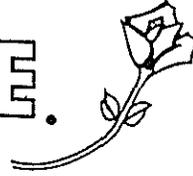




The Crystal CHRONICLE.



September 1990

Calendar of Events			
9/13	Transpitt	Social	Pittsburgh
9/15	Paradise	Social	Lakewood, OH
9/20	Cross-Port	Meeting	Cincinnati
9/21	Trans-WV	Meeting	Huntington
9/22	Crystal Club	Meeting, Makeup	Columbus
9/20-23	CDS	Paradise In The Poconos	Poconos, PA
10/4	IXE	Meeting	Indianapolis
10/11	Transpitt	Social	Pittsburgh
10/12-21	Outreach Institute	Fantasia Fair	Provincetown, MA
10/13	Transpitt	Meeting	Pittsburgh
10/13	Alpha Omega	Meeting	Lakewood, OH
10/18	Cross-Port	Meeting	Cincinnati
10/19	Trans-WV	Meeting	Huntington
10/20	Paradise	Meeting	Lakewood, OH
10/27	Crystal Club	Meeting, Halloween	Columbus
11/1	IXE	Meeting	Indianapolis
11/1-4	CAF	Moon Shadow Ball	Kansas City
11/8	Transpitt	Social	Pittsburgh
11/10	Alpha Omega	Meeting	Lakewood, OH
11/10	Transpitt	Meeting	Pittsburgh
11/14-18	Tri-Ess	National Convention	San Francisco
11/15	Cross-Port	Meeting	Cincinnati
11/16	Trans-WV	Meeting	Huntington
11/17	Paradise	Social	Lakewood, OH
12/1	Crystal Club	Christmas Party	Columbus
1/5	Crystal Club	New Years Party	Columbus
1/26	Crystal Club	Meeting	Columbus
2/22-24	Boulton & Park	Texas T Party	San Antonio
4/8-14	IFGE	Coming Together	Denver
6/91	Paradise	Be All You Can Be	Akron

President's Column

Ladies! I'm sorry that our speaker couldn't make it to the last meeting due to illness. But in her absence we had time to talk about the site of our Christmas party. We have had a few people agree to help prepare the decorations. We also talked about the possibility of moving our regular meetings to the same location as well. This can only be done if the membership agrees with the location. It would be in your

best interest to contact an officer and find the location and take a look at it yourself. I will take the time to address any concerns anyone may have after looking at it.

Growth is the only way Crystal Club can make it. If we stay where we are we'll be to the point that there won't be room for new people to come. As time passes we continue to receive letters and phone calls from new people. Since we have been together as a group it's been the support that

we've given each other no matter what branch we ourselves are sitting on, (TV, TS, SD, etc.) we have supported each other. We must continue to reach out and help those that need the same support we've enjoyed. We must find a place large enough to house that large a group. This new location is comfortable to me but that's not going to be the way everyone feels, so we must get some feedback from you. Just remember there are still many people out there that need us as we need each other.

We will be having a guest from Mary Kay at the next meeting to help us and show make-up tips. This is something that we have been trying to get for a long time, so let's take the time to check it out. The meeting will be September 22nd. Hope to see you there.

Rochelle Richards

Stonewall Union

I'd like to take the time to thank a great group of people. Stonewall Union asked if anyone from Crystal Club would help staff their booth at the state fair this year. As president I thought that I should take time and help. Russ, Cari, David, and everyone else at Stonewall were really great. I had a great time at the fair working with these people and I was treated very well. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your group and I hope that you call on us again.

Rochelle Richards

You've Come a Long Way, Baby

"It was 1955 and we were in love. In our little apartment on Castro Street, it was terrific to be a lesbian.

But outside, it was terrible. Not only were you illegal, you were sick, immoral - a total pervert. There were no role models, no organizations, no publications - there was nowhere to turn for help or validation.

It was impossible to even meet other lesbians in a safe environment. All we had were a few bars, and if you went to one, you always were terrified the police would raid it and haul you off to jail. They'd print your name in the paper, or call your employer and see to it that you were fired on the spot.

One day that year, one of the few other lesbians we know asked us if we'd like to start a group for other women like us. We were thrilled at the idea and that's how the

Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization in the world, was started.

At those first meetings, there were only eight of us. We met in secret, gave dancing parties in our homes, and kept each other from committing suicide. Our goals were modest - we just wanted to help each other survive in a world that despised us.

Since then so much has changed. What the lesbian and gay movement has accomplished in a short 35 years is far beyond even our wildest dreams from that time."

... The preceding, by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, is part of a mailing received on behalf of Roberta Achtenberg, who is a lesbian openly running for the San Francisco equivalent of City Council. It is a particularly poignant reminder of how far the gay community has come in the last 35 years, and how far the gender community has yet to come. Most of the above picture still applies to crossdressers and transsexuals. It is no longer illegal to crossdress (unless you should have need of public bathroom facilities) but we still live in fear of losing our jobs, being discovered, or being revealed to our families.

The gay community has my greatest respect for all it has been able to accomplish. We still have a lot of work ahead of us. I hope the gay community will be keep us in mind as they fight for their rights, and help us get to the point where we dare to come out of the closet far enough to fight for our own rights. Perhaps when that hard-won phrase "sexual orientation" is added to new lists of reasons for which discrimination is forbidden, someone will think to add "gender identification" as well. Or perhaps the gay community will come to accept gender identification as a part of sexual orientation, allowing us to be covered.

In return, we owe the gay community our strong support. Stonewall Union has been absolutely wonderful in helping us get started. They have covered us very nicely in their monthly newspaper, without our even having to ask. They welcomed us with open arms at this year's Gayfest, and invited us to help out at their booth at the State Fair. Let's help them every way you can! Let's all work together to get Jesse Helms out of office! I especially urge the other groups that receive this newsletter to publicize the Helms/Gantt election and point out its importance. Contributions can be sent to his new address at Gantt for Senate, 700 E. Stonewall St, Suite 500, Charlotte, NC 28202, (704) 338-1990. Let Mr. Gantt know that the gender community supports him! Identify your contribution as from the gender community! (Send a money order if you want it to be anonymous.)

Mary Ann

JUL 24 1990

It's time to dump Jesse Helms



**Brenda
Payton**

When Harvey Gantt won the Democratic nomination for U.S. senator representing North Carolina, the irony of possibility was glaring. What could be a better end to a political career built on intolerance and fear?

Imagine, Jesse Helms, three-term senator, defeated in his bid for a fourth term by a black man. With his mind on the possibility, a friend suggested that local black activists get behind Gantt's fight for Helms' seat.

Fortunately, he wasn't the only one with the idea. According to representatives of the Oust Jesse Helms Committee, activists of all colors from all over the country have joined efforts to dump Helms.

"We're getting people representing a range of interests. If you're an environmentalist, if you're pro-choice, if you're for civil rights or gay rights, you are motivated to mobilize against Helms," said Joe Herzenberg, a spokesman for the committee who was traveling through the Bay Area to drum up support for Gantt. "Because when you look at Helms, you see what a force of negativism he is. It's difficult to see what he's in favor of. Women's rights, civil rights, education, art — he's against everything."

Ironically, again, it was Helms' performance during a filibuster against AIDS legislation that may have turned the tide against him.

"People across the country saw the meanness and vindictiveness that have poisoned politics in North Carolina for almost 20 years," Herzenberg said. "Even people who had supported him in the past said they were shocked by his lack of compassion on the issue. He built his career on anti-communism. Now that he doesn't have the communist threat, he's turned his attacks on gays."

Helms' attack on the National Endowment for the Arts and free artistic expression has earned him another set of national opponents on another range of issues. Helms led the attack on Robert Mapplethorpe's photo exhibit, opening a floodgate of censorship. A museum director in Cincinnati is being prosecuted for pandering obscenity, the first time such an action has ever been brought against a director because of a museum exhibit.

Helms is calling the move to oust him "the toughest political fight of my life." He has characterized it as the work of outsiders interfering in North Carolina politics. However, committee representatives point out that Helms has always depended on outside support.

"We've found that 76 percent of his money comes from outside of North Carolina," said Mandy Carter, a committee member and longtime lesbian activist. "People think he is supported by the tobacco industry. He does get support there, but a lot of his money comes from small contributors, right-wing nuts from all over the country whom he solicits through one of the most sophisticated direct mail operations."

In 1984, Carter said, Helms raised \$16 million, an amount that represents about \$14 for every vote he received.

On the positive side of the move to dump Helms is Gantt.

Gantt served two terms as mayor of Charlotte, demonstrating that he has a strong base of support among white voters. He has a background in the civil-rights movement and education; he is an architect and businessman.

And according to a recent poll conducted by the Charlotte Observer in June, Gantt has a chance to defeat Helms. Helms actually trailed Gantt by four percentage points.

"There is a lot of national interest in this race because Helms has used his seat to launch an attack on our democratic principles that has hurt the rest of the country," Carter said.

Another advantage of the campaign against Helms is a voter registration drive that is signing up scores of North Carolinians who have never voted.

"We have a goal of registering 80,000 to 100,000 new voters," Carter said. "It's really exciting. One of the ways Helms stayed in office was the low voter turnout, particularly among black people."

The committee members were in the Bay Area in June to raise funds for Gantt's campaign. And Gantt is scheduled to be here for a fund-raiser at the end of August.

"If you are a woman, a worker, lesbian, gay, an environmentalist, artist or concerned about civil liberties, get behind Gantt," Herzenberg said.

That sounds like just about everyone.

For more information, write N.C. Senate Vote '90, 604 W. Chapel Hill St., Durham, NC 27701.

Brenda Payton writes on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

August Business Meeting Minutes

At the August board meeting we discussed the following:

We have a prospective meeting place, a hotel banquet room. The sales manager is knowledgeable and accepting of crossdressers. It's a larger, nicer place than we're meeting at now. The location will be announced at the regular meeting place or by phone.

One of our decisions will involve how to set fees and choose food and beverages. Several options exist: For example we could have entrees or a buffet or just have hors d'oeuvres.

Other concerns are coming into contact with the non-crossdressing public, and the bathroom and dressing room situation. The banquet room is private, and we will have our own entranceway to that room. We are working with the sales manager to see what can be done about the other concerns.

We will not be able to bring our own alcoholic beverages or food and beverages to the banquet rooms.

Preregistration and payment for the Christmas party at least 3 days in advance is a must. We need to do this to make arrangements with the hotel. Preregistering at either the September or October meeting would be my suggestion to avoid frantic last minute registration.

If we move permanently to a hotel, preregistration will probably be the rule. The board will eventually work out a policy for this and also refunds.

When and if we move to a hotel the Crystal Club may have to charge extra for use of the dressing room. This is because we must recover part of the cost of renting a dressing room. The expected charge would be approximately \$5-\$8.

Michelle Kennedy, a make-up person from Mary Kay Cosmetics, will be at the September 22 meeting to show her line of cosmetics and offer some instruction about applying it. I talked with Michelle and she seems very knowledgeable about make-up and is very accepting of crossdressers.

We decided to have a Halloween party for the October meeting. We don't feel that it's necessary to schedule a speaker for that meeting, but it's still a possibility, if anybody has any suggestions. We need volunteers and ideas for the Halloween party to make it a success, let us know if you can do either.

Susan

September Meetings

The business meeting will be held on September 12th at 8:30 at Rochelle's residence.

The regular September meeting will be held on September 22. (This is the 4th Saturday, not the last!) It will be held in the same old, familiar, crowded location, so come early for a good seat. (You might even want to bring folding chairs to make sure you have a place to sit.) The speaker will begin around 8:30 or 9:00.

Christmas Party Announcement

At the August 25th meeting, the members voted overwhelmingly to have the December 1st Christmas party at the hotel discussed in the board meeting minutes. The September 22nd meeting will be at the usual place.

Some of the concerns discussed at the meeting were: The fee for individuals and significant others will be slightly more for the Christmas party.

Some people were concerned about bumping into acquaintances in the hotel hall while coming or going to the restroom.

We cannot bring our own alcohol, but we can buy them at the bar.

[In the week after the regular meeting, some officers from the Crystal Club met with the sales manager to see how we could find solutions to our basic concerns about the hotel. She understands us very well, and is going to see what can be done to accommodate us. We will probably make an announcement at the September meeting. - SP]

Susan

Susan's Comments

Right now the Crystal Club is growing and we have to make some decisions to keep it growing. We must decide what kind of place we want to meet at and find it. Rochelle commented that "It's going to take all of us to keep the Crystal Club alive".

Please give us your input, positive or negative, about moving the meeting to a hotel. We need to know the concerns of the members before we move, not after.

If anybody knows of a potentially good place to meet,

feel free to run it by one of the officers of the club. Potentially good meeting places could be a private banquet room of a bar, a meeting hall, or a party facility, a motel-hotel with only one party room, etc.

Please respond soon if you want to come to the Christmas party so we can make it a success.

We had an interesting visitor at the August board meeting. Her name is Ingrid from New Hampshire. Originally, Ingrid is from England.

Ingrid thinks that English women are more tolerant of crossdressers than women in the US.

She also commented that some bars in England cater to crossdressers and some even hire crossdressing waitresses.

Ingrid knows Jimmy James quite well and said he "does a fabulous Marilyn Monroe" but "after the show, rips off the women's clothes and does not understand who wants to crossdress".

Until later,

Susan

Treasurer's Report August 1990

Starting Balance	754.94	
Meeting Fees	315.00	
Membership Dues	60.00	
Advertising	50.00	
Total	425.00	
Food and Beverages	-74.31	
Printing	-72.11	
Postage	-29.00	
Gayfest	-46.00	
Christmas Deposit	-100.00	
Meeting Room	130.92	
Supplies	-13.87	
Phone	-76.74	
Total Expenses	-542.95	
Ending Balance	636.99	

Susan

New Meeting Site

Ladies, we're growing rapidly, and you've no doubt already noticed that our existing meeting site is getting awfully crowded. Sooner or later, we're going to have to move to a larger facility. With winter coming on, it may very well be sooner.

We've located one potential new meeting facility. If you've been to the meeting, you've heard where it is. (If not, phone us for it.) This site has its pros and cons, and your involvement is needed to help determine where we meet. This is a name-brand hotel, with banquet facilities designed for business meetings, receptions, and parties. The service manager has worked with crossdressers before, and is very understanding of us.

The room is about twice the size of our current room. There is a bar in the hotel, and we have been told we are welcome to come into the bar, dressed, to get a drink. We can have a meal catered into the room. There is a direct outside door to the meeting room, making it unnecessary to pass by anybody else in the hallway. However, the hallway is there exclusively for banquets and meetings, and on Saturday nights it's usually going to be ours alone anyway. (Exceptions include Christmas, May, June, and August, and the two times a year when every hotel room in Columbus is booked: the Nationals races and Quarter Horse shows.)

There are some disadvantages, of course. One is that it will cost more. It will no longer be possible to bring our own food or drinks. Hotel food can be catered at reasonable prices, ranging from \$8/person up to \$14/person. Bottles of pop cost \$1.25 each, and drinks run from \$2.50 (for beer) to \$3.25 (for a mixed drink) to \$8 (for a carafe of wine.) There is a Coke machine directly outside the door at \$.75.

Another consideration is the layout. There is a pair of restrooms in the hallway right outside the door. If we are the only party that night, a glass door can be closed with a sign marking the wing a "private party" and we'll have the use of either restroom. (There is no restroom in the meeting room itself.) There is a bar past the glass doors, with its own set of restrooms. We don't yet know what type of crowd to expect at the bar, as it is closed for remodeling. It is expected to reopen in mid September, and you are invited to drop by after it's open to form your own opinion of the situation.

We would need to rent a regular sleeping room as a dressing room. The closest sleeping room to the meeting room is about 100 feet away, and you would have to pass by the bar entrance to get there. This room would also serve as our restroom if we cannot use the public restrooms on a

particular night.

One officer is concerned about what would happen if she or her wife would run into someone they know who happened to be at the bar. This is a valid concern and should be taken into consideration.

We need your help to find the ideal meeting location. This hotel is large enough and has much going for it. If you like this hotel, tell us. If you don't like it, help us find a better location. Perhaps there is an even better meeting location that we haven't found yet.

Mary Ann

Christmas Party

The Christmas Party will be held Saturday, December 1. This party takes the place of the November meeting. The party site will be given out in person at any meeting or over the phone to members or visitors who have been interviewed.

This is a tremendous opportunity for us. The party will be held in a first class hotel in one of their banquet rooms. Two banquet waitresses will be serving us an elegant meal. Although it has not yet been firmly determined, it is possible that there will be a bartender in our banquet room operating a cash bar especially for us.

There will be only one other party going on in the hotel the same evening as ours, and it will be two doors down in another banquet room. Except for this other group, we should pretty much have that wing of the hotel to ourselves.

We are still working out some details, such as restroom arrangements, availability of a dressing room, bar and meal menus, and prices. In order to cover the cost of this elegant banquet meal, we will probably have to charge a bit more than the standard \$15 meeting fee and \$20 for a couple. A reasonable guess is \$21 for one or \$38 for a couple. Because of the nature of the commitment, we will have to insist that everyone attending pay in advance.

We will have a dance floor, and we need to provide our own music. Unless someone has access to DJ equipment or knows someone who would like to DJ for us for a small charge, we will need your help to have music for the party. If several of you would prepare a cassette tape full of your favorite party music and bring it with you, we can have nice music so we can party until we drop!

We have decided to extend an invitation for ladies from neighboring organizations to join us at our Christmas party.

We hope that we can get to know some of the ladies we've been exchanging newsletters with, and renew friendships with those we've already met! We also hope the chance to attend an elegant banquet dinner will lead to a nice time for everyone.

Mary Ann

Master Gene Makes Maleness Mandatory

In the Broadway production of "My Fair Lady," an exasperated Rex Harrison became famous for lamenting: "Why can't a woman - be more like a man?" Now, it seems, British molecular biologists have found the answer.

What women lack, these researchers say, is a single gene called SRY - or the Sex-determining Region of the Y chromosome. The finding culminates two decades of work in which scientists have sought to identify the specific Y-chromosomal region responsible for masculinity - not only to understand the genetics of gender but also as a model for studying basic principles of embryo development.

The gene's discoverers say that this newly identified string of nucleic acids, present within every male mammalian cell so far examined, embodies the very essence of maleness. In humans, for example, the gene seems responsible for initiating the creation of testes after about seven weeks of fetal development. The testes, in turn, produce a cocktail of masculinizing hormones that influence gender-related developmental pathways throughout a man's life.

Researchers have known since 1959 that male mammalian cells, except sperm, have both an X chromosome and a Y chromosome, while female mammalian cells, except eggs, contain two Xs. They've also known that only a small portion of the Y chromosome confers masculinity. Indeed, mutant XY mammals whose Y chromosomes lack this male-determining portion develop as females. And XX individuals who, through a genetic quirk, have this critical bit of Y appended to their X chromosomes, develop as males.

Previously reported discoveries of candidate genes for maleness - including the widely publicized 1987 isolation of a testis-determining factor gene - have all proven wrong. In the July 19 Nature, Andrew H. Sinclair of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund in London and his colleagues say their newly discovered SRY is the best candidate yet. Others agree, but all concur that final confirmation depends upon an upcoming series of experiments in which scientists will try to create male mice by inserting the SRY gene into female mouse embryos. Sinclair says he and his co-workers hope to complete those tests by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, the evidence that SRY is indeed the master gene for maleness appears compelling. For example, a true male-determining gene would probably be highly conserved through evolution, and so could be expected in a wide variety of animals within a given class, such as mammals. Using a molecular test dubbed a "Noah's Ark blot," the London researchers found the gene in blood cells of human XX males, and in male chimpanzees, rabbits, pigs, horses, cattle and tigers. The gene was absent in all females tested.

Furthermore, in the same issue of Nature, a team of researchers led by John Gubbay of the MRC National Institute for Medical Research in London describe the experiments showing that XY female mice lack the mouse version of SRY. And they found that in embryonic male mice, the gene becomes active at about the time testes development begins. Those findings bolster the evidence for its role in male development.

Unexpectedly, mouse and human studies indicated SRY remains active in adult male testes, suggesting the gene has some ongoing function even after completion of male development. The nature of that function remains a mystery.

Scientists remains uncertain about how SRY may regulate other genes that play a role in gender development. Perhaps significantly, Sinclair says, SRY's nucleic-acid sequence resembles those of known DNA-binding proteins. Such proteins have the ability to turn other genes on or off. He speculates that the SRY protein might suppress genes required for female development, or activate genes whose products add up to maleness.

[A most promising line of research - wouldn't you agree? Roberts. Courtesy Science News.]

Restroom Ordinance Nabs Gender Female

Denise Wells thought she was going to enjoy a George Strait concert on the evening of July 7th. Instead, twenty minutes into the performance she found herself being escorted out of the Summit arena by a member of the Houston Police Department. What was her crime, you ask? No, she wasn't smoking marijuana, drunk or disorderly, and she didn't charge the stage to grab hold of her favorite hunk. Miss Wells' transgression was using the men's restroom.

According to Miss Wells, she went to the men's room after a long wait in the line leading to the ladies' room. "I just couldn't wait", she was quoted as saying.

Her predicament stems from Houston's old plumbing code, which allows for a higher combined total of toilets and urinals in men's rooms than for toilets in women's rooms in

public theaters and auditoriums. Only as recently as 1985 have city officials recognized that long lines emanating from women's restrooms compared with short or no lines at all from men's restrooms indicate that this is another area where equality of the sexes has been lacking. Correcting this injustice in buildings built before 1985 could only be done at an outrageous cost and, as Summit operations manager Henry Thomas explained, "We have no place to put them."

Currently, only the Wortham Center and the George R. Brown Convention Center adequately address the restroom needs of the female population (and this is subject to debate, based on recent submissions to the Houston Post's Sound Off feature.) Other facilities like the Summit can only redesignate men's restrooms as women's restrooms when higher than normal attendance by women is expected at events. This was done the night Miss Wells was ticketed and ejected from the Summit and still the facilities available were swamped by the number of female patrons.

This incident is of particular concern to area crossdressers, and crossdressers visiting the city, because it demonstrates the inadequacy of the current law designed to protect citizens from lewd behavior in public restrooms. Here is the law which has been an ordinance since 1972.

It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly and intentionally enter any public restroom designated for the exclusive use of the sex opposite to such person's sex without the permission of the owner, tenant, manager, lessee, or other person in charge of the premises, in a manner calculated to cause a disturbance. (Code 1968,28-42.6: Ord. No. 72-904, 2, 6-2-72)

While ejecting Miss Wells from the Summit without refunding the admission price and subjecting her to the possibility of a \$200 fine seems unfair, we would have expected nothing less if it had been a man attempting to use the ladies' room. There is, of course, agreement that privacy is an important constitutional right, but at the same time there needs to be some allowances made for the rights of those who, for one reason or another, cannot use the restroom appropriate to their sex. Moreover, while we recognize the necessity of a law forbidding individuals from entering public restrooms for the purpose of sexual gratification, political demonstration, or taking revenge on members of the opposite sex by openly humiliating them in a setting reserved for members of that sex only, such a law needs to be written in such a way that individuals like Miss Wells and crossdressers don't get trapped in it like turtles in a shrimp net without a turtle excluder device.

The sister of the accused, Valerie Ravenport, is serving as her attorney. She commented the defense of her sister

will be presented to the court to show that, although the defendant did enter a men's room, it was not done "in a manner to cause a disturbance", as stated in the ordinance being tested. This is the same defense that crossdressers who have been cited for violating the same ordinance have used. For this reason, members of the gender community should look on with extreme interest for the outcome of the Wells case. For, while it is likely in the distant future that the number of public restrooms for women will increase as older buildings are replaced, the dilemma faced by crossdressers needing public expression of their feminine personalities (and are fed up with having to express them in the "safety" of homosexual night clubs) the threat of being cited and/or arrested will not cease until the current city ordinance is either abolished or rewritten to abate harassment of crossdressers.

[Courtesy Tau Chi Femme Forum. This case is especially relevant in light of our search for new quarters. My understanding is that in Ohio, the relevant law is an Ohio State law, not a city code. It would be very useful to find the exact wording of the law that applies to us. If it is worded similarly to the Houston ordinance, then having the permission of the manager would be adequate. Where's our Toledo attorney when we need her?]

Financing SRS

As far as paying for it all, the first place to check is your own medical insurance and disability insurance. If your employer carries it for you, the odds are pretty even that the insurance policy will cover it. A lot of them are specifically writing SRS out of their policy now, but a lot haven't done that yet. In my experience with talking with post-ops, and my own experience dealing with insurance companies about "cosmetic" surgery, if they don't specifically exclude it, you can get them to cover it by fighting with them enough. Sure, they'll initially deny you coverage. That is standard procedure. That simply is your cue to write a nice, long, to the point appeal letter (after talking to a lawyer, so you can put the lawyer's name in the letter), giving doctor's names and statements on why this is a necessary surgery for you. They usually don't balk at an appeal. I haven't lost one yet, and I've appealed their decisions 3 times. It always pays to be very firm in the letter, and tell them that you'll take whatever steps necessary to make sure that your rights are observed. One thing insurance companies hate is a law-suit. They'll pay you off even if they think you'd lose if it meant that they didn't have to go through that kind of process.

The post-ops I've also talked to say that these insurance companies definitely DO cover SRS (as a group policy, that is), as of July, 1990:

Principal Mutual
Connecticut General
Travelers (Preferred Group Plan)

They've also said you can get Kaiser to cover it, if you are smart about getting a sympathetic doctor who will recommend you for SRS through another (non-Kaiser) doctor.

[Courtesy of Laura in CI-Forum.]

Auntie's Niece

By Carol Francine Saunders. [Continued from last month.]

After I was completely shaved, I gingerly stepped into the pink foaming bubble bath to soak in wonderful ease as I heard my Aunt Jean in her bedroom. Then it dawned on me that she might expect to see me naked in order to dress me as a girl!

I bathed, dried, and dusted with the girlishly-smelling powder she handed me through the partly opened door. Uncertainly, I wrapped my now all too dainty form in a bath towel to nervously enter the bedroom.

Auntie had me stand naked with my back to her as she slipped a pair of Sally's nude toned spandex panty briefs up my legs, which smoothed my loins.

Seeing my embarrassment, she half giggled with amusement, as she ran her fingers over my body to use her razor and skin cream to remove what little body hair I had missed. Auntie then plucked my eyebrow hairs with a pair of tweezers until I feared that all that was left was a thin ultra-feminine line that would not vanish in two weeks!

Satisfied with deruding me she reassured me that my feminine brows could be brushed into a shaggy masculine look by demonstrating the change before the vanity mirror. And as I sat looking at the growing femininity of Cindy's face she set my longish hair into rollers.

"Now that you are wearing only your underpants, I mean your lingerie, we can get proper measurements," she noted seeing that my modesty was protected, even if I was blushing over being seen so close to being naked as she took a sewing tape to carefully measure.

"My, my, I can no longer see my nephew, just a young girl. Soon I will know you only as Nancy's sister! Now, we will be sure to get all your sizes; bust, hips, waist. We will add a few inches to your "bust" with bust pads. All

young ladies want to enhance their nearly E look with falsies, and I am certain you will look great in Sally's." With teasing delight she playfully touched each of my little nipples with her index finger causing me to swallow my chagrin. Then she took the tape measure to my foot. "And your feet, I don't know if Sally's shoes or mine would fit you better. They may be snug, but to be a woman is to suffer."

Auntie had me sit as she gave me a manicure and polished my fingernails a lovely pink, and then had me let them dry while she went to Sally's room to get other clothes for me to try on.

Before she left she promised she would keep me in dresses the next full week. I would assume a female identity for that time as "Cindy", since all the boy-clothes I brought would be locked away before she returned and I would have only girl's clothes to wear.

After she left I found myself sitting very carefully with my hands on the vanity table, so that my pretty nails could dry, seeing in the vanity mirror a young girl sitting, all but nude, in her panty brief with her hair up in curlers.

Soon my Auntie Jean returned with a large box full of lovely things to wear which she dumped happily on to her bed along with a camera!

"Hold out your fingers, I will give your fingernails another coat of polish. Then I'll do your toenails. You will feel really feminine wearing nail polish, you will leave them painted all week, you must practice being feminine!" she observed picking up the polish to do my finger nails before taking a buff pad to smooth out the skin on my feet before giving me a pedicure to finish off with nail polish.

Then to my surprise she took a snap shot with her camera!

"Just for my scrapbook. But, maybe you would like me to send copies to your mother and sister?" she teased only to see the sheer fear in my eyes. "Well, perhaps for now, just for me."

"Now that we have your sizes, I want you to put on your female foundation garments all by yourself; panties, high waisted panty girdle, padded bra, nylons, and slip. You will feel quite different as a high school sophomore in feminine lingerie."

With her amused guidance I slipped on the lingerie learning from her how to cup my breasts by leaning forward to add to the falsie filled cups before raising the bra straps. Then she showed me how to roll up my nylons to attach them to

the girdle garter snaps before I lowered the white silken nylon slip over my feminized form to feel the sheer delight of lacy hems brushing taut smooth nylons.

"You really look girlish in your lingerie, wait until we're finished with you!" she promised looking at the start of her handiwork with a nod of approval that made me happy with the knowledge that she saw some promise in the transformation.

"Auntie, I really appreciate you doing this for me. I feel so good already. Do you think I am just a Sissy?" I asked in wonder over how nice it felt to be dressed so. Even more exciting than I dreamed.

"Listen, Girlie, I've never had a chance to do something like this. I am kind of looking forward to this. If it's a girl you want to be, a girl is what I'll make you be. Making you really pass as a girl will be a challenge for me as well," she promised taking yet another picture as if to remind me that if I chickened out she would have a record of my first moments in skirts!

With these words of encouragement a pretty pink teenage dance party dress came over my head and was zipped up my back. Then matching pink two inch pumps before she draped a ruffled pink plastic make-up cape around my neck. Auntie put her arm behind my neck as she applied lipstick to my mouth with her other hand. Then she quickly applied false eyelashes, cut down to fill in where my own lashes were not so full as a girl's. This was followed by a hint of eye make-up and highlighting blusher suitable for a young teenager. She combed my hair out into a feminine style before removing the cape to add clip on little gold earrings, charm bracelet, necklace, and a woman's watch to complete my transformation.

She then walked me to the full-length mirror to show me "How pretty I was!" as she took more pictures to add to her collection. [To be continued.]

[Courtesy Our Sorority. Subscriptions are \$10 for 3 or more issues per year, to Our Sorority, Lincolnia Station, POB 11254, Alexandria VA 22312.]

Gender Alternatives League Forming

The Gender Alternative League is now being formed. At present, it is a small organization. It has no officers, no directors, and only a handful of members. There are no funds to keep it afloat. We hope to change all of this - in fact, the gender community is ready for a change!

GAL consists of the seeds of your ideas. The time is NOW for the gender community to bring those seeds into

fruition. There has been talk. Now there is action!

It is our goal to promote freedom of gender expression. It is our intention to become the national dissemination network, the political activist organization, and the social watchdog promoting freedom of choice for those wishing a gender alternative and the removal of the stigma of mental derangement.

It is our primary purpose to help and support the gender community as a whole in the area of educational and political activism. GAL will in no way usurp any of the programs, ideas or purposes of any other gender organization, but will instead channel and enhance the ability of all organizations to have the clout necessary to advance their best interests within society at large. In working together, we can achieve what individuals only dream of. Whether you are a crossdresser, a transvestite, transsexual (male to female or female to male), a transgenderist, a helping professional, a supportive other (as a wife, friend, parent, or associate), it does not matter. As long as you are in the gender community or connected to the gender community in some way we are here to help and support YOU.

It is our intention to bring all members of the gender community together as one unified group, regardless of the labels or differences between us, for the betterment of our community as a whole, and for the betterment of all individuals within it. We, acting together, can create a large enough force to make a difference.

It is also our intention to join forces with any other groups fighting the same or similar injustices or resolving to achieve the same or similar goals on both a national and an international level.

The idea and need for this type of format to back the community in general is what is needed at this time. We are ready! Women's Liberation and Gay Rights have accomplished much through their endeavors and activism. In the '90s the gender community will reach for and achieve the same or similar goals.

We are in need of leaders. We need volunteers for all posts in this organization. We need a person from each national transgender organization to become a part of the board of directors of GAL. We need a member of each local organization through the US to become an integral part of GAL in their local area for the purpose of dissemination to the membership and the general public, as well as for the purpose of keeping the national officers informed about what is needed, wanted, and being gained on the local front.

We need each of you to be a watchdog and know what is

going on around you and report to the watchdog committee and all discrepancies in our society that cause us, as a minority, to suffer undue, unethical and possibly illegal discrimination as a group or as individuals. We need each and every one of you to act in unison when such an occurrence hampers one or more of our sisters or brothers or causes us as a community undue distress. This organization will field those occurrences and put the injustices on the platform and handle them. ["Handle them?" Hmm, perhaps a bit optimistic. - MAH]

It is estimated that approximately one to three percent of the population enjoys wearing the clothing of the other gender. If that estimate is correct, we are 2.5 to 7.5 million strong. We cannot possibly reach all of those people at this time since many are in the closet and will not even hear about GAL.

First and foremost we need each and every one of you and all your friends in the gender community to write down your ideas, your concepts, your comments, and send them to us now. We want to know what you need now. [How about restroom rights? How about nondiscrimination clauses? How about getting Jesse Helms out of the Senate? - MAH]

Where we go from here depends on you and your input. Do you need GAL? If this is the last you hear of GAL, it will be because the apathy in our community has made it so. If, on the other hand, GAL succeeds as an organization it will be because you have made it so. Write to us NOW.

Your (our) first test of resolve will be communication of your interests. WE need to hear from all of you and all your friends NOW.

GAL
PO Box 3392
Napa, CA 94558

[Courtesy Tri-Ess Femme Mirror and GAL.]

Related Organizations

Local Support Groups

Crystal Club
P.O. Box 287
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068
(614) 777-0648

Meral Crane, GDO
Central Ohio Gender Dysphoria
P.O. Box 02008
Columbus, OH 43202

Renaissance Education Association
Box 1263
King of Prussia, PA 19406
(215) 640-9449

Nearby Clubs

Cross-Port
P.O. Box 12701
Cincinnati, OH 45212
(513) 851-6174

Alpha Omega
Northern Ohio Tri-Ess Chapter
P.O. Box 954
Elyria, OH 44036

Transpitt
P.O. Box 3214
Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Paradise Club
P.O. Box 29564
Parma, OH 44129

IXE
Box 20710
Indianapolis, IN 46220

Crossroads
Box 1245
Royal Oak, MI 48068-1245

Trans West Virginia
P.O. Box 2322
Huntington, WV 25724-2322

National Organizations

IFGE
P.O. Box 367
Wayland, MA 01778
(617) 894-2212

Tri-Ess
Box 194
Tulare, CA 93275

Our Sorority
P.O. Box 11254, Lincolnia Station
Alexandria, VA 22312

Policies

The Crystal Club is an open support group for cross dressers. We welcome TV, TS, TG, FI, and others who assume a complete trans-gendered identity. Both Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male individuals are welcome. We welcome their spouses and significant others (SO's.) We welcome guests from other cross dressing organizations, when cleared through an officer.

Meetings are the fourth Saturday evening of each month. Meetings are open only to cross dressers who have been screened or approved by an officer, and to cross dresser's spouses/SO's, helping professionals, and approved guests. The location of the hotel is given out after the screening process.

There is a monthly meeting fee (see schedule below) to cover the cost of the room, food, soft drinks and coffee, and general operating expenses of the group. This fee is above and in addition to annual membership dues. If you wish beer or wine, BYOB (many people do.)

Nonmembers may attend as many as three meetings before joining. Usually a new member will join at their first meeting, making a total payment of \$30 (\$35 for couples) at their first meeting.

We do not care about the sexual orientation of the members and attendees. We do, however, require that all attendees behave like ladies or gentlemen at all times. Everyone has the right to feel secure, knowing they will not be ridiculed for their dressing or their appearance, and knowing they will not be "hit on" by anyone present.

We require that all attendees come completely dressed as the gender they are presenting, i.e. entirely as a woman or

entirely as a man. Members will usually dress, but this is not required. Persons are not permitted to arrive partially dressed, for example, a dress and male hair, or a dress and an unshaven face, as this may draw unwanted attention to the rest of the group. Ladies' pants and casual wear are fine. An adjacent changing room is available if you prefer to come in male clothing and dress at the meeting site.

Membership is \$15 per year in advance. After the first complimentary copy of the newsletter, additional newsletters are sent only to members who have paid their dues. First year membership will run for 12 months from the date of payment. Second year membership will be pro-rated to run out at the end of the Crystal Club fiscal year, June 30, rounded to the nearest \$5 (4 months.) Additional years will be from July 1 to June 30.

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Meeting Reservations

For September 22 meeting, reservations must be received by telephone at 777-0648, by September 20, to qualify for the \$3 "early bird" discount. You can also pay at the previous meeting if you wish. Include your femme name, mailing name and address.

EVEN IF YOU DON'T MAKE A RESERVATION BY THURSDAY, PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AT THE CLUB PHONE NUMBER, 777-0648, TO LET US KNOW IF YOU'RE COMING TO THE MEETING. A message as late as noon Saturday can still help us make sure we have enough food.



A. Newmar

"I really have to go now — my boys are getting into everything again."



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For consultation/appointments
(614) 771-7060