



The Periodical News Letter of the New England Tiffany Club



Self Esteem By Sarah Ann Thompson

“Find your self esteem and be forever free to dream”
- - Shania Twain

The phrase “find your self esteem and be forever free to dream” comes from Shania Twain’s song Black Eyes, Blue Tears. This phrase is to me at least very poignant and full of meaning. The further I traveled the rocky road (no, not ice cream) of transition the more important this phrase became to me. Six months into my RLT (real life test) I realized that life as a TS woman was filled with the same challenges and frustrations, joys and happiness as any other woman that I met. I soon came to fully understand what this country singer, another woman was saying to all of her sisters that self esteem, finding your own inner sense of worth is a large part of what life as a woman is about.

Without an appropriate at least minimum level of self esteem you will never be free to dreams. If you can not dream for something better, or a more fulfilling life experience then you will never get what you really deserve. Life won’t change for you. We, especially t-people suffer from a serious lack of self esteem and this holds us back not only as individuals but as a group as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen I am here to tell you that the time has come for all of the Transgendered people to find their self esteem and to begin to dream of a better life for all of us. A life in which we can walk down

busy city streets and not get snide remarks, or strange looks. A world that does not discriminate based on gender or gender expression. Once we become proud of our trans heritage then we as a group can begin to dream, once we begin to dream of what can be, we can begin to make our dreams come true. So I ask each and every one of you to help every Trans person you meet to “find their self esteem so that they can be free to dream”.

GENDER JOURNEY By Frances Cardullo Part 3

My bio leading up to GRS continued...

It’s been a while since I penned part two of this series so I’ll take a moment to refresh your memory. I left off by referring to my four-month motorcycle trip. Here are the last couple of sentences from part two.



“It was on this trip that I overcame a lot (but not all) of my fears. It was also on this trip that the gender issues that I had been trying to run away from resurfaced. Let’s just say that one has a lot of time to think about a lot of things riding solo on a motorcycle for eight to ten hours a day.”

In August of 1978, I moved to Ohio to fly a corporate Convair 580 turbo propjet. This is where I met my second wife Karyl. In June of 1984 we had our first and only child, a son,

Francis Paul. His birth was a home birth in a small farmhouse in rural Ohio, that is sure to become a national monument when he becomes president of the United States. Of course, after a home birth why should I be surprised when Karyl announced that we would be home schooling this child prodigy. (Don’t all parents think of their children as geniuses?)

In 1986, I changed flying jobs and went to work for an international company based in a small town in Ohio that owned a fleet of four jets, one of which was a Gulfstream II that they flew internationally. This was my dream-flying job. In 1990 I flew around the world with the plane and wrote a very long chronicle about the trip that someday I’ll get around to publishing.

Change and more change. It is often said, “Death and taxes are inevitable.” I’ve always added a third element – change! Shortly after my round-the-world odyssey, I realized that the family businesses were in trouble because of the economy and also because of my father’s age. In 1992, I tried to balance flying with commuting to Cambridge to look the family businesses. Little did I know that 1992 would be my last year of flying (not forever I hope).

By 1993 I had taken over ownership of Cardullo’s Gourmet Shoppe in Harvard Square. Gross sales then were \$710 K a year. In 2002 we did over \$2 million in sales – but that’s another story for the Harvard “B” school crowd.

My dad died in October of 1997,

Frances - Cont. on page 6

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**Letters, comments, articles and
advertising inquiries can be di-
rected to our mail or e-mail ad-
dresses. We do not recommend
contact via the telephone.**

POOL PARTY A BIG HIT

By Cindy D Lifestyle Reporter

TCNE Members and guests from 4 New England states turned out on August 6th at Randolph Country Club for the annual club Pool Party. The weather was perfect. Over a dozen people turned out for the day's fun in the sun. The dish your divine reporter heard after the affair is that one very "well connected" TCNE Member forgot it was on the 6th and showed up at Randolph on the 7th only to find out she was 24 hours late!! And our Editor, what's her name, hired a new staff photographer named Sirap Hotlih to shoot photos of the pool party for ROSEBUDS. Well, just between us girls, she forgot to bring her CAMERA! This girl will make a great addition to the paparazzi for sure.

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

The annual election for positions on the Board of Directors will be held in December. Positions open are: President & 4 seats on the Board of Directors

Now is the time to step forward and contribute to your club by running for office. Members can nominate themselves, or another member. To enter the election please send us a short note about yourself. Please give these to Debra Kelly. Nominations close on October 31st. Ballots will be sent to each member or can be picked up in the office on Tuesday evening.

BOSTON PRIDE PARADE DRAWS 35 TO MARCH

On a warm June day, 35 Tiffany Members, Members of Yahoo on-line Groups and friends marched through the streets of downtown Boston for the annual Boston Pride Parade. Many of the marchers undertook the parade for the first time and were thrilled with the experience. "Other than coming out as a Transgender person, this is the most exciting day of my life", said one girl who marched from Copley Square to the Boston Common. The temperature was in the upper 80's with humidity in the high numbers making it a very difficult day, but the girls were great and the makeup stayed on their faces and not melted on the street. Christine Becker and Dr. Alice Novic were at the tent and greeted many visitors. Dr. Novic sold many copies of her new book "Alice In Genderland". Hundreds of people stopped by the booth to learn more about TCNE. It was a great day as we met with the Yahoo Girls from The Girls Nite Out and Friends of Friends Groups. We thank them for coming and marching with us. We will be planning events and working on projects in the future to help each other.

TCNE ANNOUNCES NEW DUES STRUCTURE

The Tiffany Club Board at its June 2005 meeting voted to make changes to the current dues structure charged to be a Member. The new dues are as follows:

Long Distance Member (75 miles or more away) \$75.00

Senior Member (65 years or older) \$75.00

Supporting Member (No access to TCNE facilities but a discount on TCNE selected events) \$50.00

Regular Member \$150.00

In addition, the Board voted to continue offering discounted Regular Memberships at various times as decided by the BOD. Also to be looked at will be discounts for people willing to volunteer for various jobs needed to be done. Club Vice President Cherl Easton told ROSEBUDS that the Board wants to encourage people to become Members and offer discounts to some of our current and future people interested. A supporting Membership has been set to give people who do not have a need to use the changing room or other in-house offerings to still be a Member and support us. "TCNE is a non-profit organization and this type of Membership has been setup to encourage people to contribute to our work of helping Transgendered people, especially newer people that need support", said Easton

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Cheryl Easton



So here we are as the summer is over and I for one will never say that it was a short summer. We had an event over the summer in our Pool Party at Randolph Country Club. We also have our Halloween Party coming on October 21 at Randolph. First Event is coming in January. Nominations are open for our annual elections where we need 5 people to run for office. We need you to put that high heel forward, extend that long red nail and hit the send button or in your best girl voice tell us that you're running for club President or a seat on the Board. Somebody else has been doing it for a long time and they're tired and need to have you wiggle your ass forward and do something. Maybe you don't need the club to dress anymore, or you don't show up all that often. It does not matter, all you need to do is be there one Tuesday night a month.

Okay, I'm off the soapbox now about the club. I want to talk about my best friend (next to my wife). Her name is Avadora and she's just opened a brand new salon in Pawtucket Rhode Island. When I first met Avadora, she went out of her way to make me feel comfortable in the salon she was working at. This girl has been a professional model on the runways and magazines in New York and worked for Patricia Field. Field was the Diva who did all the clothing, hair and makeup for SEX IN THE CITY. So a lot of hard work has gone into Avadora opening her own salon. You may think that Rhode Island is a long way, but her salon is 1 minute over the Massachusetts line and it's worth the trip.

Avadora Salon
796 Central Avenue
Pawtucket R.I. 02861
401-742-6749

Well, I'm not a fan of having my picture taken and it is rare when I find one that looks OK, but someone did

show me one that's acceptable and here it is.

Hugs,
 Cheryl



GUILTY

By Roxanne M

I feel guilty about being a Transgender Girl. I see friends of mine in the club who go out a lot, maybe 2-3 times a week. They go to places like Jacques, Man-Ray (before it closed), or some other place T-Girls go. I hear stories of fun they have and the sisterhood they feel by going out. I also know that some of these girls used to be married and are now not. Maybe going out 2-3 nights a week was part of the problem, or maybe it was just because someone came out to their spouse as being Transgendered. Then there's me who goes out one night a week on Tuesday for Club night. Tuesday night in the nightclub business is the slowest night of the week. Nothing is going on anywhere. But it's the arrangement I have with my Wife about going out. No Friday, Saturday or Sunday nights as that is time for her and me. It's her downtime from work and she expects to have her Husband around. So to me I'm guilty no matter which way I turn. I want to be able go out on the weekend and have fun with other girls. I've never been to Jacques and Man-Ray and long to be part of the experience. But I have guilty feelings even thinking of asking the boss if I could go. I'm afraid that If I got to go once that I would get hooked and start going out weekends all the time. From there, I would have to hire a lawyer and wind up alone. It's hard when you love

your Wife as much as the day you met her. The thought of breaking up because you want to become a "Nightclub Diva" is something the thought of makes me feel guilty. Who ever picked Tuesday night as our night to meet? I'm sure it was not anybody who wanted to go out and have fun. I'm sure Tuesday is a great night to go to the public library or to return something to the mall. Maybe whoever picked Tuesday nights was someone else who like me feels GUILTY. Sometimes I feel like I'm walking on a tightrope at the circus trying to get from one side to the other. To be honest, I feel like a fraud when I'm with other girls around the club as they can go and do what they want. If they're married, they simply tell the wife that they're going out on such and such a night. For me I simply stand there and smile and hope that I'm not asked what I'm doing this Friday night. While I do the husband thing as I must, I know that my life is slipping away without any fun.



You Are Not Alone Group

Is held the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month is NOT a drop in group. You must be interviewed first before being admitted. For more information, please call TCNE Tuesday nights or e-mail us at:
info@tcne.org.

TCNE YAHOO GROUP HITS 45 MEMBERS

In late July, the TCNE Yahoo group, (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tiffanyclub/>) recorded its 45th Member. Thank you and please visit us and join!



TRANS NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

THIS JUST IN...A Hayward California jury has convicted two men of second-degree murder in the killing of transgender teenager Gwen Araujo. The jury deadlocked on convicting a third defendant. Araujo was beaten and strangled to death in October 2002 after a party in the Bay Area suburb of Newark. The 17-year-old's body was then buried in a shallow grave east of Placerville. Michael Magidson, 25, and Jose Merel, 25, were convicted of second degree murder. Jurors deadlocked on charges against Jason Cazares, also 25 years old.

Houston female impersonator Jill Jordan says she's tired of lamenting the demise of drag in the city where she has resided for 32 years. She's going where the art of drag is alive, appreciated and where donning women's clothes and singing your heart out pays. "I'm moving to Vegas," says Jordan, 56.

Not only that, she's taking her hairdresser and make-up artist, Leon Schwartz, with her.

"Leon's got a Chevy Trailblazer with a tow package," Jordan says. "We're renting a trailer. Honey, it's gonna to be just like "To Wong Fu," only we're not going in drag." In the movie, "To Wong Fu, Thanks for everything, Julie Newmar," three drag queens head out from New York to Hollywood in a convertible to participate in a female impersonator contest overseen by Julie Newmar.

Jordan credits Vegas drag diva Roxie Starr, the former Jimmy Emerson of Beaumont, with casting out the lure.

"Roxie and I have been good friends for probably 25 years," Jordan says.

Starr tells Jordan that jobs abound in Las Vegas, from the casinos to the drag stage.

"Roxie said if I was there for two days without a job that she'd be stunned," says Jordan. "She's already got six heads of hair lined up for Leon to do."

Jordan said she already has two job possibilities, one performing in an established drag show, the other in a new club that is opening about the time she and Schwartz arrive.

(The Houston Voice) 

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese made the following statement regarding a U.S. District Court ruling saying federal law allows transgender Americans to be discriminated against in the workplace.

"The American people believe that employees should be judged on performance and nothing else. Corporate America is leading the way in ensuring that transgender employees are able to do their job free of harassment and discrimination. It's time for Congress to follow." The majority of Americans already think that there is federal law that makes sure nobody can be fired merely for being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. And when they're told that such a clear law doesn't exist, they support its enactment.

"We are committed to working for the day that Krystal Etsitty, who brought her case before this District Court, and other GLBT Americans are free to do their job without worrying about being fired for who they are."

Etsitty, who is transitioning from male to female, was fired by the Utah Transit Authority where she worked briefly as a bus driver. Upon the June 24 dismissal of her

lawsuit against the Utah Transit Authority, U.S. District Judge David Sam reasoned laws that prohibit sex discrimination only apply to a person's biological sex. From 2003 to 2004, the number of Fortune 500 companies with non-discrimination policies covering gender identity and expression rose by 89 percent. Major companies with these policies include: Ernst and Young, Merrill Lynch, Microsoft, Viacom and Chevron. *(Out In America)* 

A dangerous underground of "pump parties" has sprung up around the country catering to transgender individuals seeking more feminine features through cheap -- sometimes deadly -- black-market silicone injections, experts say.

Two San Diego transgender women were near death on Friday after unlicensed practitioners injected them with liquid silicone at a "pump party" five days earlier, officials said. Police are searching for a Los Angeles-area woman suspected of injecting as many as a dozen people at two parties that day. None of those at the second party has contacted police.

The two injured women, aged 30 and 45, are among hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people who have sought the illegal treatments to save money and to avoid dealing with the medical establishment, experts say. Their goal is to make their hips, lips, cheeks and buttocks appear more feminine. "I've been hearing about pump parties for many years but more in the past few," said Dr. Walter Bockting, the coordinator of transgender health services at the University of Minnesota's Center

for Human Sexuality. "Being beautiful and shapely is very important to certain segments of the transgender community -- it's a self-esteem builder for people who are feeling rejected by their families and communities." At pump parties, groups of patients typically receive silicone injections from an unlicensed, untrained person who is often using non-medical silicone. Costs tend to run between \$200 and \$1,000 per treatment, police said.

Industrial-grade silicone, floor products and sealers, and a host of contaminants including motor oil and paraffin have all turned up in post-party patients. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has prohibited direct injection of silicone since 1992. Medical-grade silicone now can be inserted into bodies legally only if it is encapsulated in a sac -- as in a breast implant -- and does not come into contact with tissue.

The black market silicone and contaminants can trigger an immune system reaction that results in respiratory arrest --- as happened to the two San Diego women, police said.

There also have been cases of blood poisoning, including a death in Georgia in 2003, and other complications that led to the deaths of three women in Houston and a Florida woman, also in 2003. Still, some in the transgender community see silicone injection as a reasonable choice and many Web sites offer advice on how to get injections more safely.

"Are you going to trust your best girlfriend or a doctor who may be rude to you and refuse to treat you or disrespect your reasons?" said Mara Keistling, of the National Center for Transgender

Equality, in Washington, D.C. "We provide people with advice because we hope to have people do this as safely as possible." Doctors warn that there is no safe way to inject silicone.

"We know silicone isn't safe when it's not encapsulated," said Janie Cordray of the Medical Board of California. "We know it migrates, that it often becomes part of the tissue and can't be removed, that it causes chronic, serious health problems. "It's really sad that people can't wait and have appropriate, safer surgery." (*Reuters*)

National Report

Here it is September - the summer just raced by. Since I last checked in I had to go to the dentist for a bad tooth. It hurt in more ways than you can imagine but I haven't stopped having fun. Early this year John W who owns Glamour Boutique bought Jim Bridges store here in Los Angeles. Darya, who manages the L.A. store, asked me to be stage manager for her fashion show. Can you imagine me working with hair, touching up make-up, and assisting with costume changes? TOTAL FUN!! Over the weekend I had lunch with Masen Davis who is the Co-Founder of F to M Alliance. I ran into Masen a few years ago at meetings held by Transsexual Menace and then lost track of him. Masen, now married, has blossomed into a wonderful leader and spokesman. I talked to him about coming to **First Event** and doing a program. I believe Masen will be a wonderful and valuable addition to the circuit. Speaking of First Event - I've already sent the Crown Plaza my deposit for 2006. Have you?

I recently got more news on the brand new IFGE event "Fiesta in the Sun". The event is scheduled

for January 31st through February 5th in Tempe Arizona. The national contact is S. Kristine St James. She can be reached by e-mail at skristineJ@aol.com or by phone at 1-610-759-1761. The Fiesta Inn will be more than happy to take your reservation. Call 1-800-528-6481. 

Last but not least I got a chance to plan a Girls Night Out with some of the staff at my favorite Avenue's shop. For the last few years I have been a regular customer at Avenue's. They specialize in fashions for us girls over size 12 and have a wonderful selection of styles, colors and fabrics. The management and staff at Avenue Shops are very supportive and I would highly recommend them.

The girls and I dined at the Soup Plantation and then danced off the meal until 4 am with all the sultry Latin T-Girls at the Plaza. The Southern Comfort Conference is coming up very soon. I've got to get ready for my 14th trip in 15 years. I'll be helping out with registration, door keeping, and being a Big Sister again this year.

I JUST LOVE IT!!!

Until next month!!

Love,

Michael/Christine Hochberg



Mark Your Calendar

MAKE YOUR PLANS FOR FIRST EVENT 2006

The First Event Committee has set the dates for the 26th edition of FIRST EVENT. The 2006 program will run from Thursday January 19 through Sunday January 22, 2006.

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

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Laser Centers of New England

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Frances - Cont. from page 1

and just about two years later, in 1999, my mother passed on.

This brief biography has been about "Frank" as a lead in to my gender transition. This is not something that a person decides to do upon a whim. I had been living with this desire all my life. I hid it by marrying, fathering children, riding a motorcycle and doing other "guy" things. The truth is that I thought I was some sort of freak – a weirdo – so I was afraid to say anything to anyone about it. I also knew for sure that I couldn't do anything about it while my parents were alive and my children were young.

In 2001, I took the initial steps of cross-dressing in public, thanks to the wonderful family at the Tiffany Club. (I had done this privately all my life.) I was nervous at first but quickly gained confidence and realized that for the first time things were beginning to feel right. Please bear in mind that this was not a fetish or fleeting sexual thing – it just felt natural. I began to see Christine Becker, a gender therapist, in 2001 and by the end of the year; she gave my doctor permission to prescribe estrogen to me. My reaction to estrogen over time was nothing short of spectacular. I now have a more feminine figure, soft skin and almost no body hair. Forget all the jokes about testicles and voice. There are only two ways to obtain a feminine voice: Voice training and/or surgery on the vocal cords. I have chosen voice training with Rebecca Sharfire. You can do a lot of voice training for what vocal cord surgery costs.

Although becoming who I am has been a very satisfying experience, some aspects of it have been difficult. There have, of course, been some negative reactions, but I have been lucky in that most of my friends and business associates have

**Tiffany Club Thanks our
sponsors for their
continued support.
Please patronize them.**

**GLAD NAMES A TRANSPER-
SON TO ITS BOARD**

Joanne Herman has been named a member of the Board for GLAD, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders. Ms. **Herman** is the Controller for New England Foundation for the Arts. She has a broad range of financial accounting and information technology experience from positions in both for-profit corporations and not-for-profit organizations. Joanne holds a BA in Government and Economics from Dartmouth College and an MS Accounting/MBA from Northeastern University, and is a supporting member of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. She resides in Boston with her wife of 30 years. Since 1978, GLAD has been pursuing equal justice under law throughout New England, with enormous success. Our legal victories have

changed the landscape of the law regarding sexual orientation, HIV status, and gender identity and expression. But more importantly, they have made a difference in the day-to-day lives of countless individuals.

New England has been fertile territory for the recognition of TBLG equality, yielding successes in every area of importance to our communities. To name just a few, we now have marriage in Massachusetts and civil unions in Vermont; second-parent adoptions in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont; and recognition of non-biological parents as de facto parents in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Out of Maine came a decision that every person with HIV is protected from discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the decision was affirmed by the U.S.

Supreme Court. Sodomy laws have been abolished or de-clawed in every state in New England. TBLG students have had their rights to be safe and to meet together affirmed in Maine, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Non-discrimination laws cover sexual orientation in 5 of the 6 New England states, and in Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts protect transgender individuals.



TIFFANY CLUB
Would like to say THANK YOU
to **Cheryl Gustavson** for her
recent donation to the Club.

EVENTS FALL 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<i>"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."</i> --Eleanor Roosevelt		Sep 20 Open Meeting 7 - 11 PM	Sep 21	Sep 22 You Are Not Alone 7:30	Sep 23	24
25	26	27 Open Meeting 7 - 11 PM BOD Meeting	28	29	30	Oct 1
2 Oktoberfest in Harvard Square	3	4 Open Meeting 7 - 11 PM	5	6 You Are Not Alone 7:30 PM	7 Couples, Friends and Families 7:30 - 9P	8
9	10	11 Open Meeting 7 - 11 PM	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Open Meeting 7 - 11 PM	19	20 You Are Not Alone 7:30 PM	21 Halloween Party Randolph Country Club	22

LETTERS TO ROSEBUDS

(Editor Note: Our Sue Bauer is writing a letter to another Trans group about the lack of participation of its Members as detailed in their newsletter. Sue gave us permission to publish her letter. We thank her. CE)

Dear Ms. Charlotte,

My name is Ms. Susan Pauline Bauer. I'm a member of the Tiffany Club of New England. <http://www.tcne.org>. I also, "clean the club." on a 51 week out of 52 week basis.

I do get a chance, when I do my cleaning (it's after work), to glance over our sister clubs' newsletters. Your, "keynote," article on page one, "Is G.G.A. Passé?," caught my eye.

I've seen a sister club, whose newsletter, "The Transgenderist," no longer exists. It was in the Eastern New York area that served Albany to Cooperstown. Our own club has had a vast number of decreased total members. While our paid up member percentage has grown, the total membership has decreased.

I think that your, "Page one," article sums it up. Cross-Dressers are okay in society, these days. They are *...former club members. They* also bolder in their actions. Many cross-dressers meet in *members. They* public and enjoy the society. They no longer need a club. *were the, "takers;"* They have also forgotten where they came from. They *not the, "givers."* They wouldn't be at their favorite hotel's lounge with their full-confidence of, "passing," without the original help of older club members, when they were new and thought that, "I'm all alone; there's nobody else like me."

I saw it within our former club members. They were the, "takers;" not the, "givers." They were only interested in themselves and have no feelings for the, "girls," who have just come of, "age." Dinner and drinks in a public place is all that matters now. The years of their experiences have no new, "ears," to hear. "I know where I am; let all of the new, "girls," re-invent the wheel. I can't be bothered. I'm here to have fun and have no interest in sharing my knowledge."

It's the sign of the times. I'm also, perhaps, the only cross-dresser in our club's "You're Not Alone," support group. These meeting nights are not a social hour. It's a meeting to find out how you are progressing. I know of three suicides that have been prevented by this group. There are, indeed, post-op transsexuals who come to the meetings so the pre-ops don't have to, "re-invent," the wheel. Our Tuesday night weekly meetings are the social meetings; the Thursday night meetings are the, "business," side. for lack of a better word.

Our club has gone two years without anyone to take over the, "Events," chair. My friend, Brenda R., at Investments on Cape Cod got burned out. They only had one meeting a month; not one a week. :Brenda R.," put together the best Christmas Party and St. Valentine's Day Party ever. My wife attended with me. <http://www.investments.org>

I was a Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman, and Webelos Leader. The B.S. of A. as well as all the, "sister," clubs for the transgendered world fall into the same marketing rule: you get 80% of our business with 20% of your items. (Can you tell I used to be a buyer?) John Sexton and Company used to have a branch in New Orleans but you're probably too young to remember it. You get 80% of your needs done by 20% of the members.

I, literally, would not know where I would be or what mental state I would be in without the camaraderie from my sisters at Tiffany. Sue Bauer



Frances - Cont. from page 6

been very understanding and supportive. It has been more difficult with family and friends on the religious right.

In September of 2003 I had facial surgery with Dr. Brassard in Montreal. (A little disclaimer here. I am the unofficial president of his fan club. As far as I'm concerned he "hung the moon".) I did the facial surgery for two reasons. First, I had never had any form of surgery in my 63 years and wanted to see what it was like before the "biggie". Second, I needed to have my nose and eyes worked on. So, while that was being done it was not a big deal to have my eye brow area shaved and a full face lift. I have a diary of that surgery and it might be the subject of a future article.

Looking forward to my Gender Re-assignment Surgery I was more at peace with the world and myself than I had ever been. I did have some regrets about not being true to myself sooner but the timing would have been wrong under the circumstances.

I would like to take this opportunity of invite my readers to become part of a Q & A session. If you email me questions I will answer them in the next column. No question is off limits. Send your emails to; frances@cardullos.com.

I am also available to discuss my transition with anyone at anytime. Please feel free to talk to me about it or email me.

(The volume of information available on the Internet was very liberating for me. I would recommend a Google search on *gender dysphoria* and also a visit to the following two sites for starters:

www.annelawrence.com and www.grsmontreal.com.)

Next issue: In Part 4, Frances answers your questions and begins writing about the three years before her GRS.