A., MFCC

Sex and intimacy are a concern for everyone, but can feel especially challenging for the unmarried cross dresser. You may wonder when to tell, who to tell and how to talk about your cross dressing. At some point disclosure must be made and the sooner the better, though not usually upon the first meeting or on the first date.



The first few dates or activities *au deux* are the getting acquainted period during which each party is trying to see if there is chemistry, compatibility and a desire to move beyond casual dating. It is also the time for each of you to assess whether you can trust each other more deeply. If after a series of several successful dates there is mutual interest, a desire to see more of each other and developing trust, it is time for both parties to begin opening up and sharing more about themselves.

Be wary if you are the only one opening up about fantasies, hopes or delicate personal information, as all people have their share. Your issue is cross dressing; others will have their own personal history and issues. Emotional intimacy develops through each revealing more about him or herself and taking progressive risks in letting the other truly know them. Remember too, you are seeking and deserving of compatibility in a lover or mate. You are not just shaking in your shoes (high-heeled or otherwise) hoping against rejection. You are each assessing whether the other meets lifestyle and emotional needs and values.

The initial phase of opening up and sharing is best reached after mutual interest and rapport is determined but before the relationship becomes serious, sexual or committed. Sexuality for most people develops a bond or at least complicates feelings. Both parties should be forthcoming about who they really are, prior to being

sexual or making a commitment. The people I have seen be hurt by disclosures are most often those who made them or received them after a relationship has gone on for some time, even into marriage, without each knowing fully who the other is.

Where do you find the interested and interesting prospective partner to whom you will open your innermost self? Unfortunately, like anyone searching for love, you can't expect to find a club, organization, bar or matchmaking service that is designed to guarantee that when you walk through the door, each person there is single and looking for someone just like you — though it is a pleasant fantasy! In reality, however, you will have to circulate and meet people. It is a cliché, but true, that if you like and feel comfortable with yourself, others will like and feel comfortable with you too. If feeling good about yourself is a chore, because of your cross dressing or for other reasons, it might help for you to build your self-confidence with the assistance of a psychotherapist familiar with your issues.

Cross dressers often wonder if they should just put a personal ad in, saving themselves from a face-to-face disclosure and hearing only from those who are interested in cross dressers. This approach is tempting and sometimes works, but it severely limits your selection, especially if you are seeking a female partner. Most women like to get to know the whole person and are rarely focused on a particular aspect of their prospective partner such as "cross dresser." Over time through meeting people in the social ways you are likely to meet a woman who enjoys all of what you bring to her, but she may never have looked at your ad or realized before she met and got to know you that she would have any interest in "Spunky cross dress, age 41, into moonlight walks through Nordstrom." Besides, the woman who might have answered that ad may not share your passion for crosscountry skiing, gourmet cooking and renovating old houses — and she may be allergic to your Himalayan cats. You are more than a cross dresser, aren't you?

When the time and the person are right, and you are ready to open up and share more about yourself and your cross dressing, there is no substitute for knowing yourself well. Be honest with yourself, about who you are, what you want and what you need first. Then and only then, can you begin to be honest with another. Do not fool yourself into believing that a good relationship will "cure" you of cross dressing. It will not. Cross dressing may diminish in intensity for awhile because you are so focused on your new found love. Never promise someone that you care about that you will stop cross dressing. It is unfair to both of you and will lead to disappointment. Do talk about your feelings, not just behaviors. A person may be more easily able to relate to you wanting to be soft, feminine, sexy or daring than they can to your enjoyment of wearing women's clothing. Share and explain what is true for you, for example, "I enjoy feeling soft and feminine sometimes. It is a break from the competitive, harder person I feel I must be at work. When I come home and put on women's clothes, I'm instantly relaxed and able to be more open." Be communicative and open minded about how your cross dressing can best fit into your relationship. Be willing to listen and experiment.

Be able to talk about your interests, needs and wants without shame. If you have unpleasant feelings about this part of yourself, think it must be hidden, if you can only manage your disclosure after too many stiff drinks or by an instant disclosure (suddenly appearing cross dressed when the person arrives for a date), you may want to seek assistance from other supportive cross dressers and their partners, or speak with a psychotherapist knowledgeable about gender concerns.

Know and accept yourself. Let others know you.
Love long and well!

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On the Town ...with Darcy Leopard

Up and Down the Fairmont Hotel



And now another Torrid Tale of Two Transvestites Traipsing the Town hoping not to trip on their heels. Ever ambitious tour guide Bree suggested setting our sights high this time, so we decided to tackle the Fairmont Hotel high atop Nob Hill. As per the usual routine, she arrived at my apartment in time for us to have some wine and do some finishing touches on our appearance. Then we hopped in her parking space-friendly VW Bug and headed north on the "Breeway" toward San Francisco City Center.

For the sake of high contrast in our evening's adventure, we decided to start lowdown in the Tenderloin with a drink at the Mother Lode. Bree tried something unusual, and took us on a shortcut through the deepest, darkest heart of the Tenderloin en route. It appeared to me a bedlam of frantic characters scrambling to see who was going to take advantage of who, making our destination on the edge of this neighborhood look tame in comparison.

Entering the Mother Lode, we immediately ran into Gentleman George, your friendly, neighborhood legman whom some of you may have met at ETVC socials. We chatted a bit, and decided that the venue wasn't really happening at the moment. We told him of our plans and he offered a ride, so the three of us squeezed into the front seat of his car and jaunted up to Nob Hill. He ranted about our legs in his smooth baritone throughout the entire ride, but stayed true to his gentlemanly nature and dropped us off promptly at the Fairmont. We bid him fond adieu and made our grand entrance.

Although the Fairmont is primarily known for the stunning view lounge at the top, Bree wanted to show me a surprise lurking in the basement first. We took the elevator, and proceeded through a doorway that felt like a gateway to another world. We had entered the tropical realm of the Tonga Room!

The Tonga Room provides the convenience of an instant trip to a Caribbean setting. As such, it attracts many tourists. Bree and I surely stood out as crazy locals as we made our way into the huge, brightly-lit room, presenting the opportunity for assorted tourists to point at us and giggle. Undaunted, we seated ourselves at a table with a good view and poured through the cocktail menu to decide what type of tropical foo-foo drinks we would order. We picked a couple with festive names, and then took a closer look at our surroundings.

The focus of the surreal setting is a rectangular lake, covered by a canopy of a straw roof supported by bamboo poles. The sky-high ceiling comes alive with the flash of faux lightning followed by a rumble of thunder from the house sound system, and an island floats forward displaying the night's entertainment which for our evening was a rather ordinary lounge band that played covered versions of popular tunes. Not of much interest to snobby, San Francisco

sophisticates such as Bree and I, who are more accustomed to the latest techno-throb of the South of Market clubs.

Our umbrella and pineapple-slice garnished drinks arrived shortly, and were very tasty. A woman came by and offered us a "photo for the evening" opportunity. Of course we said yes! We noticed that a couple of gay gentlemen seated near us took advantage of the opportunity, too. Sometime during our second drink the lady came back with our pictures. We each received a cardboard framed picture of the two of us together, as well as an individual picture of ourselves on a book of matches! The gay gentlemen took this opportunity to introduce themselves and compare pictures. They asked us what in the world two girls such as us were doing in this tourist trap. At twenty bucks for the pictures, we were evidently there to get gouged right along with them.

As Bree and I prepared to head for the more famous view bar at the top of the Fairmont, I informed her I needed a restroom break. While seated in a stall of a large, elegant, and empty ladies washroom, I suddenly heard a woman's voice sweetly calling my name. "Darcy ... Darcy?" Confused, I answered, "Yes?" "I was just talking to your friend, Bree," she continued. "She showed

me your pictures, and I saw the two of you in the Tonga Room. You're so photogenic!" "Why, thank you," I answered. I was hoping I would get

to actually see this mysterious lady when I exited the bathroom, but she had already left. Bree, meanwhile, was chuckling about the whole affair.

The top of the Fairmont was totally opposite of the Tonga Room. We entered a room of classical elegance, and seated ourselves into ornate, antique chairs near a huge window and an awesome view. We were now definitely back in San Francisco! We ordered our trademark Martinis from a very pleasant waitress and settled into pure bliss.

Bree realized that one of her tour guide associates was seated just a couple of tables away entertaining tourists! She worried for awhile that he might recognize her, but he was totally wrapped up in another world.

We decided to concern ourselves with more important matters, such as Bree introducing me to her latest favorite in lipstick shades. It was 'Black Cherry,' which I applied at Bree's urging over my usual "Love That Red." She approved the results with enthusiasm. Actually, I had been formerly encouraged to try a similar shade during a previous outing with Bree to Cafe Du Nord. We met a couple of beautiful, young females who worked at a cosmetic counter by day, and wanted to try their skills on us during their off hours. But that's another night "on the Town."



Darcy and Bree at the Fairmont Tonga Room. Photo by Fairmont photographer.

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A Memorial to Jeanne Sullivan by Judy Ann

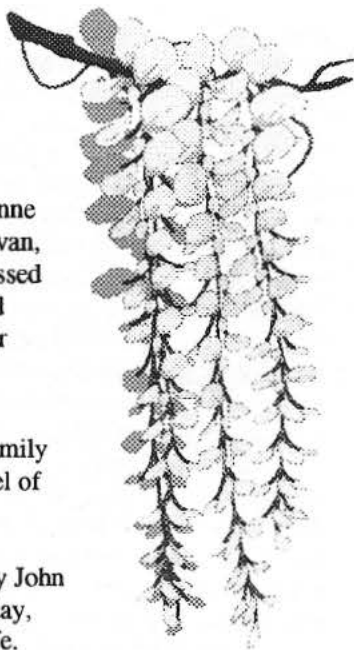
On Friday, March 14th, Mrs. Jeanne Sullivan, beloved wife of John Sullivan, one of the co-founders of ETVC, passed away in San Jose. Mrs. Sullivan had suffered a serious stroke shortly after returning home from work ten days before her untimely death.

A private wake/service for her family was held in her memory in the chapel of the Neptune Society in San Jose on Tuesday evening, March 18th. A "celebration party" was organized by John for her friends and relatives on Sunday, March 23rd, to commemorate her life.

Mrs. Sullivan helped countless numbers of people over the years in her professional life as a Counselor and Hypnotherapist. It is well-nigh impossible to comprehend what her passing means to her family, her friends, her clients and indeed, to all who knew her.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon her!

Mrs. Sullivan was known in the transgender community as Jeanne M. West, wife of Joanie Sheldon.



ETVC Members and Friends Donate Books to our Lending Library

Our ETVC Lending Library has expanded greatly this month due to the generous donations of our members and friends. A long time member, Bob Davis, who has an extensive personal collection of books and memorabilia relating to the transgender and drag communities, introduced us to a friend of his, Mr. George Albin, who graciously donated over thirty books and video tapes which are new to our library, plus another twenty five copies of books which are duplicates of some of the finest books available on the subject of transgenderism. Every one of Mr. Albin's donations are in pristine condition and we are extremely grateful to him for these gifts. He stated, "it is better for these books to be made available to those who need them than to be sitting in my study unused." Many of our members will benefit from his very kind philosophy.

We also want to acknowledge the donations of Andrea [REDACTED], who contributed two VHS tapes and a book which she recommends for all transsexuals to read entitled "How to Change Your Name," by Loeb and Brown. Recent donations by the authors to our library include "True Selves" by Brown and Rounsley; "Sadomasochism," by Henkin and Holiday and "Confessions of a Gender Defender," by Randi Ettner, PhD.

Do you have a couple of hours a week you can donate to help catalog our new additions? Our lending library committee has been working hard to bring everything up to date. In fact, before we received these additions we had just completed our data base of materials available, thanks to the invaluable work of Judy Ann, and were about to print a complete list for you. We still plan to do this, but would like to include the new additions mentioned above. If you can help, please call Ginny at (415) [REDACTED]. The library now consists of over 250 books and tapes, not including the fantasy fiction. As Mr. Albin stated, "let's make it available to those who need it."

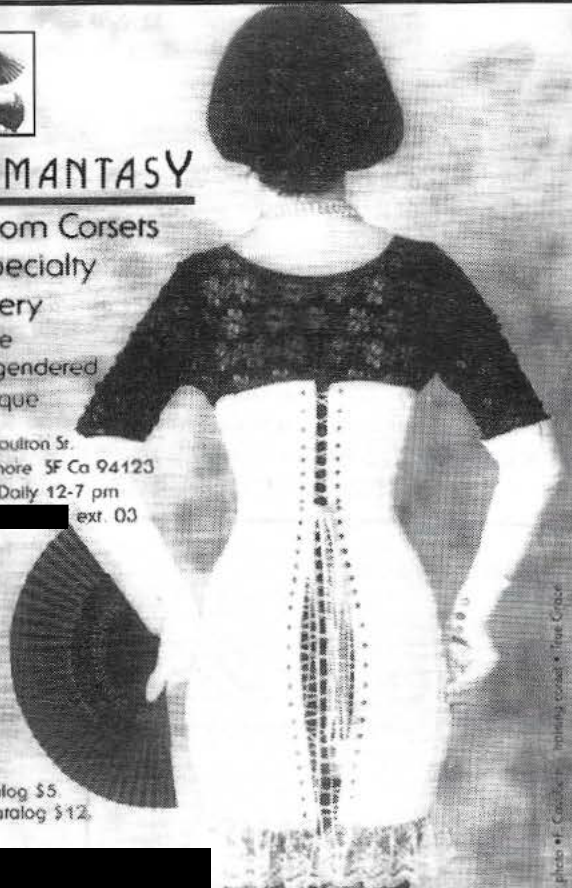
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