

THE GROUP GROPE

Do Your Groping With Latex Gloves

Volume 1, Issue 8

August 1996

69 cents (U.S. funds only)

Another Wedding On The Horizon

Group Grope news dispatch

For those who haven't heard yet. . . Big News! Brian Darga and Dyan Oliver have got marital bliss in their sights and plan to wed next March. Brian and Dyan found each other with the help of their mutual friend, Justin Smith. . . coincidentally at an Ozdarski New Year's Eve Party. (*Is August too early to squeeze in a gratuitous plug for this annual event where many a romance has sparked?*)

Please join us in wishing them both the best. Congratulations.



Very Well, JS, Drink Q's Forever (Rebuttal to Mr. Smith's "Parody of Durango")

By Rick Richard

Surprise! Surprise! Mr. Smith has evaluated yet another individual's efforts and thereafter spewed forth his incessant conjecture upon those unfortunate quick readers who fail to appropriately note bylines. This rebuttal will no doubt provide a bit of clarification after being subjected to a confusing and mind-altering piece of incomprehensible drivel from the mop-haired boy toy. Furthermore, this piece of paper and print can be used to clean the spew from all affected mailboxes.

With hope, the intelligent reader gleaned the necessary words of jest and twittery in order to summarily dismiss the retort. Or, perhaps, the insignificant effort was simply ignored by all, much as is done when listening to a Notre Dame alumnus talk about this year being the season the Fighting Irish will be contenders.

However, in case some of these notions reached a particularly easily swayed and unknowing child, the following should put into perspective the life strategy one would choose if deciding upon the antithesis of creating your Immortal Self.

4. **JUSTIN SMITHISM (JS)** - This fourth hierarchical level of detached bliss was intentionally excluded from the previously

published rebuttal. It's exclusion begins an explanation of the self-preserving, self-indulgent, and oblivious behavior which defines JS individuals.

Justin Smithism is first easily evidenced in individuals who "pose" in public with any of an assorted number of pain-deadening phallic extensions, e.g., cigarette, pool cue, or a dart. After successfully completing this escape from brutal reality, JS is continued by inviting friends for a weekend away, only to later rescind all invitations upon realizing that long-term social contact may provide a window to his numerous neuroses.

If a long term observance of JS is made, he or she will note continued fruitless fishing excursions. Indeed, JS individuals, while trying to catch perch, have not caught a perch in years, while repeating the self-delusional phrase "I don't really care if I catch a fish, I'm just out here to drink beer."

Individuals can become thoroughly entrenched in JS by sandwiching themselves between crown air fresheners and ND paraphernalia, a lover and Ansel Adams prints, or a six of Q's and the scales of justice, while wrapped in cellophane, or not. Friends and family can only hope for eventual enlightenment.

How I Spent My Summer Vacation

By Christopher Ozdarski

I know that summer isn't over yet, but I just wanted to comment on how much I enjoyed the month of July. From the picnic lunches I shared with my grandmother in Ludington to the flowers I received near the end of the month from a special friend, I can't help but to look back at the month with a smile.

Since I'm sure that none of you are interested in all the sappy details that made the month so enjoyable for me, let me just focus on two events. . .

The Morand / Pauline Wedding

I realize that it is uncharacteristic for me to not focus on the negative, like the tardiness of the bus, but this wedding was the most fun I've ever had in a tux. From the rehearsal dinner/barn bash to the last dance, this event was jam packed with laughs and love. It gives me a warm and fuzzy feeling inside just to think about it. Kudos to all who planned and executed this wonderful event and congratulations again to our friends John and Mary Beth.

Club Suburban Canoe Trip

Again, let's not focus on the negative. I had a blast. Good weather, good food, good friends (old and new), and lots of laughs. This trip continues to be the best bang for the buck this geek accountant has ever seen. I can't thank the Confer clan and all their helpers enough for once again doing such a fine job with this annual outing. *Group Groppers* and our friends numbered at least 30 on my last head count. Hope they all had as good a time as I did.

Enjoy the rest of the summer
and remember. . . *I Love You Man!!!*

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THE GROUP DOPE

By Justin Smith

Y'all might not be aware wha's'up with my new living arrangements. Recently, I was constructively evicted from the Ozdarski digs, ostensibly because of an over-accumulation and callous disregard of the dust bunnies (more appropriately "dust gorillas") that were allowed to accumulate and breed therein. Actually, I think the underlying and true reason for my exile was due to certain snide comments regarding my former land-lord (and Friend's) eye rolling and PB&J-eating censure in last month's *Grope*. Seriously though, I must thank Christopher for his tolerance of my peculiarities over the past year and a half. Thanks buddy, it was a gas. (Literally speaking rather than figuratively.)

My new address is ~~██████████~~ Apt. 211, Madison Heights, 48071. Fortunately, my phone number remains the same: 810-~~██████████~~.

Anyway, here are some observations that I've noted in the process of my move:

1. Public Laundry Facilities Downstairs

Why is it that all washing machines offer a mode dial that is uni-directional? It is so frustrating to accidentally move two degrees past the desired setting then having to do a 360 to make another attempt at the desired mode. Are all of these things designed by the Master combination lock factory? Please, all of you enterprising budding entrepreneurs out there, redesign this feature. While you are at it, design a digital clock that will allow backing up when setting the damn thing.

2. Apartment Complex Avoidance

At all costs, look to the parking lot before signing your name on the lease line. A simple check thereof would reveal certain "red flags." I should have known better when I noticed an over-abundance of rags in lieu of gas caps, after-market brake light indicators visible in the rear window, fuzzi lined steering wheels, AMC Pacers, "NO FEAR" stickers, neon license plate boarders, bumper stickers emblazoned with "if you get any closer to me, I'll flick a booger on your windshield," and raspberry colored utility vehicles. In ignoring the cumulative indices aforementioned, I am now stuck with hearing Led Zeppelin blaring at all hours of the night and Confederate flag stickers on apartment doors in my complex. I also am realizing that tube tops on women by the pool did not leave with the Gerald Ford administration.

3. Nyquil Disposable Cup

If you notice any of these things lying around, you're faced with a true dilemma. One of the guys in my apartment building placed a used Nyquil plastic shot glass on the window sill near the entry to the building. There seems to be a gastric residue or some vomit-congealed substance about the cup's rim. Undoubtedly, this will remain during my entire residency because no one here will dare remove it because of STDs or other infectious transmissions. I'll pay five bucks for anyone with latex gloves to assist.

Cheers everyone, please stop by to say "S'up."

Deep Thoughts

By Jewel and Mary Ann

- 1) If you shit in the river, do you have to wipe your ass?
- 2) Do fish wake up every morning and go "where the fuck am I?"
- 3) If you were a mosquito and only lived for 2 days, wouldn't you just want to screw your brains out?
- 4) If you are a guy and you dance with a girl all night then invite her to your tent, doesn't it suck when you don't get anything?
- 5) Why do you call underwear a "pair" when there is only one?
- 6) When your pet watches you have sex, do you ever wonder if they are grading you?

A Question for Mary Ann

By Christopher Ozdarski

Let me whisper in your ear.
Don't be afraid, there is nothing to fear.
I just have a question, rhetorical at that.
But I feel I must ask before we continue our chat.

It's really no biggie, although some might disagree.
I for one acknowledge that it's not important to me.
But as I sit here and stare at the floor,
this question begs to be asked;
please, don't think me a bore.

Before I continue, let me just say...
how special you are, and not just today.
You have many good qualities (and beautiful eyes).
I enjoy spending time with you -
This should be no surprise.

I could go on about how much I care,
and how I look forward to time that we share.
But no closer I'd be to asking the question.
Besides... Some things I should probably not mention.

So the question I'll ask.
Please, don't make me repeat.
I just want to know -
What's up with those feet ! ? !

Note: In honor of Mary Ann's birthday, my 1995 poem to her is reprinted above for your reading pleasure. I was inspired by the following excerpt from a Jamie DePolo column in the Metro Times:

I find feet incredibly ugly and devoid of all aesthetic value. I admire their mechanics and amazing ability to perform, but I don't want to have to look at them. I am one person who will never have a foot fetish.

Jamie DePolo

Want a poem for *your* birthday? Inspire me.

Christopher



THE CHART. . . A Novel Idea. . .

But Don't Take It Too Seriously Or Rely On Its Accuracy

By Christopher Ozdarski

Several people in *The Group* had expressed an interest in putting together a sort of 'family tree' to represent our rather large circle of friends. So Ellen, in her infinite wisdom and with the help of other group members, put together the visually stimulating work of art published in last month's *Grope*. A graphic representation of how we all came to know each other. It may sound like fun, and on the surface it seems like a neat idea. But I was dragged along, kicking and screaming. Here's why. . .

I thought it was a great idea too. So a year or so ago I started to sketch one out on the back of a paper place mat in a bar. It started out simple. It started out fun. Then the human element showed up to the party. *What about so-and-so? Do I have to be associated to the group via that person? Why is John at the center?* Oh boy. . . do we have a lot of personality in our group or what?

Unlike genetic family trees, we don't have a trail of births and marriages to help us. How do you chart friendship when friendship, by definition, is a very personal thing. Who are you to say whom I am fond of and who am I to say who your friends are. I'd like to think that the ubiquitous nature of the friendships we have formed could best be charted by having lines drawn from each person to just about every other person. So the next logical option would be to represent how people met. A historically accurate diagram of how we came to know the other 'members' in the collection of acquaintances we affectionately refer to as *The Group*. Should be easy. The facts are the facts. But consider the following:

- What do you do when several people meet simultaneously, such as in a classroom?
- What if two people knew each other in college but don't come to be associated with *The Group* until years later when co-workers drag them to a social function where they are unceremoniously reunited?
- What if someone in *The Group* takes another member as a guest to a *non-group* function. Let's say the guest meets someone who the invitee doesn't know and that the new person is now a member of *The Group*? Would it be charted differently if the invitee and the new person work for the same company? Maybe they even smiled at each other as they passed in the hall on the way to or from the shitter.

These are actual occurrences gleaned from my knowledge of how some of my friends met. Attempting to chart all of these relationships results in an artsy-fartsy, scribbly looking mess with circles, triangles and dashed lines. Furthermore, it is far from complete. Where does it end? Who should be included?

Criteria for Membership.

How does a person become a member? Does a person have to be nominated by a current member and have the nomination seconded? Is there some magical number of current members who must collectively agree that a particular person is now (ta da) a member? Is attendance at a *Group* function cause for immediate acceptance? Is there a certain number of functions that must be attended and, if so, what are the requirements to make a gathering of friends a *Group* function? Membership may have its privileges, but what if someone doesn't want to be considered a member for some warped or twisted reason? Is membership a conscious choice or is it something earned? You may think that I'm taking this way too seriously, but who are we to be playing God by deciding who is or isn't in *The Group*?

John Morand's 15 Minutes of Fame.

In an informal poll with a statistical margin for error of about 100%, I asked a few people some questions about the origin of *The Group*. Answers varied, but most people reluctantly agreed that our 'family tree' begins with John Morand. Take John out of the picture and our 'family tree' is reduced to a bunch of small shrubs. *The Group* is what it is today because one person facilitated a great deal of introductions between friends from high school, college, different work environments, and various other places. That person is John.

So why are people *reluctant* to put John at the center of our chart? It's not that they don't like John. It's their fear that one person will be given credit for forming *The Group* when in fact we are all collectively responsible for what it is today. John didn't wake up one day back when he had hair and say to himself "I think I should make as many friends as possible and bring them together to form a large group that will ultimately worship me as their leader because of my strong interpersonal skills." He's just a naturally friendly guy who enjoys talking to people. John didn't form *The Group*. *We* did. All of us.

An Ozdarski's take on 'Live Forever.'

Many people devote a great deal of time cultivating and maintaining strong friendships. Individuals want to have friends. This is healthy to a point, but what happens when a *need to belong* becomes so great that life is a constant state of tension and stress?

Read the following sentence (print it on the bottom of your foot with a felt tip pen at two o'clock in the morning if you feel so inclined):

I am a happy person and my life would be complete even if I were not a member of a group.

If this isn't the case, then maybe it's time to reevaluate certain aspects of your life. Don't attempt to justify your own existence by formalizing the friendship process. Avoid the urge to quantify the friendships you have made and just feel good about what a great thing we have. It's ok to feel lucky to be a part of this wonderfully diverse and caring group, but life should be lived in its entirety. Don't just live for the weekend get togethers and dinners with the gang.

Now there will be those who will say that I'm the one who attempted to formalize the process and tally my friendships by starting this newsletter. This is not the case. I just wanted to have fun with *some* of my friends. Sure I wanted a lot of readers. That is part of the fun. Do all of my friends read this newsletter? No. Over a third of the people on Ellen's chart don't receive this publication. Does that make them any less a member of *The Group*? Does that make them less of a friend? Of course not. My intent for this newsletter is to help distribute event information and provide a vehicle for expressing thoughts and ideas for those who are interested. Participation is not mandatory.

Conclusion & Chart Disclaimer.

I understand that this chart thing can be fun and that it's interesting to see how people met. However, in my humble opinion, it will never be complete and its accuracy should be questioned. Think of it as the glow-in-the-dark condom of the family tree world. *This is a novelty item and it should not be relied upon.* . . . We have something good here. Don't try to capture it. Just bask in its glory and do your part to help nurture its growth. *Live all* of your life and enjoy being a part of this wonderful creation that we call *The Group*.

The Astrological Connection

by Mary Ann the Mystic

For August 1996

ARIES (March 21 - April 19)

Everyone has been telling you how to plan a special event. Just politely say "If you are willing to foot the bill... go to town." If they don't take you up on it, do it the way you originally planned. Best sex: NO SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20)

It is time to get away for some quality time with those you care about. Bring along toys, like a *peter-meter*, for extra laughs. Best Sex : With the one who breaks the *peter-meter*.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)

Now that you are on your own, feel free to walk around in your boxers. Oh wait, you did that before. Destroy the erect fortress between your inner-self and others and discover true bliss. Best Sex: When the fortress is erect.

CANCER (June 22 - July 21)

All the recent activity has left you over stimulated and zonked. Relax. Use a hot tub in the beginning of the month and a dip in lake Superior towards the end of the month. Best Sex: Nov. 3, 2001.

LEO (July 22 - Aug. 22)

Think water when planning your summer fun. Lakes, rivers, canals, hot tubs. . .

whatever it takes. Try variations by going both up and down the stream. Wear latex gloves when using water to clean up before and after the summer fun. Heck, you might want to wear them during the summer fun. Best Sex: While wearing latex gloves.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)

The next two weeks will be prime time for you to dare to take a risk you have been contemplating for months. You have already redecorated your home, now it is time for your soul. Best Sex: Well don't be too risky.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23)

Often your right hand doesn't know what the left is doing. I guess in some cases that is a good thing or you might go blind. (Or so they say.) But don't be worried if you are thinking you need a new eyeglass prescription. Best Sex: When everything goes hand in hand.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21)

Although you are somewhat of a loner, spend time with your friends. But be very, very, very careful not to rock the boat, for your partner's sake. Best Sex: When the boat is rocking.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

It is time to get away for a romantic rendezvous on the mossy bank of a canal in France. Well, maybe you should settled for the Soo. And go ahead and have a beer if anyone asks. If that doesn't work you could always double as Paul Marquis. Best Sex: When people think you are Paul.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

Boy, Freud would have a field day examining your psyche. Why you ask, because you are sleeping with Mary. But then again he also said, "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar." Best Sex: In the female dominant position.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

You and your partner swap naughty fantasies, leading to sweetly offbeat sex. Add to the ambiance and light a few candles. Best Sex: When it is off the beaten path.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20)

You've had sex on the beach after a glorious sunset, now try a hot tub. Remember, the temperature of the water will lower your sperm count. Best Sex: A fish in water. . . need I say more.

A Gift From An Internet Friend

Contributed By Bridget Dunnigan

A friend of mine sent me this with one of her e-mail messages. Author is unknown, but I thought y'all would enjoy it.

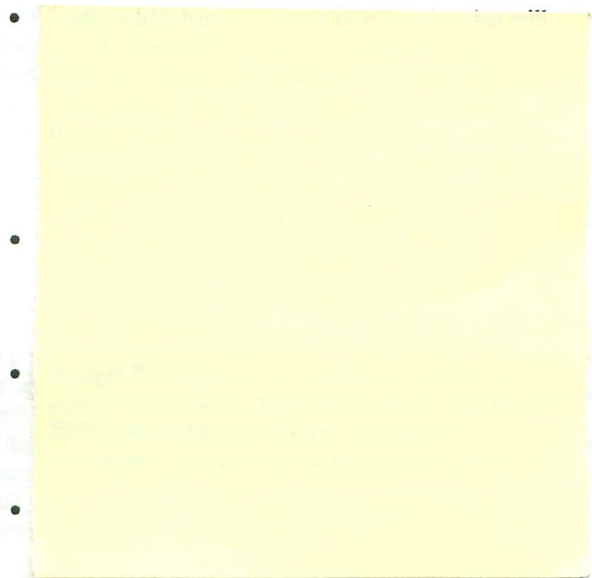
A horse and a rabbit are playing in a meadow. The horse falls into a mud hole and is sinking. He calls to the rabbit to go and get the farmer to help pull him out to safety. The rabbit runs to the farm but the farmer can't be found. So he drives the farmer's Mercedes back to the mud hole and ties some rope around the bumper. He then throws the other end of the rope to his friend, the horse, and drives the car forward saving him from sinking!

A few days later, the rabbit and horse were playing in the meadow again and the rabbit fell into the mud hole. The rabbit yelled to the horse to go and get some help from the farmer. The horse said, "I think I can stand over the hole!" So he stretched over the width of the hole and said, "Grab for my 'thingy' and pull yourself up." The rabbit did and pulled himself to safety.


The moral of the story:

If you're hung like a horse, you don't need a Mercedes.

Group Directory Updates:



August 1996 Groping Opportunities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Let's go to Four Green Fields to see Mike Ridley	3 Mary Ann Trapp's Hot Tub Birthday Bash
4 Mary Ann Trapp's Birthday (1967)	5 Mary Beth Pauline-Morand's Birthday (1970)	6	7	8 Tony Di Ponio's Birthday (1965) Lisa Howard's Birthday (1968)	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Rick Richard's Birthday (1966)	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 Carol Johnston's Birthday (1964)	30 John Flynn's Birthday (1967)	31  Congratulations Jay and Michelle

The Group Grope
 Editorial and publication headquarters:
 ██████████, Berkley, MI 48072

Published monthly for 69¢ per copy.
 (Not including the latex gloves that
 should be worn while reading.)

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Editors: Christopher Ozdarski
 and Ellen Bristol

Contact Christopher @ 810-██████████
 if you have any questions, comments,
 complaints, or contributions for future editions
 of this toxic publication.

Event Information

Friday, August 2nd: Dianne L. and Susan E. thought it would be fun to get a bunch of us together to see Mike R. while Bridget is still in town. Sounds good to me. Come one, come all.

Saturday, August 3, 7:00 p.m.: Mary Ann Trapp requests the pleasure of your company at her place for a little wine, water and song. Be sure to bring you swimsuit. (Although use of this garment, or any other garments for that matter, is optional.)
START PLANNING YOU SEPTEMBER FUN...

Friday, September 6th: **FREE Verve Pipe** concert in Grand Rapids. From what I understand, it will be something like a piano recital except that the young man who will be performing will be playing a *verve pipe*. (A.K.A. *giggle stick*, *live sausage*, *magic wand*, *pocket piccolo*. . .) I may be a little off on the facts, but contact Ellen Bristol if you think you might be interested. Whether you attend for the music or the subsequent sleep over at Ellen's, it promises to be a grand time.

Do it. . . Like Donna Reed

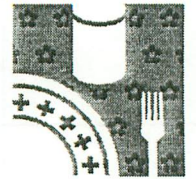
By Dianne Lee

I have affectionately been referred to as "Donna Reed" by some of my fellow Groper. Apparently, my secret fantasy life has emerged and my everyday persona has been enveloped by a past era entity. As part of my feeble attempt to come to grips with my alter ego, I have put to paper some enlightening household tips, in which you too can find pleasure.

Your daily, weekly, monthly or yearly tasks need not be reminiscent of your childhood chore. Whether you are toiling alone or find delight in purifying as a pair, the agony of purging your home of filth need not be a painful one. If you are in need of guidance, then take heed of these delightful hints:

- NOTE: Ladies and Gentlemen, a dress and pearls are optional. However, 3" heels are recommended when aerating the lawn.
- MEN: Looking for a biodegradable car buffer? Feminine napkins apply a smooth coat of wax and will bring a new luster to your car. Bonus: For hard to reach areas, simply remove the adhesive strip and affix the pad to the end of your snow scraper.
- LADIES: Leftover toothbrushes from your old lovers? Don't toss them to the curb. Your toilet or aquarium will benefit from the intricate scrubbing these bristles can provide.
- Kitchen floor sticky from a "9½ Weeks" weekend? First remove all articles (of furniture), then strip the floor down with a mixture of Mr. Clean and hot water. Latex gloves recommended.
- Bathroom floor and fixtures resembling an annex for the Hair Club for Men? Guests at the front door? Toilet paper wrapped around the toilet brush will get into all of your nooks and crannies.

Private consultations by "Donna" can be made and prices are negotiable.



THE GROUP GROPE

c/o Christopher Ozdarski

