



August 2003

## *From the President*

**“Act as a non-sexual support group for heterosexual cross-dressers, spouses and significant others of cross-dressers and their families and to assist its members in developing understanding and acceptance of the qualities essential to their personalities”.**

**The above sentence is the first statement that describes the purpose of our chapter. I just wanted to touch on that statement for this month.**

**We have been having some discussions over the last month or so about going out to clubs and bars as our femme selves. I think that this is a fine idea but I think that we have to be careful about where we go and whom we go there with. We also have to be very considerate about the feelings of our spouses and significant others.**

**Right now we are planning a trip to Godfreys in Richmond, VA, which caters to many types of lifestyles. As straight cross-dressers, we must be careful that we are not associated with other groups that have different ideas of what we do. We must also make sure that we go together but as individuals and not a group where someone may want to join that doesn't meet the criteria of our group. This can cause problems if they want to join and we say no.**

**Another discussion has been to go to a local bar here in Norfolk after a meeting. I don't feel that this should be a group-sponsored outing where it might become a controlling part of our meetings. The location of this place can put our members in some jeopardy due to the large number of people there that might not appreciate what we do and cause us some problems.**

**I have written about this because it is something that we need to discuss prior to making any plans for such outings as I have mentioned. We will**

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talk about this in the coming months and make some decisions.

Sometime in November we will be having a dress optional, after hours shopping trip to a local CD friendly women's clothing store. We will be

letting you know when and where as soon as the details are worked out.

If you have any comments that you would like to make, please e-mail me and let's talk.

ANNA

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## Executive Committee 2003 - 2004

President: Anna

Vice President: Angela

Treasurer : Robyn

Secretary: Catherine

Program Co chairpersons: Carol & Shirley

Web mistress: Tiffany Michelle (non-voting member)

Editor: Rita (non-voting member)

## Rho Tau Meeting Schedule

Most regular chapter meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month. Sometimes adjustments are made for holidays, so always consult *The Rho Tau Newsletter* for the latest updates. The schedule for 2003 is:

August 16 Hampton Inn      October 18 Halloween Party      December 6 Holiday Party  
September 20 Hampton Inn      November 15 TBA

**\*\* August's meeting will feature Maggie Chubb heading a discussion on "Children – when and if to tell".**

**\*\* September's meeting will be a White Elephant Sale – Fall is to fashion like Spring is to flowers, so it's time to clean out those closets and make room for new clothing**

**For more detailed directions to the Hampton Inn, please contact Anna or Robyn.**

## Special Events in the Transgender Community

**Dignity Cruises** - Cross-dressing events (For more information write [melp@mindspring.com](mailto:melp@mindspring.com))

November 16, 2003 - 7 Days - Galveston to Belize, Carnival *Elation*. From \$260

January 24, 2004 - 7 Days - New Orleans to Grand Cayman, Royal Caribbean *Grandeur of The Seas*. From \$410

September 18, 2004 - 7 Days - Barcelona Spain to Nice/Monte Carlo, Florence/Pisa. Rome, Naples and Malta aboard Royal Caribbean *Splendor of the Seas*. From \$644

September 24, 2004 - 12 Days - Vancouver to Hawaii, Carnival *Spirit*. From \$910

## Tri-Ess and its Chapters

**Holiday En Femme** - November 5-9, 2003 in Denver, Colorado – Sponsored by Tau Sigma Kappa - for more information: [rmtsk.org/holiday](http://rmtsk.org/holiday)

*Please help us by contributing information about additional events.*

## **Winning The Head Game on Passing**

*By  
Lucy Stone*

How long does it take for a CD to get to the place where she can go forth with confidence and consistently pass? Until she is comfortable with herself, and she has developed confidence in her ability to make an effective presentation through research and putting into practice what she has learned. Only then will she lose the fear of being discovered because she will come to realize that she blends in and is not the center of everyone's attention merely because she is cross dressed.

The essential quality without which all other effort is futile is the ability to overcome her fears and project an image of confidence and well being. If she can project an image of being at ease with herself, everyone is more likely to be at ease with her. But if she appears ill at ease, everyone around her will be ill at ease, and they are going to be looking more closely at her as they try to determine the nature of her problem. As a result of this heightened curiosity, they are more likely to pick up any flaws in her presentation.

When I first started going out dressed, I was certain that everyone knew that I was a male in women's clothing. However, I soon became aware that most people on the street had more important things to do than to pay much attention to me. I also learned that

when I acted insecure I invited closer scrutiny. On the other hand, even when I got questioning glances it really didn't make much difference because no one ever knew for certain. And it would not have made much difference anyway because I always went out in areas where no one knew me.

As my presentation got better, my confidence increased, and as my confidence increased my presentation got better. My approach has always been to research any problem that I was trying to solve. I continue to read articles about fashions, makeup, voice, gestures, walking, etc., to observe genetic females and to put what I learn into practice.

Whenever a CD tells you that she can't pass, you can be certain that she can't. As long as she holds to that belief there is no way that she is ever going to pass, and there is not much anyone can do to help her. On the other hand, even if she doesn't pass very well but believes that she can pass, and then goes about the process of developing her presentation, she should soon at least get to the place where she blends in.

*Courage is the art of being the only one who knows  
you're scared to death.*

**Harold Wilson**



## *The Eyes Have It*

*By Rita*

With his usual aplomb, Michael's instructions on get-ting just the right eyebrow shaping to create the feminine mystic as well as keeping the look natural so as not to draw attention was right on target. With deftness borne of long familiarity and expertise, he used a pencil to show the correct manner to line up the inner corner of the eye and the outer edge of the nose to create the perfect spot for the inside edge of the eyebrow. He then used the same principle for the outer edge of the eyebrow by lining up the outer corner of the eye and, again, the outside edge of the nose.

All the while instructing as he applied the wax to remove those wild hairs, he showed the correct point for the arch of the eyebrow, just above the iris of the eye, for the most eye opening and brightening effect. With a quick flick of his wrist to pull off the wax and strips, the process was so fast it was near painless (well... *almost*).

We were all impressed at the difference that just an eyebrow waxing could make, and many of our ladies went home with very

well groomed and shapely new eyebrows thanks to Michael.

Michael, thank you for coming out to help make us even lovelier.

## ***SORTING HE FROM SHE***

*By  
Shirley Dickson*

*If you're not sure just who you are,  
You've searched your soul both near and  
far,  
And even wished upon a star,  
But can't sort he from she.*

*No need to venture near the brink,  
Nor pay the high cost of a shrink,  
Nor stoop to use of drugs or drink,  
Just take this word from me.*

*I'm not an expert but I know,  
A few things 'bout this urge and so,  
We'll help you out but there is no  
Known cure for a CD.*

*But put an end to all the guilt,  
And grow the bud that will not wilt,  
Get help from what Rho Tau has built,  
With us you'll be happy.*

*Sister, this is all you do,  
Come join our club, we want you too,  
Just write to rhotau@yahoo,  
Add dot com, it is free.*

*There's not much you need to write,  
We already know some of your plight,  
Responding will be our delight,  
Of help we have plenty.*

*So write us now, don't hesitate,  
We'll talk and then we'll make a date,  
To meet our group and participate,  
We'll help sort she from he.*

## Tea for One

*By  
Jamie Roberts*



One weekday back in April I had one of those all too rare opportunities to spend an entire day en femme. So I did! Of course I did!

It was a very pleasant bright spring day. I dressed in appropriate day wear--a long wheat colored wrap skirt; a stretchy top with blue (some almost iridescent!), brown, and tan horizontal stripes of varied widths, a

long-sleeved linen jacket matching the skirt and worn loosely unbuttoned; hose; and a pair of bone flats. So, I was all dressed up and I had places to go, girl!

My first stop was an outlet lingerie shop to look for a foundation garment to help display my girlish figure to best advantage. Even though I arrived just after opening time, there was already a family in the small shop. Mom was shopping and taking bras to one of the fitting rooms while dad and son sat bored in chairs at the front of the shop. Their adolescent daughter was also shopping a bit. I tried to stay off to myself and avoid the kids. I was very comfortable being near mom since she was, of course, completely absorbed in her shopping! After a short while mom made her selections and paid. As the family was leaving the shop, I heard the boy ask in a clear, loud voice, "Why is that man dressed like a lady? That's weird!" I didn't hear his father's reply, but it didn't really matter; I then had the shop to myself.

I picked several items and asked the young sales clerk to open a fitting room for me. After selecting the item that would give me the look I was looking for, I took it to the counter, presented my frequent buyer's card, and paid. I asked the clerk to remove the tags so I could go back into the fitting room and wear my new foundation garment and immediately enjoy its pleasing slimming effect. That young lady treated this lady like a lady!

I had also decided the time had come for a new wig, something lighter in color and a bit

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more daring than the ones I already had. So I went to the Flair Wig shop in Denbigh. There, as always, I was received graciously by the very TG-friendly lady who owns the shop.

We discussed what I was looking for and I pointed out some potential pieces arrayed on the shelves on wig forms. She seated me and had me try on at least half a dozen wigs, brushing each one after placing it on my head to show it in its full beauty, handing me a mirror to see the back, and turning my chair so I could take it in from every angle. Some she brushed into a more than one style to show their versatility. Decisions, decisions!

I liked a wig straight, medium-length hair, not blonde, but considerably lighter than either of my other wigs. She said she liked a shorter, curly, blonder one better. On and off went each wig several times as she patiently let me make up my mind. After making my decision, my only regret was that I could wear only one of the wigs out of the store. So I wore the straight one and carried the curly one in a bag!

I enjoyed feeling my new hair flutter in the spring breeze as I drove along I-64 while heading to my principal destination for the day--the Painted Lady restaurant and tea room in Norfolk (see <http://www.thepaintedlady.com/index.htm>). I had heard its name months and months before and even without knowing anything about its menu, decided that I simply had to go to the Painted Lady as a painted lady!

About 2:30 in the afternoon I parked right in front of the restaurant and went in. The host greeted me and asked, "One for tea, ma'am?" showed me to a table by the front window in the dining room, and held my chair for me. At a table nearby sat a group of six ladies busily chatting over their tea; and towards the back of the room were several other tables accommodating ladies in pairs and an elderly couple. None of them every paid any attention to me. My young waiter came to my table, served water, and presented the menu to me. He assured himself a very generous tip when he left the table saying, "I'll be back in a minute to take your order, dear." ("Dear!" Oh be still, my fluttering feminine heart!) He was every bit the gentleman to me throughout my tea and never failed to call me "dear" when he spoke to me. Not only was I treated like a lady; I also enjoyed a pot of very good tea along with some buttery scones. Next time I'll try the tea with finger sandwiches. Not even the inevitable back up at the I-64 tunnel on my way home dampened my spirits after this wonderful outing. I very much enjoyed my tea for one, but hope someday to go back and enjoy tea for two--maybe with you!



Falling in love is only the first stage of love. It's impossible to remain in that stage. A mature relationship will shift from dizzying infatuation to a deeper, more secure love.

Don't make the common mistake of thinking that when the initial wild passion fades you aren't in love any more. The answer is not to start a new relationship so you can recapture that emotional high with someone else. *The answer is to learn how to move on to the next stages of love for a different but richer experience.*

*This is the second of the ten Relationship Myths by Dr. Phil, a well-known psychologist who now has his own TV show. One myth will be featured each month, in hopes that it will open a dialogue between you and your partner. Read each myth together and think of all the many positive ways that your partner's differences make life more interesting.*

## Relationship Myths

*Excerpt taken from a listing by Dr. Phil*

### **MYTH #2: A GREAT RELATIONSHIP REQUIRES A GREAT ROMANCE**

Yes, your life with your partner should include plenty of romance. But don't kid yourself and expect an unrealistic Hollywood fairytale. The truth is that in the real world, being in love is not like falling in love.

## Trans Gendered Clan

By  
A.C. Bennette

Memories besieged  
Spirit so sad  
We are the bereaved  
Trans gendered clan

What is our crime  
Our passion is beauty  
The sentence is time

Hatred and fear  
Gifts to us all  
Given in anger  
By the hearts of the small

Desolate silence  
Laughter unheard  
Taught to the world  
Misunderstood word

Left to abyss

Lost and alone  
Cause to resist  
Our true selves shone

Lie to ourselves  
Or lie to the world  
In body enhomme  
In spirit we're girls

As we unite  
We find our lost hope  
Our spirits find peace  
As we learn to cope

## ANGER OR ACCEPTANCE

By  
Rita Marston

In reading the Summer 2003 edition of *The Sweetheart Connection*, a publication of the Society for the Second Self, I had a momentary pause after finishing the article titled, "Anger." The wife's vehemence came through, not only about the injustice she felt of having a husband who found the need to wear women's clothing, but also, more importantly, her fear.

How well I could empathize with that feeling. How well could most of the wives and SO's of cross dressers identify with this emotion in their struggle to sort out all of the many thoughts and onslaughts of feelings that blast us from every side when we first find out. We start to sort through the varied and myriad emotions we face when dealing with "The News", thinking we are getting a handle on it, only to have the sheer

immensity of it knock the breath out of us again.

We run the whole gamut from disbelief, shock at the revelation itself, anger that he is doing this to us, and, probably most profoundly felt, fear - fear of discovery by friends, family or children, forever destroying the life we now know, fear that he is actually gay, fear that he will want to become a woman full time, and, unfortunately in some cases, fear followed by distaste and disgust. This is the man with whom we have fallen in love and thought we knew, only to discover we didn't really know him at all. This can rock our beliefs so much that we start to doubt all of the things we once felt were concrete and secure.

Our mate, seeing how distraught and unhappy we are, is immersed in even more guilt over this stigma that he has carried most, if not all, of his life. He wants to see the pain removed from his love's eyes, sometimes promising things that in his heart he knows he will never be able to keep - namely denying that part of his makeup that defines who he truly is. And, when he cannot keep his promises, the wife's anger is doubled for the even further betrayal - unless the two can sit and openly and rationally discuss a compromise of sorts.

Sometimes the only thing that is the deciding factor between the feelings of anger or acceptance is the compromise between these two partners to maintain the wife's/SO's comfort level, the pact or agreement she feels absolutely necessary to

assuage her fear. This is on an individual basis and, as such, should not be gainsaid by anyone beyond this couple.

I applaud those CD'ers who take the feelings of their partners into consideration by asking first when, where and how often she is comfortable with the dressing. It is through this cooperation and consideration that the wives/SO's gain a level of trust and begin to take the steps beyond mere tolerance to acceptance, and maybe even one day, celebration.

## Twins?

By  
Kerry Scattergood

A couple of years ago while visiting my sister, she commented on the length of my nails. I told her there was a reason and related that I was the "hostess" at Godfrey's "Drag Brunch" in Richmond.

"You mean the host," she said.

"No, I'm the hostess," I said. "I wear women's clothes. All the performers are men in drag. I greet and seat all the customers."

Well, you can imagine that I had a little explaining to do. First, there was the confession of being a life long transvestite. She claimed to never have had a clue in all our childhood together. I admitted that I had only been dressing fully since my youngest child went off to college.

Then, out came the pictures, and she was introduced to her older sister. I admitted, that I felt as if the first fifty years of my life, I tried to be what everyone expected me to be, now I was doing things I wanted to do. Including crossdressing.

After more than two years, Sharon was coming to Richmond and going to attend the brunch. I was really impressed that she had kept the secret so long. She had told her husband, but he was cool with it. He told her that "... she would probably have a lot of fun, too bad she couldn't tell anybody about

it." And there lies the rub about our secret life, you can't tell anyone about the fun and adventures. I had long suffered from the isolation, now; for once I could see it affecting another. My poor sister would be put in the unenviable position of protecting her big brother from supposed embarrassment.

In truth, after being introduced as Richmond's most recognized crossdresser for two years, I am pretty "out" there! I run into all sorts of people in stores, on the street, at the theatre, who know me from the brunch. I have chosen to tell many of my co-workers and friends who might otherwise stumble onto my secret life. For the most part, I have had no negative reaction.

Sunday dawned a beautiful sunny day. I arose early to begin my transformation, a close shave *all* over being the first step. I then put on my undergarments. Hearing a stirring in the kitchen, I discovered my sister

getting a bite to eat. She is an insulin dependent diabetic and has to watch her sugar levels. I gave her a look at my curvaceous body, thanks to some strategic padding and pinching, and she joined me in my room while put on my face.

She looked at some *LadyLike* magazines and tried some different colored wigs while I finished up. We decided to remove the shoulder pads from the new pants suit I would be wearing. And finally, on with my trademark blond wig and a little lipstick and I was ready.

This was Sharon's first meeting of her big sister in person.



**Kerrv (on right) and her sister Sharon**

I suggested she drive down to the brunch later, as I go in two hours early. So I was busy working the crowd when she walked up around ten til eleven. The bar doesn't open until eleven and we don't take reservations, so the public has begun to send

an earlybird to get a table then the rest of the party doesn't have to get up so early. All of the customers are told be there around a quarter til eleven, and quite a crowd gathers before the doors open. I introduced my sister to the staff and a few customers and related to them, that when we were growing up, for one month we would be the same age. To my dismay, Sharon delighted in telling our friends we were twins . . . well, now I think she has finally got a little bit more twin than she counted on. You think?

## *In Sisterhood and Love*

By  
*Audrey Carol Bennette*

As leaves fell slowly to the ground,  
So my guard did I let down.  
Mother earth prepared to rest  
Replenishing to bring her best.  
On her mark I stood to bear  
the part of me I need to share.  
Deep inside a softer glow,  
a gentle touch I only know  
Born to me a precious side,  
grace and beauty there abides.  
Audrey Carol needs to sing  
to herself let freedom bring  
to the world bring grace and poise  
sounds of laughter, precious noise  
to my friends, I hold above

this I bring  
in sisterhood and love

*We don't receive wisdom; we must  
discover it for ourselves after a  
journey that no one can take us or  
spare us.*  
Marcel Proust

## *From the Editor*

***After this, my second month of putting together the Newsletter, I am once again amazed and delighted at the talent that we have within our Chapter of Rho Tau. The articles that we are receiving are articulate and well written, and the poetry is extraordinarily original. I can hardly wait to read what all you Ladies will send for the September Newsletter. ([equinelover2@hotmail.com](mailto:equinelover2@hotmail.com))***

***Don't forget - the featured speaker for August will be Maggie Chubb, leading a discussion on "Children – when and if to tell". Some of you may know her, but for those of you who don't, let me give you a brief bio as provided by Lucy:***

**Maggie Chubb, LCSW, has been in practice for sixteen years. For the past eleven years she has been counseling transgendered persons. She also counsels gay and lesbian couples, persons seeking gender reassignment therapy and persons with Dissociative Disorders. She has been a member of the Horton & Horton and Gilbert gender reassignment teams until those teams retired from active service to the community. She leads an open MTF/FTM/Transgender support group within her private practice. She also works with military families to help resolve problems unique to military family Life. Maggie Chubb is associated with Affiliated Clinical Therapists, 142 W. York St. Suite 710, Norfolk, VA 23510,**

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Email: [ally4u@pilot.infi.net](mailto:ally4u@pilot.infi.net).



***Rho Tau Chapter  
Richmond - Tidewater  
Area***