

OUR FTM GET-TOGETHERS

Although attendance at Get-Together #6 was down, probably due to its being held on Fathers' Day, those who were there seemed to welcome the smaller, more intimate gathering. Sterling and his bride Gloria made us very comfortable in their beautiful home and everyone had a chance to talk and laugh. We all gathered in the cosy bedroom to watch **Second Serve** on the VCR, starring Vanessa Redgrave as Dr. Richard Raskin, aka Renee Richards, in without a doubt the best female-to-male performance on film. (Someone remarked that, on the contrary, **Second Serve** is the story of a male-to-female; but Redgrave also played the male role of Dr. Raskin in the film, and did so with such artistry that some refused to believe it was really her.)

Later we discussed plans for a future program or panel of wives and girlfriends of FTM's and hope to present this panel at our Get-Together to be held next January. So far, five partners of FTM's have agreed to participate on the panel.

Get-Together #7 will again be held at the Chez Mollet Restaurant in San Francisco. The date is Sunday, October 2, 1988, beginning at 3:30 p.m. At 4 p.m. on the VCR, the August 23rd **Larry King Live** TV talk show will be shown, featuring Steve Roczey, a female-to-male from Washington, D.C., and Dr. David Gilbert, innovative sex reassignment surgeon from the Center for Gender Reassignment in Norfolk, Virginia. Also available at this Get-Together will be free copies of the July 25th **Los Angeles Times** article on female-to-male transsexualism.

For more information on our Get-Togethers, contact Lou at [Identifying Information Redacted] San Francisco CA [Identifying Information Redacted]

DR. FOERSTER'S PHALLOPLASTY

by Nicholas C.

Dr. Foerster's technique is done in three stages. Stages one and three are done under general anesthesia in Dr. Foerster's office. There's no hospitalization involved. Recuperation is done either in a hotel room if you have someone who can come with you and care for you, or at the home of a woman who takes care of Dr. Foerster's out-of-town patients for \$100 a day. I stayed with the woman during the initial critical days of each procedure and then moved to a hotel.

In the first stage he takes skin below the navel and forms a tube with the skin's surface forming the inside of the tube. The skin is still attached at both ends to the body so it looks basically like a suitcase handle. He takes a skin graft from the thigh and wraps it around the tube. Some people experience pain after this procedure, primarily in the area where

the graft was taken, but I didn't. At this time he also converts the labia majora into the scrotum.

I had to stay in Oklahoma City a little longer than most because a sizeable portion of the skin graft failed to take. After about two weeks I went home to continue convalescing. I tried taking 100 mg. of zinc a day and my body suddenly started to heal rapidly. The skin filled in where the graft didn't take but to date (4 months after stage one) it still looks faintly different from the rest of the skin on the shaft.

It's advisable to have a slight potbelly for his surgery as that helps him create a thicker penis. It's also preferable to have this surgery done before having the hysterectomy as the scar can cause complications and it also becomes part of the head of the penis if it extends into the area just below the navel. If you want the hysterectomy done first, then the incision should definitely be made vertically and not come within two or even three inches of the navel.

Stage two is done three months later. This is a minor procedure done in his office under local anesthesia. It's difficult to describe this procedure but basically he does a delay, cutting an outline of the triangle below the navel which will become the head of the penis. It's practically painless and I only had to spend one night in Oklahoma City.

Stage three was done two weeks later and I required less than a week of recuperation before being allowed to go home. In this stage the top part of the suitcase handle, or pedicle, is released and the head of the penis is formed. In stage three he also implants the testicular prostheses. The whole thing is very natural looking but I imagine the scars will always be somewhat visible. The two drawbacks to his procedure are that he doesn't do the urinary hook-up so urination is not through the penis, and he doesn't do the microsurgery, which means there's no sensation in the penis. My pants fit the way they should though and that's a real high. The other procedures can be done by others at a later date.

Contact Dr. David Foerster at 3131 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City OK 73112.

TV/TS CONVENTION IN APRIL

The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE), a predominantly male-to-female group headquartered in Massachusetts, will hold its 1989 convention April 4-9 at the San Franciscan Hotel in San Francisco. Organizers at ETVC, which is hosting the convention, have expressed interest in a female-to-male program segment. If you'd like to contribute or participate, contact Tara at [Identifying Information Redacted] San Francisco CA [Identifying Information Redacted]

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

by Kevin [Information Redacted]

A name is kind of like a comfortable pair of walking shoes. It will be a life-long companion if sturdily constructed and after a while it may become nearly unnoticeable if it's a good fit. Lots of people change their names for reasons having nothing whatever to do with gender. If somebody is Jewish, for instance, they may want a Jewish last name which is different from their given name. Rabbino-vitch sounds easier as Rabin, or Leibowitz has unpleasant connotations 'because I hate my Uncle Harry,' so Leiberman is preferred. Sometimes writers choose names with an interesting set of initials, such as AE, or JD, or AA, or whatever.

When it comes to choosing a new name because you are changing genders, the situation gets even more complicated. For instance, if you have been known as Linda, and you've only been on hormones for a few months, you may have a problem. Even the all-powerful testosterone takes time to work its mighty miracle. Choosing a name like David right away could be confusing to middle America. During a period of transition (if you look inbetween), a neutral name is often the wisest choice. Numerous names fit this description: Alex, Jamie, Courtney, Tony, Kris, Nicky, Morgan, Jude, Jerry, Joey and Jess are examples. Nicknames like Sonny, Nikko or Stringbean can also work out, if the names are gender non-specific.

Another thing to remember is, our male-dominated culture places less stigma upon women who happen to have a guy's name than it does for, say, a 6-foot tall man going by "Beverly" (although that can be the case). In particular, names like Kevin, Sean, Isaac, Michael, Evan and Daryl have been used successfully by women. Whatever works best for you, and feels comfortable, will set others at their ease when they are around you. Sometimes the best way to know that is to experiment. If, after being called Mike all day long, you don't like it, try Steve, or Jared. Spellings can make a real difference, too. Allen converts to Allyn, Sam to Sammi or Sammy, Daniel to Danny or Dannie, and Mike to Mickey.

Choosing a name is a highly individual matter, and can be done with a sense of joy and integrity. Think of the person you are inside, and try giving him a name that would feel good. Maybe it's John Lennon's first name 'cause you looked up to him as an adolescent; or maybe it's your dad's name, or somebody else you always liked a lot. Who knows? A name is a name is a name is a name but it's your name just the same.

* * *

How did you choose your new first name? Tell us in a paragraph and send it to FTM for an upcoming, surprising and often humorous expose!

FTM "MALE" BOX

Dear FTM:

What is FTM? Can I get a subscription?

A friend sent me a copy of Issue #3 and I'd like to start an F-M service out here. Other than being an F-M myself, I just got a great job with unlimited copying availability, so with this in mind and the needs in the Albany area for F-M materials, well, why not ME.

Anyway, let me know how organized you are... what we could do together.

Regards,

[Identifying Information Redacted]

[Identifying Information Redacted]

[Identifying Information Redacted] NY [Information Redacted]

Dear FTM:

I am very interested in any news or developments concerning the design and manufacture of a penile prosthesis. We are contacting American Medical Systems in Minneapolis, the University of Utah's Artificial Heart Research Laboratory in Salt Lake City, and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Perhaps we could interface in this endeavor. Please ask your F-M and professional contacts how to develop strategies to convince one of the above research units to undertake such a project--given that though a minority, on a global level at least, F-M's without a phallus are a viable market.

I am eagerly waiting for April to roll around so I can finally get to visit San Francisco for the IFGE Convention.

Rupert Raj

Gender NetWorker

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Dear FTM:

I just received your Issue #4. I never realized there was/is such a support group. Please send me your back issues and all related information about support groups around the country, as I'm ready to travel to meet with understanding souls.

Thank you,

[Identifying Information Redacted]

[Identifying Information Redacted]

[Identifying Information Redacted]

Dear FTM:

What a wonderful newsletter and so needed! Best regards, and keep up the good work. It's a tremendous asset to the female-to-male community.

Warmly,

[Identifying Information Redacted] M.A./MFCC

FTM NEWSLETTER
The only newsletter exclusively for the female-to-male transvestite and transsexual; published quarterly by FTM, 1827 Haight St. #164, San Francisco, California 94117
Editor: Lou Sullivan

Dear FTM:

You are such a lifeline.

We received the back issues and, of course, read and re-read them. I was surprised at first to see Daniel's letter in print, but then relieved that suddenly we were not so alone... people who've "been there" are out there! How refreshing! I'm a little hesitant writing this, as I didn't see other letters from partners of F-M's, but I'm hoping it's okay to encourage that addition. I'd love to hear from other partners, especially those who've gone through the entire transition period with their mates--are there any out there? I foresee being with my honey long after hormones and surgery and would really enjoy a role model or two! I've felt really isolated in my ups and downs even though Daniel and I are real open between us.

A few comments and questions:

--Whoever does the proofreading for FTM deserves an award! It's rare to see such well-put-together English... thanks.

--Can someone submit a brief summary for the newsletter on what Dr. Brownstein had to say, and perhaps something on the long-term effects of testosterone (for those of us who couldn't attend the Get-Togethers)?

Well, a bit more about myself before closing. I'm 32 and a child abuse therapist by trade. I'm just returning to work after spending our daughter's first year of life with her at home. Daniel will now be "housedaddy" while I be "breadwinner" for at least a year, while he goes through his transformation. We're very excited about the changes but also frustrated by how long it all takes. Our new-found connections with F-M families really helps!

Thanks for being there!

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F-M GROUP IN MARYLAND

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute lists the following support group for "F to M TS only": Andros/DC, Sexology Associates, 4835 Del Ray Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814.

BACK ISSUES OF METAMORPHOSIS

Back issues of **Metamorphosis** newsletter and magazine, published for female-to-males only from February 1982 through February 1988, are available at a total cost of \$86. Write for issue highlights Gender Worker, Box 1224 Station A, Toronto Ontario Canada M5W 1G7.

LOS ANGELES TIMES ARTICLE AVAILABLE

The **Los Angeles Times** published a lengthy article on female-to-male transsexualism on Monday, July 25, 1988, entitled "A Journey Across Lines of Gender." For a free copy of this article, send a self-addressed stamped long envelope to FTM.

CHRISTINE JORGENSEN HOSPITALIZED

Probably the world's best-known transsexual, Christine Jorgensen, 62, is undergoing chemotherapy at Mission Hospital Regional Medical Center in Mission Viejo, Calif., for cancer that has spread from her bladder to her lungs. Doctors are not optimistic.

DO-IT-YOURSELF NAME CHANGE

How to Change Your Name, a book by Attorneys Loeb & Brown (California, 4th edition), explains how to change your name legally in California and provides all the necessary court forms with detailed instructions on how to fill them out. \$14.95 from Nolo Press, 950 Parker St., Berkeley CA 94710. Order by phone (415) 549-1976 or, if outside the 415 area, 1-800-445-6656.

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GENDER NETWORKER

Introducing a new bimonthly newsletter for helping professionals resource workers and others interested in Gender Dysphoria Syndrome Edited by Rupert Raj. \$20 for six issues. Make payable to: "Gender NetWorker PO Box 1224, Station A, Toronto Ontario, Canada M5W 1G7.

