

Alpha Chapter of Tri-E ss

Alpha-Bits

January, 2004

Linda's Fem/Mail

We had a nice crowd at our Holiday Party, and the more was merrier. I thought the gift sharing game went quite well. (No shawls though. Just as well. Somebody would have taken it.)

Our January 10th meeting will feature BeBe Tamberg, a certified prosthesis expert for post operative breast cancer patients. She has customized breast forms, spe-

cial bras, etc. She works for St. Josephs Hospital, near the Annabelle.

She gives many, many presentations, and has top of the line audio visual equipment which she will bring. She was also in the fashion business for quite awhile and will also share some of that knowledge with us. BeBe is a



caring person and does a lot for physical and emotional health of women. Our group will be the first of its kind for her, and she is looking forward to it. She really knows her stuff and is really effervescent. I couldn't stop talking to her, she was so interesting. What can I say? Come and see for yourself.

At our February meeting, we will have as our guest presenters The Gender Studies Group from

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About Alpha

Alpha meets on the second Saturday of each month. We offer safe caring support for heterosexual cross-dressers and their wives or partners.

If you have any questions regarding meetings, contact Linda Wade at (310) 798-5637 or E-Mail at president@alphatriess.org

For couples issues, Ginger xxxxx is available at xxxxxxxx or E-Mail at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Visit our web site at <http://www.alphatriess.org>

This newsletter is available on our web site. Ask an officer how to access it.

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Linda's Spy

I have known Linda, Phil, or whatever for almost fourteen years.

I actually met Phil first and for the most part we got along. I did sense some anger and sadness in him now and then. I didn't know what was the matter, but that wasn't my concern. I mean what could I do. I felt safe and secure with him and to me that is what's important.

One day I thought there was a stranger in the house. I at first caught the aroma of a different smell than Phil's. It smelled pretty nice, but just the same it was not Phil. Then I saw the stranger coming down the stairs from the loft, and this was not Phil. I was startled and wanted to hide.

Sensing my anxiety the stranger quickly said, it's Phil. The voice I recognized. What really threw me was the added hair on top of his head.

I got used to this new look the more Phil changed back and forth as Linda and Phil. I noticed the difference between them a lot. As time went on, though, I became more comfortable with these two figures.

Linda was nice and didn't exhibit much anger and seemed quite

happy. Phil in fact has less anger and wasn't hardly sad at all. As time went on it was like they were united as one. I really found Linda (as she was most of the time now) a pleasant person to be around.

It didn't matter to me if the name was Phil, Linda, or Philinda, I just liked being around him/her.

As long as she/he feeds me and pets me, what do I care.

*Meow,
Athena*

I am not going to even try and sell anyone that cats have philosophical views about the Universe.

They do have feelings and have cat smarts.

Here is just a few samples: Cats aren't about to learn to do flips through a fiery hoop. They won't perform for a

snack or a pat on the head. They are really indifferent to the process, and learn tricks only when they are inclined to do so. They don't take bribes. If they sense there is something in it for them, no problem. They are in short very independent.

Basically they learn by association. All I have to do is think about getting the carrier to go to the vet, and

Athena vanishes.

And She Is Trained To Use The LITTER BOX.

So at least in some ways people would be better off by using their own individual gift of reason, and mixing it with some cat smarts.

You probably don't need to feed or pet your boss, but using the same mindset of the cat, he would only care about your work output. The petting thing and food thing with your significant other on the other hand is super, if shared.

There is too much meaningless stuff around. Love, kindness, sharing, etc. is the Good Stuff. Greed, envy, jealousy, hate, etc. is the bad stuff. The latter gets in our way; why is it there complicating our lives? Humans!

To be fair, animals can be aggressive and want their territory in the worst way. Where humans... whoops.

One could present themselves in whatever form or mode they wanted. They might choose to be the female gender, male gender, or some of both. If people really used the love that's in us, it would rub off in us all. That is learning by association. Cats do it.

*Respectfully,
Athena (purr) and Linda [[[[]]]]*



Linda's Fem/Mail (cont'd)

UCLA. Attending will be the professor and a couple of students in the program. We will talk more about it at the meeting.

For our March meeting, we have Wilshire Wigs coming to show and tell.

I am in contact with, and trying to get Denae Doyle to visit for our April meeting. If not then, in one of the following months.

Dinner selections for January will be Stuffed Pork Chops or Blackened Snapper.

Please contact me by Wednesday night January 7th as to your choices and how many in your party.

damelindatg@hotmail.com or (310) 798-5637

Have a Great and Healthy New Year!!!

Linda [!!!]!!!



Happy New Year!

A Little Webby Space of Our Own

Our website is now:

www.alphatriess.org

Please change your records and visit our new, improved website!

For years—I don't know exactly how many—Alpha has had a free geocities website. Most Tri-Ess chapters (as well as other clubs and groups) use these free sites. Free is obviously a good deal. Why change?

One reason is how the free sites stay free—those darned pop-up ads you're blasted with every time you change a page. Very irritating! Now, **No More Ads!**

Another good reason to change is space. With the free site, we were running out of disk space. I calculated that it would be no more than six months before we couldn't upload another Alpha-Bits or another photo. Sure, we could start deleting stuff, but that's our history we're talking about! Now, **We Have More Space.**

With the new site, we also get our own name, alphatriess.org. "Why is this important?" you might ask. It's a matter of image. We crossdressers, as with all

transgenders, have an image problem with the general public. Though this is changing, most people still consider us weird or perverted. Having our own web name conveys an image of stability and respectability. **It Improves Our Public Relations.**

Finally, we can add new features. The free site was very restrictive (for good technical reasons) about what we could and could not do.



For example, the complete past issues of Alpha-Bits had to be accessed by a special, hard to remember, case-sensitive address. So, few people bothered. Now, you can find past issues at: <http://alphabits.alphatriess.org>. The new site, then, is **More Flexible.**

All this and it's easier for me, your poor, hardworking web-mistress to edit and expand.

So please visit our new website. View some photos. Page through some old Alpha-Bits. Tell your TG friends about the site (though please keep the past issue site confidential until I can set up a password arrangement). Have fun! It's your space on the web.

Kathi

Transgender & Recovery

I just presented a seminar to counselors and mental health professionals, such as clinical social workers, case managers, and people that work in related fields. In preparing for this workshop, I needed to expand my gender talk and bring in some experiential workshop type material. The seminar was four hours long. The attendees were paying for it so I wanted it to be accurate and professional. I included some case studies and life experiences of others. I had to do considerable research of new material and the rereading of older things. I also took another look at some of the things I had written over the past few years. My own writing included articles I had written for Alpha-Bits, as well as thought papers and written presentations on recovery used in my class work to become a counselor. The workshop went very well. The attendees all said it was good and they would recommend it to others. The facility I presented it at is including it on their continuing education program, so I guess it worked.

My research of my own writing and others caused me to take a new look at some of my old assumptions and conclusions about gender and transgender. For some time, others and I have been defining gender as a continuum of thoughts, expressions, and feelings that classify a person as predominately mas-

culine or predominately feminine. Gender, of course, includes a perception of sexual identity. I have defined this perception as three fold. First is the perception others have of a person based on indicators they give off. These indicators consist of but are not limited to body shape, hair styles, presence of make up, clothing choice, and many others. The second is the perception we have of the gender that we represent. This is based on our own perceptions of how we are supposed to look, act, walk, and dress for the gender we present. The third is the truth of our being. The part of us that tells us who we are or who we should be. I have said in the past that cross-dressers spend way too much time and money trying to get the first two perceptions to match. If they worked on getting the third in sync with the first, the second would happen on it's own. I still stand behind that.

In taking a new look at gender, I found it defined as a clinical term that is used to define the social construct of the experience of being one sex or the other. In other words, what it feels like to be a man or a woman. In pondering this I began to question what is man and what is woman? Men and women can be defined as adult males or females. But this only goes so far because the definition changes due to age, social status, demographics, education, cultural differences and, many other factors. For example,

the definition of a man is different for a twenty-year-old male than a seventy-year-old man. Both males, both adults, but the image, expectations, and experiences are different. A thirty-year-old woman in Iran would have different social experiences and expectations than a thirty-year-old woman in Cleveland.

Sex is much easier to categorize. We can and do say sex is pretty much biological and can be determined scientifically. Man and woman are adult male or female, but it is more difficult to package because of the variables imposed by age; society and ever changing culture.

Relatively new to our culture is the word transgender and whatever meaning it has today in our culture. The root of course is to cross gender and the gender models we all use are men and women. So when we say we are transgendered, even the most understanding people try to relate to us as people with genders of the opposite sex. Men have a pretty good understanding of women, and women have a pretty good understanding of men. There are some social differences, but men and women are really pretty close in relating to the world and the culture they exist in. Most of us can't help but relate to each other from a polarized perception of men and women relative to masculine and feminine.

I got to thinking about the transgen-

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dered as a separate gender and the arguments for that. I really do like the idea of a separate gender but can't get a handle on it because of the variations we present. Then I got to thinking about gender as a preference, at first I didn't like it because preference sounded too much like "lifestyle," and I don't usually like the people that say things like "transgender lifestyle" because they use it to pass judgment. Then I decided I didn't care for preference because it implied I made a choice to be transgendered. I, of course, didn't make that choice. But I did make a choice to act on my feelings of gender. That implies that those of us that are "out" with our gender expression have made a choice to be and accept the consequences of social rebellion.

The psychological & medical model does little to clear up the subject by insisting on the gender disorder reference. Gender Identity Disorder has replaced gender dysphoria as the term used to describe a whole spectrum of behavior. The medical mind set is that there is a disorder. The fact that they can't cure it doesn't change the fact that, to them, it is a disorder. Cross-dressers used to object to the word dysphoria because it is sometimes used to describe confusion. Cross-dressers say they are not confused. They may confuse others but are not confused themselves.

So I went back to the idea of gender being the social construct of the

experience of being one sex or the other, but I still needed a predisposition to transgender or feminine gender to make that happen for me. I just don't know where any predisposition came from in me or in anyone else. What I do know and understand is that people are drawn to certain activities because they bring pleasure. These activities can bring pleasure by just seeing them or thinking about them. Activities such as exercise, gambling, sex and eating trigger the action of neurotransmitters in our brains. Doing these activities or just thinking about them can start this neurotransmitter process. Some people have no interest in these activities and doing them gives them no real pleasure, but other people are drawn to them and seemed destined to do them, much as transgendered people seem to be drawn



to the transgendered experience. So then, to me, this clinical model of gender being a social construct of the experience of being one sex or the other, or if one is transgendered, the

desire to experience being a sex other than the biological one born with. If I could throw out the medical model that likes to believe something caused this to happen, I liked the hypothesis.

I could fit this into my own spiritual and life experience and find a spot for the transgender expression as being a part of our perfection as

spiritual beings. I have a problem accepting the theory that there is a genetic cause. Even the so-called gay gene that may cause homosexuality can only be proven to the point of "maybe finding the genetic string the gay gene might be in." This is a long way from proof, and linking it to a transgender gene is very far fetched.

I am now back to the desire to experience life as a woman as part of the perfection of my being. What I mean by that is that from a spiritual point we all have perfection, we are all perfect at the level of soul. We don't always perform with perfection, and we certainly don't act perfectly all the time or much of the time, but at the core of being there is a truth about us that stands out and can be called our spiritual center. This is the I AM within us all. My definition of gender as sexual identity is three fold:

1. Others perception.
2. Your own perception, and
3. Your truth of being.

I come to a place that says we are just putting a she or he on the I AM.

So with all this complexity, I will now go to an oversimplification. Transgender can be defined as a desire to experience life socially and emotionally as the opposite sex, at least to some degree or to some extent. That desire fits with an inner identity of self and is therefore an expression of truth.

*Janyne Cresap
CDC*

Tri-Ess Membership Fees Increase

We have received the following notice of Tri-Ess membership fee update. Membership applications are on our website, www.alphatriess.org, and from our chapter officers. When you renew, please remit the proper amount. Otherwise, your application will be returned to you.

Dear Tri-Ess Chapter Leader,

Tri-Ess prides itself on frugal management of its meager financial resources. It has been fully 13 years since there has been an increase in membership fees. Can you imagine going that long without a "raise"? For all these years, it has been able to absorb the effects of inflation plus the increased costs of its expanding programs. The ongoing steady uptrend in membership has made this possible. Now rising costs of publication materials and the desire to continue expanding our programs has left us with the necessity for a small increase in membership fees. Appended as an attachment is the new fee schedule.

Please publicize it and implement it, as of January 1, 2004.

Warm regards,
Jane Ellen Fairfax, Chair
Tri-Ess Board of Governance

TRI-ESS MEMBERSHIP FEE INCREASES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2004

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>NEW</u>
Individual Membership 1-yr.	\$ 36.00	\$ 42.00
Individual Membership 2-yrs.	\$ 60.00	\$ 70.00
Individual Sustaining Membership 1-yr.	\$ 96.00	\$ 96.00
Individual Sustaining Membership 2-yrs.	\$160.00	\$160.00
Individual Life Membership	\$500.00	\$550.00
Couple's Membership 1-yr.	\$ 48.00	\$ 57.00
Couple's Membership 2-yrs.	\$ 80.00	\$ 95.00
Couple's Sustaining Membership 1-yr.	\$120.00	\$120.00
Couple's Sustaining Membership 2-yrs.	\$200.00	\$200.00
Couple's Life Membership	\$700.00	\$750.00
Wife/Partner (new, joining separately from Partner)	\$ 12.00	\$ 15.00
Additional Family Member (in home)	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Adult Child of Crossdresser	(None)	\$ 15.00
Friend of Tri-Ess, Individual, 1-yr	\$ 24.00	\$ 28.00
Friend of Tri-Ess, Individual, 2-yrs	(None)	\$ 47.00
Friend of Tri-Ess, Couple, 1-yr	\$ 39.00	\$ 43.00
Friend of Tri-Ess, Couple, 2-yrs	(None)	\$ 72.00
Friend of Tri-Ess (Vendor/Professional), 1-yr	\$ 30.00	\$ 40.00

Next Meeting

Saturday, January 10

7:00 pm Social

7:30 pm Dinner

AT: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Phone: xxxxxxxxxxxx

*Same place, correction of name and address

Menu: Stuffed Pork Chops
OR
Blackened Snapper

Program: **BeBe Tamberg**,
Certified Prosthetics Expert,
speaking on custom breast-
forms and bras.

RSVP: Please RSVP to Linda by
Wednesday, January 7
Contact Linda at
(310) 798-5637 or
damelindatg@hotmail.com

Please tell us the number in
your party and your dinner
selection(s).

Cost: \$21.00 single
\$36.00 couple

It's All About Wives

Next Meeting January 24, 2004

Women's Club of Hollywood
1749 N. La Brea Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90046
Fee:\$40

For more info: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.