

IV

PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE 1997-2000

Lee Frances Heller

Lee regularly wrote via e-mail to her unofficial “Board of Directors”, as she called those of whom she sought counsel and help. Presented here are many of those usually monthly messages of greeting and of her own state of being. No attempt is made to further identify people named.

In addition, there are presented some personal messages to Julie Johnson and Becky Allison. She certainly corresponded with others, too. We have printed only her messages, and not “the other side”, because, after all, this insight is all about Lee Frances Heller’s life and struggles.

We see her writing not only about her declining health, but about her joy and struggles of her faith in Jesus Christ.

By the Grace of God

Sun, 10 Aug 1997

Dear Sisters,

It has been over a month since I have been able to contact you due to the failure of "ole" Mac here. After 6 hours of phone calls Kori walked me thru many approaches to the problem until we found one that worked. I am on line now. I am writing this off line and hoping I can get back on to send it. There is a new development. I think I have it fixed now. Seems like the phone wires are loose at the modem. Anyhow, if I jiggle them around I can usually get on line. If any of you answer this and get no reply then you'll know why. I have had to do my address book all over again and I have done that this morning.

I am diligently working on *Love Letter* which is not a popular subject with some who think I should keep *G&LLI*. But then, when I started *G&LL* eight years ago I was told I was wasting my time. What my critics don't factor in is the fact of God's calling on me. It was definitely His will for me to transfer *G&LLI* to younger and more resourceful Christian folks as Jane Ellen and Mary are. I no longer had the physical resources to handle the volume of work *G&LLI* generated. I can handle *Love Letter* as it is a far smaller publication and less expensive to provide for. I have completed the first one except for some quotes, etc. that I want to make a part of each issue. The approach is personal and I write it as if I was writing directly to the person reading it. What I write is not an "article" it's just what the name implies; a Love Letter telling of God's great love for us in Jesus Christ. I've said it before and I'll say it again, only death will silence me. God is on my side and "I will not fear what man can do to me." (Holy Bible)

My health is a yo-yo. One day good and another, not so good, but I'm happy to say the good days far outnumber the bad!! Trying to keep house is a tedious task and time consuming. I have about 2 hours on a good day that I can work on publishing.

God bless you all. Thank you for your prayers and I pray almost everyday for you and yours. God will not let us down but will carry us forward as we trust Him and rely and depend upon HIM!!

My Love in Christ to you.

Lee

Tue, 7 Oct 1997

Dear Julie,

I sent this letter to the 5 friends who I called the unofficial Board of Directors of G&LL. We all worked closely over the years. I want you to have this as a point of information.

My thanks to you for making the new LL possible to publish worry free for awhile.

My love and gratitude, Lee

This is a letter I have been trying not to write but it has become apparent I have to.

I am not going to be able to do the Fall Issue 1997 #3.

Without listing my ailments it's sufficient to say my health is such that to try now to get the issue in the mail is an impossibility.

The final blow is my eyes. I have a cataract on my left eye that is due for removal on Tues., Oct. 14. The vision in my right eye is diminishing and my ophthalmologist tells me I have macular deterioration in that eye. After the operation he is sending me to a retina specialist to check out both eyes. There is nothing that can be done for macular deterioration which is the hardening of the blood vessels in the back of the eye but perhaps the retina man can tell me the extent of damage and give a prognosis on the rate of deterioration. I assume I have it in the right eye. There's no way to tell until the cataract is replaced with a new lens. In the meantime I have five pair of drugstore glasses of varying strength plus a lamp on a free arm with a 4 inch lens. I have stopped driving, but Marge is so good to me and takes me where I have to go.

All is not darkness though. While I can't do the paste-up involved with getting *G&LLI* out and other intricacies, I can see well enough to type and that allows me to do *Love Letter*. My magnifying lamp allows me free reign in reading and researching.

I will announce in the next issue of *Love Letter (LL)* that JEF is now the publisher of *G&LLI*. And so it is as I always wanted it to be when I stopped publishing *G&LLI*. It is quiet, no fanfare and emotional eruptions, but with

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Christian dignity. It is with prayerful thanks to God for the missionary ministry of *G&LLI* that God called me to start, and my daily prayers for it and the new publisher go with it.

God has given me a new horizon. He will never allow retirement from His ministry and the Gospel message of love and salvation in Christ. In 1965 I went to the retirement party of a Gospel minister and to them it was a joyous occasion because now the Rev. Jones could sit back and enjoy the rewards of his faithful ministry. To me it was a sad state of affairs when a minister of Christ's tries to reap his reward before the Lord has a chance to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" on judgement day. God retires us in His heaven of which St. Paul said,

EYE HATH NOT SEEN NOR EAR HEARD OF THE GLORIES GOD HAS
PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.

So the next time you hear a preacher telling you exactly what to expect when you die, and they usually interject, "...and when I see Jesus I'm gonna ask Him why this-or-that happened," it's not going to work that way. If, when in heaven, I can recall my past on earth then heaven will be a miserable place. I will continue writing until He calls my number.

JEF & Mary: It's all yours now as of this date, October 7, 1997. I will continue to honor requests for samples but will advise of your address for subscription information. Your first issue will be Issue # 4 1997 in December. When I do my mail list again I will send some new names to you. God bless and guide you in the further ministry of *G&LLI*.

As for our faithful Board, you will remain as always, friends. We had a Board in name only. We have been and remain friends. I thank God for all of you.

I love you all now and always will with a love that is inspired by Christ and fed by being the dear people you are!

Lee Frances

P.S. Home pages, Bob and Roxanne continue on as usual. Don't wait for reappointment from JEF. Her hands are FULL!!!!

The following is a cross correspondence between Mary Fairfax and Lee

Sat, 22 Nov 1997

Dear sisters and friends,

Lee: This breaks a long silence of mine and I do it in defense of JEF and the Fall issue of *G&LLI*.

Mary: The truth is, these articles were in Lee's hands long before she turned over the publication of G&L to Jane. Lee was going to put them in this issue anyway. The fact that Jane kept them all is, to me, an indication that she also sees the leading of the Holy Spirit in our writing.

Lee: I was not going to use all of the articles in The Fall Issue. I was going to use Becky's and Terri's and only one of the others. After all, I have 16 pages to fill and every issue contained one or two off-beat articles. Jane wanted to get the issue out and worked with what she had. She had only 8 pages to do it in and I'm glad she was able to get it in the mail in such a short time. In this case let's forgive and forget.

Mary: This is a very worthy goal. It is the primary goal Lee established when she began the letter. We still espouse this goal. But how many different ways can you say "it's okay to wear a dress, God still loves you"? We have made that point. Shall we now (a) make the same point every issue - sure would be easier; (b) stop publishing now that we've made our point; or (c) challenge our Christian sisters and brothers to keep living and growing in God's grace and love? Challenge them to a strong faith, grounded in love, one which they have not parroted from someone else's teachings but have found by taking every idea they read or hear and examining it for themselves in the light of Jesus's love?

Lee: CHEERS !! Here you have one of many reasons for not being reluctant to let *G&LLI* go. Please keep in mind that health was the prime mover of the transfer.

Herein is the reason for *Love Letter*. Its purpose is to go beyond the, "It's OK to wear dresses". The new ministry is to expound God's love for us in spite of what the church says. To tell our sisters that we are included in

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God's plan for the ages. We are a part of His kingdom. We can be saved as well as anyone else because we also were created by God. To lift up Christ as our only hope in making it through this world and to be received into God's heaven when this troublesome life is over. Only the Holy Spirit can reach hearts and I offer *Love Letter* as a vehicle.

I really don't care what criticism I receive. I am not pleasing critics but writing as I believe God directs me. I am not a holy person. Nor am I perfect. God gave me a message for our T community nine years ago. Only death will silence me or a total lack of finances to continue and, sister, that ain't gonna happen ! God has provided for eight years of publishing and will continue to do so. *Love Letter* lives as long as I do.

As to all of the conflicts. I have nothing to say.

I simply wanted to take the heat off of Jane Ellen and not because we are buddy-buddy. Nothing could be further from the truth. Objectively, she did her best and we should accept that in the spirit of Love. Unless, of course, you happen to be perfect and are a shade above the common drivel.

God bless you all and I don't love you because the Bible tells me to. I love you as dear friends who have made my life worth living. I thank God for each of you.

Lee Frances

Thu, 27 Nov 1997

Dear Friends,

Just a note to say hello and HAPPY THANKSGIVING. I hope you all enjoy the day.

Let's be thankful, first of all, for our salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and secondly, that each of us has been called to minister His Word to a spiritually needy people; to a people that have been largely rejected by our present day holy institutions but never rejected by God.

There is a male spirit and a female spirit and a male mind and a female mind but there is no such division when it comes to souls. A soul is undivided and

genderless. Hyper religion produces souls “polluted by rules and regulations and religious experiences, which they interpret as norms for EVERYONE. They think they know how EVERY Christian ought to live and what every minister should and shouldn’t do. They want to regulate how people think. Tightly packed overreligion is what Jesus fought the Pharisees over. It’s what hung Him on the cross.” Quote by David Hansen, Author of *A Little Handbook on Having A Soul*; Intervarsity Press. Copyright 1977.

What a blessed task we have! God chose us to be instrumental in enlightening those crowded souls so the light of Christ can shine through and subsequently each one will see, not the Christ of the church but the Christ of God who loves them and gave Himself for them. It’s ours to invite them by whatever means He has given us to our table of love; Salvation in Christ.

Thank you, Lord for this blessed privilege. These thoughts are the thoughts running through my mind since 4 AM and I thought I’d share them with you. We don’t thank God enough for the intangible things of the Holy Spirit He gives us.

Enjoy the holiday today, I am and I’d better stop here. This is not a Bible lesson but it’s supposed to be a Thanksgiving greeting. It’s great being 78 and a servant of the Lord ! !

I love each one of you and am thankful and grateful that God put you in my life.

BYE!

Lee

Mon, 1 Dec 1997

Dear Julie,

I really don’t know what I’m doing writing this letter but I have come to the conclusion it must be the Holy Spirit leaning on me to write it. It’s been on my mind for a couple of months and it won’t leave.

I have been a renegade all of my life from kicking my piano teacher out of our house at age six (my mother stood by and let me do it, so that tells much

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about my childhood) to my total rebellion at the “establishment” of religious authority when I learned three months after I was saved that they were trying to run my life for me. Regardless, I stayed in the fundamental church ‘til 1970 because I really didn’t know where to go.

I finally rebelled at the church’s teaching on *Deuteronomy 22:5*. It had bugged me all of my life and after I came out of the closet in 1988, I, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, as I see it now, started a real search to find the truth because I knew God loved me and was blessing my transgendered life. So if the TG life is so sinful how come I was being blessed and had this idea of a Christian paper to tell others? I had to free us all from the 22:5 bogey and in a short time God gave me the answers I needed right from the scripture as I had asked Him to do. The rest is history.

It was a struggle to get *G&LL* out each issue. I did it on my own personal Social Security income and then, for awhile got a little help and that faded. Now prices had gotten so out of my range that I thought maybe I should give it up but the Lord said no by sending along my friend Peter to do all of the copying on his company’s copying machine free. That saved over \$100 each 16 page issue and left me to pay the postage and I received help from time to time but nothing dependable. My health kept worsening and I was asking God to let me turn it over to Jane Ellen and Mary (Fairfax). They had the time and resources for it. Before I ever thought of leaving *G&LL* I posed the question to God about what I should do if I gave it up and *Love Letter* popped into my head. A greatly modified paper of, at the most, 4 pages. In *G&LL* I presented the fact that CD/TG/TS is not a sin. In *LL* I am presenting the fact of God’s love for us. I believe every TG should have a close walk with God as non-TG folks do and not deny themselves that association because they are not sure that God loves them. I have had some tell me, “Yeah, so TG isn’t a sin but it does not glorify God.” “TG may not be a sin but I don’t see how God could be pleased with me.” God isn’t pleased with the human race. That’s why Christ came and died for our sins and gives us first class status with God through His resurrection and ascension. We belong to the human race and I see no reason for our sisters and brothers to stiff-arm God because of our lifestyle!

Why deny ourselves the fellowship of our Saviour because we suffer the same guilt that Paul did. The upcoming *LL* is on *Romans 7:12-26* and will be out this month. The largest part of our readership are born again Christians in various stages of defeat. Some have a glowing victory. All belong to God and need to know He loves them, regardless!

Since I stopped working in '92 my life has been a financial struggle and I never realized what I had neglected until you sent (funds) to me.

Now comes the hard part. Every Christian Organization wants to get as many dollars as they can and I am an exception only in the fact that *LL* is not an organization. I have no accountant, no organized giving and it's hard for me to keep records. Under the present setup my financial needs for *LL* are not big, unless we expand with advertising etc. You said you wanted to relieve the strain on me and how I thank you for that. What I'm trying to say is that when you contribute, please make small contributions on a more frequent basis. Large amounts are too distracting. I am trying to be honest and I thank God for you and if you knew the struggle I have had in writing this letter. Ouch! It's contrary to every word in the fund raisers' manual. I worked for a Radio Evangelist around 1962-3 in New York City and she said that she had to keep \$10,000.00 in the sock and when income approached that level she hollered like a stuck pig for money. You'd think she was being evicted from her penthouse and was going to lose her mountain property. One friend who has a very large ministry came here to visit and rented a car, a Cadillac, and has a high style of living. These are the temptations that present themselves and I've had enough of that in my lifetime. I want to spend my last days serving the Lord as I am.

I hope I haven't offended you in any way, but it's good to know your customers. I have never written a letter like this because I have never had anyone interested in relieving the strain on me. I thank God for our paths crossing, for the Christian fellowship we have and for our mutual concern.

Have you heard from Terri? I wonder if she is out on the road again. Her daily meditation is not coming but very infrequently and I can't raise her up.

I'll not hold you any longer. You have my love and prayers.

Lee

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Christmas Snow in Mississippi Sun, 14 Dec 1997

Dear Friends, Brothers and Sisters,

What a beautiful morning! There is now more snow on the ground than I have seen the other two times it snowed in the 12 years I've been here. I have almost 2 inches on my steps. It looks exactly how it looked up north when I left. And it's still snowing. I'm glad I'm here because it'll be gone, most likely, by mid-afternoon or before. There's no market for snow blowers here, nor snow shovels as such. A nice new broom, yes and you can use it for the kitchen and cat chasing also. No provisions for snow here. Sand trucks will sand overpasses on the Interstates but that's all. I look for a power outage as the tree limbs get heavy and break power lines. We don't need snow for outages. We have them in a mid-summer rainstorm. You hear the wet transformer "pop" followed a split second later by an outage of 10-40 minutes and in the winter – well, in '89 we were without power for 5 days. Depends upon where you live. Our section had an outage of 6 hours last winter while the rest of the city had a day or two.

This snow makes me grateful I no longer live in the North! Thank you, Lord. This selfish peasant is happy here.

Since I can't go anywhere today (snow paralyzes Jackson – Peter just called and said we'd not go to church today) I'm going to try to get my phone system going and activate an answering machine in one of them. I have three and two have answerers in them and neither work. If Santy is good to me, I am going to The Office Depot and buy a simple \$30 machine whose only function is answering and recording messages but does have remote capability, that's all. It won't play Dixie on the rewind, nor will it play Happy Days on hangups, nor will it spit jelly beans when it rings! Just answers, ma'am, just answers.

So that's it for a snowy day. Ain't it great! No theology or meaningless controversy in this letter! Praise the Lord!!

God bless you all.
My love always,

Lee

Thu, 18 Dec 1997

Dear Julie,

The older I get, the slower I get. Time slips by so fast and so I stay a week behind almost all of the time. I made some computer Christmas cards Monday and so priorities today are to write to you and then send the cards.

Is it worth it all?

"I do want to thank you for sending me the Love Letter. It's nice to know there are people out there that can understand and relate to how a sister sometimes feels. Christian support like you have given to me has helped me gain my faith back to believing there is a place for me in Heaven.

Lee, I will never stop wanting to dress and project myself as a woman. There are no support groups for us in Southern CA where a sister can worship and not feel rejected. Most churches condemn the fact that it's not moral for a man to dress and project himself as a woman. Your literature has helped me regain the faith I had lost. Thanks ever so much" From Trisha in CA

Yes, it is worth it all. I have had several thank you notes as well. LL is starting to take hold and I have given up the idea of trying to eliminate those who are not interested. I would do that for the sake of economy, but now, with your help and some encouraging words from some who receive LL, I'm going to continue to mail to the whole list I have. On the distaff side, I had a guy in CA spend \$10.75 to overnight a note asking to be removed from the list. Had two others ask to be removed.

Trisha hit the nail on the head. ". . . there are no support groups for us in Southern CA where a sister can worship and not feel rejected." The plague of our community is a lack of concern about worship. A lack of concern about their soul and it's salvation. It's a minuscule number of sisters we hear from. When a favorable note comes in there are 20-25 more who did not write but feel the same as Trisha.

As I sit here and ponder the situation from time to time I see some solutions but my time is limited on earth. I get so excited at times that I wish the Lord would start a new life for me so I could continue to work here with our sisters.

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We all want the same thing. A church where we can comfortably worship and be accepted into the congregation as an equal, but such a state of being does not exist for us---yet. I can join an evangelical Methodist Church here or I can join the Episcopal Church I attend occasionally, but in neither case would I be accepted as an equal, but would be put in the “odd” class. There would be no distinction if we had Christian worship support groups of our own.

Impossible?

No.

For years I have had in the back of my mind the possibility of having a three day Camp Meeting or Convention of our own with the theme of “Christ for Us.” Simply put, if we are ever going to have any Christian groups we are going to have to lay the groundwork.

At a convention, conference or plain old camp meeting, God could burden certain ones to carry on the ministry within our ranks. There is one *G&LLI* and one *LL* that are bearing the good news right now, but we have to get beyond those restrictive borders with the good news that we are welcome in God’s Kingdom and that Christ died for us as well as the rest of the world. The spiritual well being for us is in the hands of three sisters. Jane Ellen and Mary Frances Fairfax and myself. This coverage has to be expanded and the way to do it is to get the Christian sisters together in one group where the Holy Spirit can deal with them. We need more of us to reach out to others with Christ and His Love.

The cost would be very reasonable. We could have it at the Episcopal Conference grounds here. A few years back Jane Ellen said if this is ever done to put her down for attendance. I have heard no more from Crystal about her idea of a conference. We don’t need a tightly structured camp meeting but one that is free of committee hierarchy. We need to be all rank & file and be loosely structured to allow for input.

Anyhow, Julie, if you’re interested let me know.

On Dec. 9 an unusual luncheon fell into place. Peter had called the day before about having lunch with him on the 9th and I said OK. Later that day Melanie, from Kosciusko, MS called and asked if I wanted company on the 9th. I said, fine. Then on the 9th, Vanessa (TS) called and asked what was doing. I told her it looked like we were going to have an unusual luncheon and to

come along. Finally I asked Marge, my friend – genetic woman – if she’d like to go along and she said, “why not”. So there we were at the Red Lobster, a CD, Melanie; a TG, me; a TS, Vanessa; a gay, Peter; a genetic woman, Marge! I wish you could’ve been here. We had a great time.

Christmastime again and will be glad to see the 26th. Christmas is for kids and families. A Christian celebrates Christ everyday. I will spend Christmas with Vanessa and her husband – straight male – and a friend of Vanessa’s from Louisiana. Marge left yesterday for a ten day trip. Five Days at Disneyland (Orlando), and five days with her son & family in Jacksonville, FL. She’ll be back on the 27th. She lives next door so I watch her trailer and feed her cat and get her mail for her. We are not lovers, but we have a great relationship. I never knew how nice a woman’s company can be without sex motivating everything. I’m glad I’m 78 and the hormones have slowed down.

I guess I’ve written enough for one time.

God bless you, dear Julie, and my love always,

Lee

Rom. 5:10; “. . . saved by His LIFE”

Thu, 19 Mar 1998

Dear Julie,

I have your 25 copies of *LL* ready to be mailed tomorrow.

I never received an answer to my March 4 email to you, so I’ll update you now. I did nothing about a copy machine. It’s not a dire necessity. I can do without it. It came under the category of something “Nice to have.”

I am doing OK healthwise and am able to put up with the bad days and even get something accomplished on those days. When I read of C. H. Spurgeon’s constant ill health and what the Lord enabled him to do in spite of it, I have nothing to complain about. I tried to find someone to type my address label master but nothing turned up so I did it myself. I’ll start tomorrow on getting the envelopes ready for stuffing. I’ll do them 100 at a time and send them out in four waves.

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My TG activities are somewhat curtailed. However, Rev. Kim Lee Brown, a TS, and Marge and I went to lunch yesterday and had a nice visit afterwards. Monday, Vanessa, a TS, and her visitor, Shelby, a TS from New Orleans and I will spend some time together visiting. Of course Peter is always available to take me to church on Sunday. Did I say “curtailed”? Excuse me!!

As I sit here in my old age (approaching 79 in a couple of weeks!) and look at the direction the TG community is taking, it’s not an encouraging picture. Now Dallas Denny has been forced to close down AEGIS. Our community simply is not responsive to “help” organizations and AEGIS was the cream of the crop. I fear IFGE will be the next to go. In my humble opinion, they are asking for it.

The Community is fragmented. CrossTalk is gone, Phyllis Frye has resigned from her TG Law organization. Our CD club, Aurora, had only 3 in attendance on Mar. 7.

As long as I live and have the funds to do it (thank you thousands of times over) I will reach out to our community with a Christian witness. As far as results go, it’s like ministering to Arabs or Muslims. Maybe one comes to Christ in 10 years. My commission is to preach the Gospel. Nothing says I have to present to my fellow man with any results. God handles that. I mark it up as a partial success when they don’t write back, as some have, “Please stop sending me your literature”.

God gives the increase. I will close now and if there is anything I can do for you or anyone you want me to send *LL* to, just let me know. In this issue I’m reaching out for new people.

Before I go. How is your transition coming on? I pray for comfort and progression.

God bless you, Julie and my love to you, always.

Lee

March 26, 1998

Dear Becky,

It is good to hear from you and to receive your article which rings the bell! By all means, send it to JEF for publication in *G&LLI*.

Coincidentally, Kim Lee Brown was here Wednesday for lunch and a visit and we were discussing the same thing. Fear. We were talking about the fear that CD's face if they ever consider Christ in their lives. Will He take away the sweet, sweet lollipop of CDing? We know He will enhance our loves with a freedom we, as gender people, have never known.

I'm going to try to put it in some kind of an article for *Love Letter*.

Ministering to the TG community is like trying to convert Muslims to Christ. We just keep on and let God take the increase. Our commissions are to preach and teach those who will listen and not concern ourselves with the outcome. Let the Holy Spirit handle that!

For a change, I am feeling fine. I feel good physically, but have hardly any strength. I can't complain for my age. I'm 100% better than I was a year ago at this time. I just praise the Lord and thank God for it. There are some new herbs I've been using for 4-5 months now but I'll spare you!

I'm rushing about 3 days behind now in getting LL out in the mail. You and a few others get it hot off the press and then the rest trickle out over about 10 days.

I'm so glad your eyes are OK now. Marge's son, Danny, had the same operation and he was happy to have sight without the glasses. I have macular deterioration in my right eye and I discovered Bilberry, the herb they gave WWII night fighter pilots in England. It makes a great difference. I had the cataract in my left eye operated on a couple of months ago.

So, dear heart, I'll go now. I know you are busy, so I don't write unless I have to, but from now on I'll write (or TRY to) once a month and will not require an answer from you.

Oh! Marge and I are doing fine and she certainly does take care of me. By that I mean she sees to it that I have everything I need and carts me around everywhere in her car as I don't like to drive anymore. I will get my driver's

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license renewed soon. I NEED IT IN CASE I HAVE TO GO ANYWHERE WHEN SHE IS AWAY ON A TRIP. OOPS! My finger hit the caps lock. I watch the keyboard when I type. I can do a good 40 wpm via the hunt and peck system. Biblical: seek and ye shall find.

I sure would like to see you. I miss you on those Sat. nites. I often think of them. God continue to bless you and guide you and we'll continue to pray for one another.

My best love to you always,

Mom

Tue, 5 May 1998

Dear Julie,

It's been a few weeks since I've written to update you.

It's abnormally quiet here, but then it's spring and time to get out and enjoy life. I'm sure our sisters have other things to do than write to *LL* !

I did get some good response to the last issue by way of stirring up a couple of preachers here to giving thought to the Church's relationship with us. I see where Dianne Zahn is compiling a list of churches who will open their doors to us. I asked in the last *LL* for those who thought they knew a church or pastor who would be favorable to us to send me the address and I'd send a copy of *LL* to them. Should I get any I will not deal directly with Dianne but will forward them to you as you asked me not to deal (through) IFGE and I am more than willing not to do so.

I have a list of 28 Christian Clinical Psychologists who are in active practice and I am starting tomorrow to send the *LL* issue on guilt; with a cover letter to them. I have put this off too long. With the spring, I too am feeling somewhat better! Thank God and thank you for the Xerox copier. I'll have to copy 2 inserts I'll enclose. I have the copies of *LL*#3 already. I always get extra printed.

My social life is slow right now as my friend Marge is away for 10 days to visit her sister-in-law in NJ. Saturday I had a visit from Melanie and yester-

day I had Kim and her female sister here for lunch. Kim will be going to Belgium on the 24th for her SRS. I'll call Vanessa (TS) Thurs. and we'll go to lunch. That's enough activity for me. I can sit here and work and I feel really fine but as soon as I have to go out, like the store or P.O., it takes a lot out of me. My legs and feet swell and all those keen things!! God is so good to me!! I have no complaint.

Money situation? All set for the next issue and then the well is dry. It takes \$128 for postage and \$82 for copying each issue and then I'm mailing out other things as the month goes along. I have to get paper and The Office Depot is having a "buy-3-reams-and-get-one-free" sale on right now. I'll go and pick up some ink and price a toner for the Xerox. I got a "Starter Toner" with the machine and on and on it goes. A hundred dollars hardly gets you a seat in the bleachers in this game of life anymore. But we won't fear. God has carried us this far and He's not about to quit now!!

I trust that things are well with you and that you are enjoying life. When I pray, I pray for you. My prayer life has been sagging of late but I'll blame it on the fact that I didn't feel good most of April. God is on our side and working with us and keeping us day by day. He keeps the dinner plate full and provides us with a place to lay our head. Although I have to sleep sitting up now. I have a big easy chair and put pillows around and sleep like a baby!! Praise the Lord!!

I have to go now and feed Marge's cat, Annie, and clean the litter box and sit with her and watch Jeopardy (or however you spell it) and the 5 PM news.

God bless you dear Julie. Enjoy His blessings. My love to you always,

Lee

Fri, 8 May 1998

Good morning Julie,

My note was a "State of the Union" message. I had planned on asking you for money in June. I have the stamps for the June mailing and \$118.00 left to pay for the copying bill of \$82.00. Then I'm out of money. If you'd like to send some now I can take advantage of an office chair sale at The Office Depot. I have had to replace the present chair for a long time now but couldn't

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do it. I got it from my last employer in 1992, and it was worn then but now it's all frayed and the bottom is coming out, so a new chair is a real necessity. I can get one that is just fine for \$149.00 right now. If it seems childish the way I'm writing, it's because I believe in accountability. You are entitled to know where the \$ go. It feels so good to have my Social Security check to use for my needs!! Praise the Lord.

I am always in agony over all the TG people who leave the Church, or indeed are thrown out because of screwed-up beliefs. But then, the Church has seemed to be almost always more interested in themselves than saving souls.

It seems that a demonic false sense of morality has taken over our country and has not spared the Church. You and I know who we are and where we fit in God's plan, and are carrying it out by His grace and the leading of the Holy Spirit. To the church we are men in dresses and therefore an abomination to God, according to *Deuteronomy 22:5*. Their Bible says, "from such, keep away. Touch not the unclean thing," so they are operating out of sheer ignorance. They are losing the blessing God could make us to them. There is an undercurrent of movement towards attempting to enlighten the Church and I hope our sisters don't get discouraged in their efforts. You don't train a 1,200 lb. bear overnite and the resistance will be great. The main thing is to approach them from a viewpoint that we'd like to explain who we are, etc. I'll send you a copy of the cover letter I put in with my mailing to the 28 psychologists. As a matter of fact, I'll send you the whole package to look over.

Look at it this way. There's a cute little squirrel you want to hand feed. You approach with respect and caution and offer him a nut. He is apprehensive and will keep his distance until he finally has confidence in you and then when he accepts the nut he is accepting you too. This has to be our approach to those who look at us askance. We have to gain their confidence. We know what nice people we are but they look at us as perverts. What a task ahead!!!

God bless you dear Julie and thank you for your love and support and prayers.

My love to you always,

Lee Frances

Wed, 27 May 1998

Dear Becky and Julie,

If I were an emotional person I'd just sit here and cry.

The same scenario is repeating itself. It's a round robin. It goes like this.

I go to a doctor for help, get treated and given 'scripts and then fill the 'scripts and take the medicine as I'm supposed to and near die the next day. Today (the day after my visit to the clinic) is absolutely the worst day I have had in years.

Dr. Boone wanted to make sure my legs didn't get infected so he gave me a tetanus shot and prescribed an antibiotic course of seven days. 21 pills. He asked me if I was allergic to anything and I said the ONLY antibiotic I can take is erythromycin. So he prescribed Keflex 500 mg. Said it was new and very effective. I never questioned him. I figured he knew what he was doing. I took two yesterday and then one before breakfast this morning. By 9 am I was having a hard time breathing but figured it was my liver. I took another at noon, and when the labored breathing continued (plus a couple of episodes that reminded me of the time I almost went into anaphylactic reaction in NJ) I woke up to the fact that it was the Keflex. My son Leo saw what happened in NJ and said he never saw anyone get as sick as I did after taking medicine. So Keflex is out.

I got Glyburide 1.25 mg for my diabetes II which is ok. The clinic was supposed to have made an appointment with some Gastro-Enterologist for me to see about my liver. No sense in going. More medicine and someday some doc is going to innocently deal me the lethal dose. I have no trouble keeping my liver under control with the highly accepted European treatment with milk thistle and dandelion root extracts. Even Dr. Boone didn't object to it. My diabetes is the thing I need help with, so I am going to make an appointment with Dr. Tenore (formerly Dr. Brown, now married and has a child) for my diabetes monitoring, etc. I WILL get a family Dr., Becky, be assured of that.

I didn't discuss the Lasix with Dr. Boone although I told him I was taking it and he didn't say stop. Actually the Lasix is not as effective as it once was but I'm not bothered with excess water too much.

I want medical help but I'll be darned if I want to almost die after each doctor

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visit. I'm no guinea pig for the latest pharmaceutical concoctions. But us oldsters are a happy experimenting ground for new products. I just ain't buyin' it no more!!!!

Now! As you know, my word is usually final but I am going to allow myself the luxury of seeking your opinion and advice with an eye to acting on it.

I am sending a copy of this to my son Leo III as it's the most comprehensive tome I'll ever write about the last two days and I want him in on it.

I trust things are continuing well with you and Margaux. Give her my love. Thank you for your patience with me all of these years. God's best be yours, my love,

Lee

Thu, 28 May 1998

Julie,

I'm feeling fine now and am having a good nite for a change.

By the grace of God, it's on to *LL#5* this weekend!!! Pray with me on this.

Love,

Lee

Fri, 7 Aug 1998

My diet these days consists of "crow" and "humble pie". I am doing everything I said I'd never do; such as seeing a doctor and now I'm going to the Baptist Hospital Monday to have my legs looked over. I always figured that the day I went to the hospital I'd be signing my death warrant as I so often said. God is good to me. He has given me an excellent internist and now an excellent doctor at the hospital. Becky started these balls rolling. Thanks Becky!!

I'll let it rest here

God bless you all as you pray for my dilemma and you have my love and prayers,

L.F.

Fri, 25 Sep 1998

Dear Julie,

I have been out of the hospital for 15 days now and am feeling a little better. I received your inquiry of the end of August when I got home. I have written a couple of general letters but no personal letters, so I'll try now.

I am not gaining strength too fast. My motivations are rising, i.e. this letter. Now I need stamina. Other than that I am OK. Good appetite, etc. Sleep is bad. I'll survive by the grace of God.

A month in the hospital was a spiritual experience. Or I should say, a spiritless experience. Never have I felt so devoid of God. I'd try to pray but to no avail. I was looking for that great ethereal, spiritual experience so many say they have. It just wasn't there. I did not lose faith for a second. I was weak and Satan was trying to rob me and tell me there never was a God at all. Thru all of this I simply said, "In your good time dear Lord". This is not a confession but a statement of facts that a good Christian would fear to tell because others would think they are not the stalwart they think she is. I don't care what people think, I'm dealing with my Saviour in an honest way.

As for how does a TG do in a hospital? Everyone accepted the fact of my TGism and I made a great many friends of the staff. Never one smidgen of ridicule. That was a great experience. My hospital doctor is gay!! I go to my regular doctor on the 29th.

A CD friend came in and cleaned my house while I was away and took it on herself to determine what files I no longer needed and wiped me out and the LL master pages went with it. I cried. When you are poor and can't afford to pay responsible help you have to take the hand you're dealt, so I have never said anything to her. God allowed it. It isn't God's way of telling me LL is finished. He operates in love. The darned old devil got into my friend. Greater

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is He that is in you than he that is in this world!!

I have my article on file and maybe another page or two so I'll write a cover letter and send what I have. A stroke of genius on my part was addressing all of the envelopes a couple of months ago! I have stamps. I have no more distractions because my world is contained within the limits of a 25' oxygen hose. That little world is blessed by God! I hope to wean myself from the oxygen. I try each day for a couple of hours. Sometimes it works. Don't waste pity on me but pray for me.

How about you? You never tell me about yourself anymore. You may be the TS mayor of your town and I'd never know it.

Enjoy with me, the showers of blessing in the sunshine of God's love. I'm praying for you.

My love,

Lee

October 24, 1998

Dear Becky,

It has been ages since I have been able to write a decent email to anyone.

For 6 months before I went to the hospital I wasn't able to function properly, rather, normally. I have had a harrowing experience in life since July 26 when I began the route that led to the hospital.

I have never had what you would call a normal reaction to anything that I have had to confront in life and going to the hospital called for a 180 degree turn in my thinking and I didn't fight it. I didn't like it, but accepted it. I knew my well being depended on the nurses and aides dealing with me so I made every effort to win them over and by God's grace, succeeded. I had first class services which made the ordeal much easier.

The shock to my spiritual being was terrible when I realized that, in my case, the room wasn't filled with angels every nite and Jesus did not appear

on the wall. I felt removed from God. I guess I was expecting the fundamentalist version of illness, where God lifts you out of your misery and all that jazz. I think 90% of those people are (untruthful to themselves) seeking a stature in their Church by describing how their worst moments were overcome by the Lord and proudly stand in Church to testify and hear the oh's and ah's of those who are impressed.

I found no such experience and it was disappointing. But only long enough for me to open up to reality. I couldn't pray as I wanted. Had no desire to read the Bible or engage in spiritual gymnastics. Only one stark spiritual reality appeared and that was the fact that God had not forsaken me and He was aware of every breath I was taking and He would see me thru the whole thing. I clung to that. The devil used my situation to point out what a failure and phony I was as a Christian, but God's prevailing presence in my then negative mind sure got rid of the adversary. Everything the devil pointed out was alarmingly true, but in it I learned more about God's love for us. It's incomprehensible. I don't understand it but the hospital experience was, in retrospect, a great spiritual lesson. I realize more of it every day.

I'll leave the trumpet sounds, bells and whistles and Jesus on the hospital wall to those who see and hear them. I hope I'm not being bitter. One of my friends and contributors to the mission in NJ claimed Jesus visited him in his room one nite and the dear man lived off of that experience for the rest of his life. He's one I believe.

As for now. A week ago Tuesday past I woke up feeling extremely bad and it looked like I was losing ground. I asked God to take that day as the lowest point in my recovery and to help me improve each day from then on because, I told Him, I am determined to get better and would not accept defeat. Every day since then has been an improvement. I am getting stronger and am now able to be off the oxygen for 3-4 hours at a time.

Today will be the first day since the beginning of May that Marge and I will go to lunch together. Her ankle is much better and her knee doesn't bother her as much. She still can't work, but is improving.

AOL tells me I've been on this letter for 47 minutes. No wonder I'm tired. I'll have to rest now until the Baptist Home Health nurse arrives to dress the one remaining spot on my leg and then for the first time since July I'll get all dolled up! I've lost 40# and most of my clothes hang on me but I have some that are OK. We'll see. I'll write again and tell you about it.

By the Grace of God

I received your check yesterday and thank you ever so much. Having someone to help me was the incentive to move into assisted living quarters, but I found Jo Ann, a professional house cleaner and gopher, and my life has improved 100%. I no longer have to live in squalor and piles of dirty dishes and with a foul cat poo-poo box. My problem is I can't bend down to take care of a lot of things and I can't stand on the floor too long. It's a real pleasure to live here now. I spent \$65.00 last week on Jo Ann and she is worth every penny of it. While Jesus wasn't on the wall of my hospital room, He certainly is in the hearts of you five dear friends who are helping me to date to enjoy my life and my recovery. No angels floating in the hospital room but in the person of Jo Ann they walk right into my house!!!

God bless you, rather, continue to bless you Becky. I'm looking forward to a visit from you in '99. GREAT!!! I love you, Lee

Tue, 16 Feb 1999

Dear Julie Ann,

I have procrastinated in my writing to you but I hope your recovery is complete now. Are you able to work again? Are you on any medication? Are you on any special diet? I just trust the Lord that you are OK.

As the sponsor of *Love Letter*, I know you'll be interested in the following letter. I remember the writer well. Talk about a skeptic. She proves that consistent mailing of *LL* to what would seem a resisting audience, pays off in spiritual values. For every one who writes a letter like this, there are ten more who have not taken the time to write. I am much encouraged. I've been thinking lately that I would cut down on the mail list as I am going to have more pages and the increased postage cost may not be justified in some cases, but this letter proves the value of keeping it as it is. I think I know who the dead wood is and Layla was one of them. The circulation is 305.

Thanks, Julie Ann, for making this all possible. I have a good issue lined up for Easter. Becky has contributed an article she just wrote but I'll use it in the May-June issue. She has given me permission to use an article she wrote for a 1995 issue for this coming issue of *LL*. I have Kori's offering of an olive branch to the religious right. A letter she wrote to Don Wildmon of AFB. Other goodies too!!! I'm looking forward to it.

God's best continue to be yours as we continue to pray for one another.

My love always,
Lee Frances

(Letter follows)

Subject: Attention Lee Frances Date: Tue, 16 Feb 1999

Dear Lee:

I don't know if you remember me or not, but we met at the *Texas T Party* back in 1989, at least I think it was 1989. Anyway, we sat and talked several times about the Lord and what He meant to each of us, and our mutual desire to live as women. I remember thinking for the first time that maybe I could have my relationship with Jesus and still be TG without feeling as if I'm deep in sin, heading for hell as all my brothers and sisters would have me believe. It was a wonderful revelation, but I was still not able to receive it for fear you were wrong and everyone else I knew was right. Nevertheless, I began receiving your newsletters and then your *Love Letters* with great joy and anticipation. It seemed every time I would receive something from you it would greatly affect me in a positive manner, or your letter would say something positive about what I was going through at that particular time in my life. It was almost uncanny. Consequently, I began to look forward to your mailings to read and re-read and to think about what you had to say concerning the Lord and your constant preachings about the non-issue of cross-dressing. Now over the years I've been up and down in my relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, but the sad truth is, mostly, I've been down. Pushed down by my thoughts of not being a good enough Christian, or a faithful Christian because I was TG, and even, shudder, maybe TS. Well, I've been thinking about what you've been saying for many years, and fighting with my inner thoughts for just as long, but I now have come to the conclusion that I believe you're right about God not caring about whether we cross-dress or not. He only cares about what's inside in our hearts, and I've come to this conclusion just recently, and, if you don't mind, I'd like to share this little story with you.

Once upon a time (yes, I know, but just bear with me). Anyway, once upon a time there was this plain looking TG person whose name was Layla, (Yes, yes, Eric) who had given her life to the Lord, but was troubled because she was a woman who very much could pass as a man, and had done so for many years. Now this poor woman had been told by all her teachers, and everyone she had confided in, that God would not and could not tolerate her trying to live as a woman because she passed so well as a man. So, what did she do?

By the Grace of God

Well, she tried to be a faithful Christian man working at having a good relationship with the Lord, but all the while being miserable because she wasn't living as a woman. Then, after a while, she'd get sick of her miserableness and decide she would like to live as the woman she knew she was, but because she was now sinning, she would forgo her Bible reading, prayers, and church attendance, with the net result that her relationship with her Lord plummeted, and she was miserable again. Then deciding that she couldn't live without the Lord in her life, she would confess her sin of cross-dressing, begin reading her Bible again, praying, and attending church regularly, and, lo and behold, her relationship with her Lord would begin to blossom again. Now this went on for several years (twenty four to be exact) until one day, after living for a long period of time without a satisfying relationship with Jesus, and being so miserable she was finding it difficult convincing herself she would ever be happy again, she decided to give up on trying to live as a woman, again, confess her sin of cross-dressing, again, and decide to retrieve her relationship with the Holy Spirit once more. However, she knew by this time that it would only be a matter of a few months before she would once again be miserable at trying to live as a man (duh) which really made her think, "What's the use! I might as well die now and get it over with." But, she quickly put that out of her mind because first of all, she was not too keen on dying, and second of all, she knew it would be like jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire. For Layla wasn't stupid. She was just slow. So, Layla thought very hard at what to do. She thought and thought and thought, and finally she decided that she was pretty angry at God for putting her in this mess and just leaving her without any hope. "If this is a joke," she continued thinking. "It's not funny anymore." However, Layla knew that God was not trying to be funny, nor would He leave her without hope. Something else must be wrong, but she just couldn't figure it out. One day, as she was feeling very sorry for herself, which she was very good at (she always prided herself in doing things well), she began to think about what she was going to do with the rest of her life. "If I could just get by the next thirty or so odd years that I might have left, Lord willing, living as a man and having a relationship with my Lord, I might be able to endure this life. I mean, really, look at people in prison with long sentences. If they can exist in prison, surely I can do the time easily in the comfort of my home," she reasoned. Yet, she knew deep inside her she was just fooling herself again. But wait, a new thought came into her consciousness from out of the blue. (At this point the reader should picture themselves walking into a brick wall at night with their eyes closed.) Being awe struck by this new and wonderful thought, she said to herself, "Gosh, why don't I just read the Bible, pray, and attend church as Layla? I mean, what harm could it possibly do? I'm already being bashed by my fears now. It couldn't possibly be any worse."

Being very pleased with herself at coming to this new conclusion (I told you she was slow), yet being a bit nervous wondering what new hammer blow might strike her next, she began to read her Bible while praying regularly each day. Immediately she began to feel as if God was speaking to her in a positive way as she read and prayed over the next several days. Then it was Sunday. She had decided and planned where she would attend church that morning. It would be a large church, with lots of people in which she could easily blend in with the rest of the worshipers and hopefully not be noticed. The morning came. Turning off the alarm, Layla quickly showered, put on her favorite brown outfit (it was winter) with matching heels, fixed her hair, put on her face, found her coat, and headed, somewhat nervously, for church. Arriving, she found a parking place for her car, grabbed her purse, opened the car door, and marched (in a feminine sort of way) toward the front door. Inside she found a seat and sat down at the same time praying for strength and protection in this strange new place. Soon the church organ began to play, the worshipers began to sing, and then the minister began to preach. Soon Layla began to find herself lost in the wonderful feeling of being in church, conscious once again of the closeness of the Spirit of God she remembered and missed for so long, and the peace of God that passes all understanding. It was a very good feeling. She was actually reading the Bible, listening to the Word of God being preached, singing hymns, feeling the presence of her Lord, and wearing a dress. She didn't want this moment to stop. She was as happy as she had ever been. After the services were completed, several people came up to Layla to welcome her to their church and ask her to please come back again. And she lived happily ever after. The end.

Well, that's the story. True in every word and sentence. And yes, I've been back to that church many times with the same results. I'm still reading my Bible and praying everyday while becoming closer to the Lord. It's a wonderful life after all (Thanks, Jimmy). Actually, thank you Lee Frances, for being there to help this poor sinner find her Saviour again. I can't tell you how much it means to me to feel as if my life has meaning anew. Purpose and hope can only be found in something bigger than yourself. For me, God is that purpose and Jesus is my hope.

I hope this letter finds you well and solid in our Lord Jesus Christ. May His love comfort you in the days ahead.

Layla Roxanne Joy

By the Grace of God

Mon, 15 Mar 1999

Dear Sisters, Brothers, Friends,

I have just finished enjoying a visit from Becky who was at a medical convention in the “big easy” – New Orleans – and she came up here for a visit with myself and other friends.

We enjoyed dinner together here at “Lee’s Acres.” I quickly fried some London broil, fresh asparagus, and my special potatoes. We had strawberries and peaches for dessert and then talked more and eventually put on the VCR and watched *The Apostle*. Both of us for the second time, but it is so good that a second run of it is not boring. Robert Duvall certainly should have been awarded the Emmy he was nominated for. As Sunny, the Apostle, he gave a powerful performance. We had a great time and then she came back on Saturday and we visited a couple more hours. Becky is a wonderful person. We met every Saturday nite in ‘93 for dinner and a movie here at the acres. I miss those evenings always.

My health? Well! There’s good news and bad news. The good news is that I’m getting out more and feeling much better. Hardly feel the 80 years I’m approaching but I find my energy level dissipating and my need for oxygen growing. I was going 6-8 hours a day without it here at home and now it’s down to one hour a lot of days. Three hours, max.

I went to St. Andrew’s Episcopal Cathedral yesterday with Peter and a visiting friend who is a Presbyterian preacher. Becky went to St. John’s Episcopal Church with a friend. As Peter put it, “So we have one TG and one TS in two of our churches today. That’s an ALRIGHT situation!” Peter is a wheel in the Episcopal Church here. We then went for dinner and had a real nice time. I was worn out Friday after getting to bed at 11PM Thursday nite and I’m not overly tired today. I cannot complain. I am doing very well considering my age and condition.

Susie is the big reason for it. She is doing a great job and being able to live in a clean home is the best ever and I don’t have to wear myself out with keeping the Acres up. Susie has such a pleasant personality and her visits here are cheerful and we laugh a lot. She’s a #1 therapist for me. Who needs a psych. therapist when Susie is around?! Thank each of you who make it possible for her to be here 3 days a week, 2 hours a day. Bless the Lord, O’ my soul!!!!

Now! *Love Letter*. Big one this time. I had so much GOOD stuff to put in it. It will be 16 pages. My article is sort of an “X-Files” thing but the rest is rational. I still have to write my letter for it and fill in one more page and then off to the copier we go. There is an article on deeper life written by my friend of 31 years, Earle Davis, who has stood by me since day one of my new life. He is the friend God sent to me when I was considering leaving the Mission in 1968 because I had had it with the basic fundamentalism. Earl said from the scriptures that, “THE LETTER OF THE LAW KILLETH BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES LIFE!” That verse hit me like a ton of bricks! We immediately became bosom buddies!

Subsequently I stayed at the mission ‘til 1985. My wife Martha died in 1984.

Bye now, this letter may bore you and I apologize. I’m too long winded this time. I love each of you and pray God’s blessing on you. His best blessing for each of you.

My love to you, in Christ,

Lee Frances

Wed, 3 Nov 1999

Dear Julie,

I’m sorry to hear (*personal JAJ*). I certainly will pray for God to undergird you with His acceptance of you. In all of the rejections we experience we’re surrounded by His love. Job knew this when he said, “THOUGH HE SLAY ME, YET I WILL TRUST HIM.” Rejection is hard on the Spirit and flesh but in man’s disapproval we experience God’s approval. He will certainly see you through this and I’ll be praying. As we pray for one another, God strengthens each one of us.

Tonite is my big “trial”. I have been accepted by the clergy of St. Andrew’s Cathedral. There are five Priests there and the Dean called me Monday morning and told me they are all welcoming me to the meetings starting tonite. It remains to be seen what the attendees will do. The Rev. called me Monday in answer to a letter I wrote to him in which I told him that if my presence would be a stumbling block to the folks that I would not come. This is a big test and God is up to His sleeves in it!! Now, you pray for me and all of this

By the Grace of God

tonite. Like you, I sorely want a Church to fellowship in as well as a place of worship.

If you would like to have an article in *LL* next issue I will need it by Nov. 20. Otherwise you can send it any time. Becky will have one in this one. I have an article written which is titled, *Overreligious* and subtitled, *Pain-in-the-Neck Christianity*. I may save that for the first of the year and write another for this issue. I'm leaning towards writing on the magnitude of God's forgiveness enveloped in His love for us in Christ. It's staggering and mind boggling and my only fear is that I won't be able to bring it out in our mortal language. Being 80 yrs old and living alone is wonderful and the Lord opens up so much I have always taken for granted and shows me what is behind it – spiritual values.

I've been up since 2:45 AM and it's time to lay down for a spell. My son, Jerry, will be here at 9:30 to take me for my first of the month grocery shopping. My other son, Leo, is totally rejecting me because when his nephew (my grandson) visited here I took him to lunch. Horror of horrors!! I was wearing a dress. So let him stew in his own juices. My grandson accepts Lee Frances and has no problem with it.

Bye now. God lift your Spirit today and love you to death. I do.

Lee

Sun, 28 Nov 1999

Hi Julie,

I wrote this this morning for the Old Bags & Sagging Hags newsletter for older CDs. I will use it later on to send to many more newsletters as an unsolicited article that they can use if they so desire. Let's pray that God will open new avenues in 2000 for His message of love for us.

I did this hastily and seeing as how I'm going to use it in the future, maybe you'd like to edit it and suggest any changes in it.

Lotsa love and prayers

Lee

Sun, 28 Nov 1999

A Dead Biblical Ordinance

The ordinance with which crossdressers are concerned is the one found in *Deuteronomy 22:5*. This is the ordinance that states that a woman shall not wear the garments of a man, nor shall a man wear the garments of a woman and those who do are an abomination to God. I don't want to be an abomination to God and I know you don't. Not to worry. We are NOT an abomination to God.

St Paul, in two places in the New Testament deals with these ordinances:

Ephesians 2:15 “. . . HAVING ABOLISHED IN FLESH THE ENMITY, EVEN THE LAW OF THE COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN THE ORDINANCES.”

Colossians 2:13-14 In *2:13* CHRIST, IN HIS ATONING DEATH, HAS FORGIVEN US OF ALL OF OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, and in *2:14* we read, “. . . BLOTTING OUT THE HANDWRITING OF THE ORDINANCES THAT WAS AGAINST US, AND TOOK IT OUT OF THE WAY, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS.” If you can picture *22:5* nailed to the cross, then you have the picture. *22:5* died with Christ. Christ rose from the grave. *22:5* didn't.

If you are going to enjoy the freedom of Christ's victory then you have to stop discriminating against yourself.

By the Grace of God

Like it or not, we are male chauvinists. We discriminate against the woman within us. At times we give away, throw away, or better yet, we burn all of her clothing. We say to her, "That's it, babe. You're history." She's gone.

Never underestimate the power of (a) our woman. She's a fighter and she comes back in all of her splendor and glory. So, then we go into rank denial. She just stands there tapping her foot, waiting for you. She KNOWS you'll be with her shortly. Then you finally join her with the strong admonition that no one else can know about her. You put her in the class of a second class citizen. All this time she knows she is the best part of you. You start condemning yourself. Guilt builds up. You try to compromise with her. If she will come and go at your bidding everything will be alright. She won't cooperate. She knows that you know she's here to stay. No compromise.

The foregoing was simply borne out in my own personal life. I thought God had put *Deuteronomy 22:5* in the Bible just for me. It tortured me for years. I was allowing something dead to flog me. That's why I am so intent in clearing up this matter. I well know the necessity of secrecy in our lives. What a way to live! Anybody who would deliberately choose crossdressing is a basket case.

I'm speaking of being free in the sense that we recognize the 'woman' within us and not allow her to throw us into a bad guilt trip. The way out of that is in the bringing of Jesus Christ into your life and both of you resting in Him, knowing that it was for the sin we were born in that Christ died so that original state of sin could never stain our souls again.

If you think that crossdressing is "a sin", forget it!!! How I'd like to write a book on that! Crossdressers crucifying themselves because of what they think is the sin of crossdressing or worse yet, having been influenced by the negative approach of hidebound merciless ministry and laity. God, in Christ, is concerned with our soul, and whether that soul wears pants or a skirt is not the issue. God neither approves nor disapproves of crossdressing. It's just not the issue! It never has been and never will be. So let's get on with our lives and no longer let dead guilt rule it. God loves each of us just as we are. Open up your heart and life to Him.

Lee Frances Heller

Wed, 15 Dec 1999

Dear Friends,

If this is the season to be jolly then what do we do the rest of the year? If troubles are supposed to melt like lemon drops at this season then what do we do the rest of the year?

I'd say this time of year is creating problems. Who to give to, and don't offend even the remotest friend by not giving her a present. If you forgot to give something to somebody who gave you a present last Christmas you risk losing a friend. If you are going to have a few friends over for a little gathering at your house someone is going to be hurt because they figured they should be invited. So, in all, Christmas is a season of high risk of losing friends instead of being jolly and making new friends. These are just a few reflections. And not to mention the \$\$ indebtedness this jolly season produces, thereby upsetting folks who went overboard trying to satisfy everyone on their list.

Susie and her neighbor did Thanksgiving dinner and invited me to be with them. There I was, a TG in the midst of 10 women and one man, the hostess's husband. They all know I'm TG but I didn't push it. I wore black pants, white blouse, and black blazer. No jewelry or make up. My hair was done nicely. I just didn't want to push the envelope. We had a great time. Never one allusion or wisecrack about me being TG. They even gave me the privilege of praying grace before we ate. I came away with a brand new granddaughter! Susie's 11 year old daughter, Anni. We e-mail each other now.

This Christmas is the first time in more years than I can remember that I have bought presents for kids. Susie is 3; Anni, 11 yrs; Carrie, 14 years; and Katy Rose, 16 yrs. I sat down and clicked in Amazon.com, I have bought books from them so I know they're OK. I had a lot of fun doing it. I'll cry about it when my American Express bill comes in.

This is supposed to be my update on my health. I have no legitimate complaint. I do much better than some in my condition. I give God the glory. My strength and endurance are waning. I spend much time in bed now, I went to the eye doctor Monday and my bad eye is doing fine. I have peripheral vision only. My good eye is now showing signs of macular deterioration, so he will keep a check on it. I go back in 3 months. I go grocery shopping today with my son, Jerry, and tonite Peter and I will go to our church class meeting. Tomorrow Marge takes me to get a blood test that will tell

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the density of my blood. I take 5mg of rat poison (Warfarin, generic for Coumadin) a day and the blood has to be checked once a month. So that's a full schedule. Marge and I will go to breakfast after the blood test. No sense in feeling sorry for me.

Sunday Peter and I will go to church and then I'm having Susie and kids over for a Coke and cookies and to give them their presents. I haven't gotten Susie anything yet. I'll wait and see how my finances go. She deserves the very best. Someday I'll have to tell you how she not only keeps my house clean, but more than that her sparkling personality is wonderful to have around. She sure has been a factor in my present state of well being. Her gentleman friend has had a liver transplant and is in and out of the hospital in New Orleans. She loves him and wants to get married. She accepts him just as he is and will care for him. If this is what she wants then I'm all for it. Each time she comes here we pray for him and their relationship. In looking over this letter it seems that it's an update on Susie. Guess she's given me a shot at having a family that cares for me and they do.

Marge and I are going to The Out Back Steak House and have a dinner for our gift to each other. She needs nothing and I need nothing. We will each pay for own meal!! Her idea!! Good one, too!! I love it!!

My gratitude for all you have done on my behalf this year can never be expressed in words. You have done much, much in making it possible for me to enjoy life and moreover, to publish *Love Letter*.

In spite of my cynical observations at the beginning of this letter I pray you will have a good Christmas and Millennium New Year and that God will guide you and keep you all year long

To say I love you puts it very mildly, but I do,

Lee

Thu, 24 Feb 2000

Dear Sisters, Brothers, and Friends,

As some know, on Feb. 12 I tripped and fell on the concrete apron of my trailer while carrying 3 gallons of water from Marge's car. I went flat down and couldn't catch myself. I suffered for a week because I didn't think I'd

have to go to a Dr. In the end, I did.

I went to my internist yesterday and she took 15 x-rays and referred me to an orthopedic doctor. I went there today and I have 2 fractured ribs and a badly twisted knee. The knee is all wrapped up but today they do nothing with ribs as they will heal themselves. So now I have a big handful of pain pills, an exercise for my leg and lots of time for healing.

The crowd that says God wants us only healthy, wealthy and happy won't buy into the reason I fell, so you folks can take a walk now and spare yourselves.

On Saturday morning, Feb. 12, 2000 I decided to have a real heart-to-heart talk with God and proceeded to tell Him how dissatisfied I was with my spiritual life. It was routine and mechanical and centered on everything that was wrong in my life. Too much attention being paid to the temporal rather than the spiritual. I was vocally ranting and raving and asking God to change my life to His advantage.

He did, He slammed me flat on my face. I didn't realize it at the time that it was He that allowed it. When I did, I thanked Him for it. I am not the first "suffering saint" He has had, but, like the others, my life is changing too! God is love and with some of us He has to use "tough love."

I now have the time and motivation to carry on the *Love Letter* ministry and to center on writing 2 tracts I have been commissioned to write. One salvation tract and a brochure to be given to church leaders on who we are, and what we are, and are not, and why we should be welcomed into the church.

Wow!! The junk God has purged out of my life!!! Once again I'm free. At least until the bill collectors start pursuing me and even that can't change the course God has put me on. Nothing can separate me from the love of God.

So now, please pray for me and my recovery and I am praying for you. I'm getting tired now so I'll go, asking God's very best for you and telling you, I love you too. Better friends no one has ever had. You're the best!!

Lee Frances

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Fri, 7 Apr 2000

Dear Friends,

Since I last wrote my health took a turn for the worse and I have spent most of the time in bed. My knee has been very painful, my breath short, my head woozy (normal).

In that time I did the Easter Issue of *LL* and will tie up the loose ends this weekend and Susie will take it for processing Monday. I don't like to take codeine pain pills but finally succumbed yesterday. I had an appt. with the bone doctor yesterday and couldn't keep it, as I felt too badly. I made a new one for Monday. I took the pain pills yesterday and had a real good nite's sleep. Everything's OK now. I have a yo-yo existence---up and down! Praise the Lord ANYHOW!!!

I am now 81 years old as of 4/5. I didn't tell anyone it was my birthday. Subsequently, it was a quiet day. Susie came by and gave me a box of "Opium" Dusting Powder. I love it!! Saturday, April 1 the *Aurora* girls gave me a party here at my place and it was very enjoyable. Melanie brought a beautiful cake and refreshments. The girls gave me a pair of black slacks which Susie is shortening for me, and a nice boat neck top. We had a real nice time. They have my sincere thanks.

Last Tuesday Cissy (from Jackson) took me to do my monthly grocery shopping and we had lunch together and had a real nice time. She was a big help to me and I enjoyed her company. She is going to take me to the internist next Thursday.

I had a visit from the Reverend Susan Bock from our Episcopal Cathedral yesterday and enjoyed it very much. She wants to arrange a wheel chair for me so I can go to church Sunday. I can't go up steps and the walk to the back of the property which has access (no steps) to the auditorium is too far to walk. If this works out, then I can resume my Wednesday nite visits to our membership class. It all depends on Peter's whereabouts! If he's in town, I go.

Well, it's almost time for the home health nurse and the aide to come and service this body of flesh. Never complain about the cost of Medicare. It's a blessing to those of us who have no financial resources. They have paid a good \$80,000 taking care of me. All those with whom I do business in Medicare know I am transgendered and no one has ever made a derogatory remark or

exhibited anything other than total acceptance.

God has been, and is, good to me and I praise Him for it. I won't go on with a sermon now but I will ask His best blessing on you and your life for Him.

Thank you for all of your prayers and help. I love you,

Lee Frances

Tue, 11 Apr 2000

Dear Julie Ann,

Big day yesterday. Susie picked up the Easter *LL* for processing. I went to the orthopedic doctor and he has ordered physical therapy for my right leg. The nurse will be here today.

The highlight of the day was, I fell again. This time in the house. My right leg gave away and down I went. I called 911 and Marge. It took 3 cops to pick up my 230 lbs.! I suffered no further damage other than a scraped knee from crawling to the phone.

I remain, by the grace of God, optimistic. A bit discouraged – like St. Paul; down but not out. My fall was due to my own lack of proper precaution. I have been told to use a cane until I get the muscles in the leg built up. Well, guess what? I'm now using a cane.

My next project is to start on the brochure for churches and from that I will get an article for the next *LL*.

I wish every church was like my Episcopal Church. The lady priest, Susan Bock, visits me. Folks from my class call me. I will be confirmed in May. I have total acceptance and 90% know I am transgendered. I haven't been able to go to church or to class since I fell Feb. 12th, but they keep in touch.

When I say, as I very often do, God is good, I know where I'm coming from. In spite of my infirmities, He blesses my life. He has given me you, and through you *LL* is published. But more than that, your interest in reaching out to our community gives me an opportunity to serve the Lord through your interests. I just called Sissy, a local CD friend who will take me to the

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medical doctor Thursday, and then we will go to lunch. Peter is an everlasting help, as is Marge. God has filled my life with His people, my brothers and sisters. Sure, I'm human, and experience many lonely times, but for a person in my physical and TG condition, He has undertaken in a great way. I have no room for complaints.

Only room for much praise for Him.

Thanks again for your help and prayers, Julie. I love you,

Lee

Tue, 16 May 2000

Dear Friends:

I wanted to give you a report on my confirmation Sunday, May 14. Therefore this update is late.

Well!! I did make it to my (and 45 others) confirmation in St. Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral. However, the forces of evil, namely Satan, had to have one final shot at trying to stop me from going. Peter pulled up in front of the Church on Sunday and was helping me out of the car and into a wheel chair when my bad knee gave 'way and I flopped in the gutter of the main drag in Jackson, Capitol St. Peter had to get the (lady) cop on the corner to help him pick me up and put me in the wheel chair. Another man came and assisted.

There was my 235 pounds of dead weight laying in the gutter. God has let me experience much on the seamy side of life including 60 days in the Bronx, NY Jail in 1962 for public drunkenness. But never have I laid in a street gutter. So I have now. From the gutter the Church looked beautiful with the morning sun shining on it, highlighting a huge colorful banner of Christ which was hung on what would be the steeple. I never knew the banner was there. I had never seen it as I don't look up when I'm in the car. Anyhow, I immediately saw the spiritual application and my own testimony personified. From the gutter, I saw my Saviour, Jesus Christ. From the gutter to Christ. St. Andrew's can now say they picked up a poor old soul out of the gutter, brushed her off, took her in the church where the Bishop of Mississippi confirmed her, and a new Lee Frances was born!!

Yesterday I went to the orthopedic doctor and he put me back to working with a physical therapist. My right leg will never have much strength again.

Now when I go out I have to go in a wheel chair. I wish I was rich and could buy one of those little electric wheel chairs. I hope that I can graduate to a walker. It's hard to accept that I will never walk unassisted again. While it's hard to accept, God gives me the grace to overcome the disappointment and I don't feel at all bad about it. My constant meditation is on how fortunate I am in view of what some other people have to go through. Our Father has been and is being very good to me in so many, many ways. All glory and praises to Him.

Also saw my internist yesterday. I have periods, especially at nite, when it's hard to breathe. I use oxygen every nite but when I get short of breath the oxygen doesn't help. There is a paradox in there somewhere. She said that's part of the congestive heart failure package. She gave me an additional medicine to use in an effort to get the residual water out of my legs. Her suggestion is to sleep sitting up. I had done that prior to going to the hospital in '98 and it worked out fine.

So! Ain't old age grand! Really though, I'm not letting it get me down, so don't feel sorry for me. The grace of God lifts us above ourselves and forestalls any self pity. All I can say is that I am blessed of God.

I am blessed with how He has given me such great friends as you are. You're my prayer partners, and it's your prayers for me that are helping so much.

God's best be yours. I love you, but not as much as He loves all of us. You are in my prayers.

Lee Frances

PS. Dr. Becky will be here Thursday morning and then she'll take us to St. Andrew's Sunday, and Sunday afternoon I am trying to get a few of our locals together here. Like a reception for Becky. So far everyone's out of town. Sissy from Jackson will be here though.

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Tue, 16 May 2000

Dear Julie,

I hope and pray you can work out a way to be here Sunday.

I want to meet you, and do I dare say I feel this will be my last opportunity to do so?

God bless you and I love you,

Lee

Fri, 19 May 2000 22:17:59 EDT

The family of Lee Heller has asked me to contact all of her friends that I can, to let them know that Lee went home to be with the Lord this morning, around 5 am. Apparently she went very peacefully in her sleep.

For those of us who loved Lee, we shall all deeply miss her. I knew her for about 25 years, and have been honored to be known as her friend – she had a very special place in my heart, as I know I did in hers, too. And I know how very much Lee treasured all of her friends.

The family tells me there will be no services.

Please pass this news along to anyone who is not on this list but whom you believe you would like to know.

Blessings to all,

Ginger Smith

Re: LEE HELLER NEWS Date: Fri, 19 May 2000 21:55:52 -0700 From: Becky Allison

Dear friends,

I have some further information regarding Lee Frances.

I am in Jackson at this time, having traveled from Phoenix on Wednesday. On Thursday (yesterday) morning I was blessed to be able to spend a couple of hours with Lee in her home. We shared a light breakfast and talked about all that had happened since our last visit. Despite her health concerns, Lee was in very good spirits. She has always trusted her Lord to provide for her, and knew that He would do so through her illness.

I told of my son's medical school graduation coming this Saturday. Lee replied, lightly but sincerely, that she anticipated a "graduation" of her own soon. I knew what she meant. Lee did not fear death. Like all of us, she hoped to avoid a prolonged dying experience, and to go promptly and peacefully in God's time. And so she did.

I think God allowed me that one last visit with my "mom" before He called her home, where she is free from all pain and can breathe freely, run and delight in His heaven.

As for me, I rejoice for Lee, but I am personally distraught with grief. Lee Frances was the first transgendered person I met when I came out into the "community." She loved and accepted all of us, and let us know in no uncertain terms that God loves and accepts all of us too.

Sometimes, before my transition, it seemed that the only times of peace and solace I knew came at Lee's home. She realized before I did that I was meant to complete a full transition. I will never forget the conversation where I asked her, "So, where do you see me five years from now?" She replied without hesitation, "I see you living as a woman, of course." Oh, I thought, it's that obvious to others... She always had perfect advice for me and it was always in line with God's love.

Lee had not been comfortable the last couple of years. Her knees gave her much discomfort and she fell sometimes. Just last Sunday, she was confirmed in the Episcopal church of St. Andrew here in Jackson, and slipped and fell "in the gutter", as she put it, while getting out of the car. Looking up from the gutter she saw the beautiful banners on the steeple and knew God was

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present. Lee required home oxygen and had visiting nurses checking on her. One of the things we discussed yesterday was a plan to build a ramp in anticipation of her getting a wheelchair.

Lee Frances Heller was my mentor, my spiritual guide, my surrogate Mom, my dear friend and my sister in Christ. I will miss her and love her always. She is in that place where we will see her again one day, and rejoice. Let us praise her life well lived.

With love and fondest memories,

Becky Allison