

The Voice

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Volume Four

Issue Three

December 2001

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Gay Man Beaten to Death
Pages 2, 8, 9 & 10



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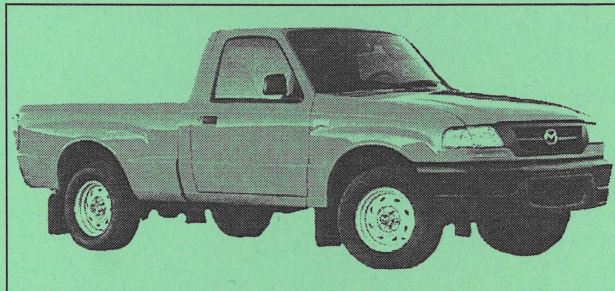
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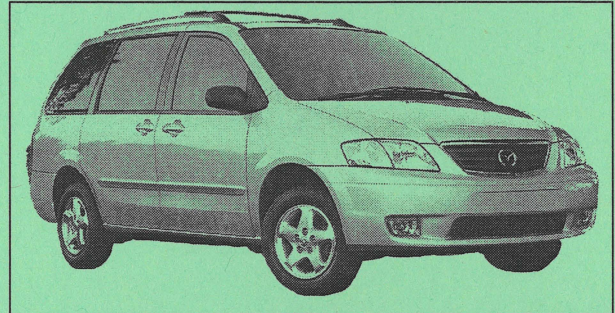
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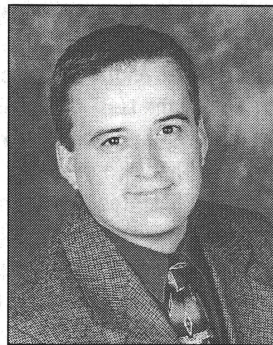
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FIRST WORDS - Guest Editorial

Aaron Webster: A Co-op brother who will not to be forgotten.

By Craig Hunter

What follows is a story that must be told and retold, a story that must not be forgotten, a story that touches us all as members LGBT Communities and as Canadians.

Aaron Webster, 41, was the President of Cityview Housing Co-op in Vancouver, BC.

Early in the morning of November 17, 2001, Aaron Webster was murdered in a public park. According to witnesses, he was attacked by a group of three or four men. The Vancouver Police have stated that they are treating the case as a hate crime as his murder was motivated by the fact that he was gay.

This story broke across Canada. In the following days, there was sorrow, anger, accusations and some new promises. I feel that the most important thing is that we cannot let Aaron's story go untold, that we must share it with everyone until what happened to Aaron Webster has touched all of us.

My partner Jason and I attended the vigil in Toronto's Cawthra Square Park on November 24, 2001. We looked around the crowd for familiar faces. There were faces that we recognized from our work in Toronto's gay community. There were faces that we recognized from our work in the co-op community. And, more importantly, there were many faces we did not recognize.

It was a quiet and reflective gathering and, in a way, quite beautiful. There was candlelight and messages of support for Aaron's friends and family, his co-op and the LGBT Communities of Vancouver.

These people shivering in the darkness had come from different ethnic and social backgrounds. Some of them were gay, some of them were not. Tonight it didn't matter. Tonight we all had a common bond: we were the people who had come out to mourn a victim of senseless violence. We listened to the speakers, to those who talked about the horror that had happened and to those who talked about the man we had lost. We stayed afterwards and listened to people tell stories of how they had been victims of homophobia and gay bashing. There was anger in some of the voices, hopes for healing in others. All

plainly stated that this must never happen again.

There have been many suggestions following Aaron Webster's murder. NDP MP Svend Robinson recently introduced a Private Member's Bill to include sexual orientation within federal hate crimes laws. Justice Minister Anne McLellan has said she will now reconsider the issue, but needs to "consult" with provincial Ministers. EGALE (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) has suggested a letter writing campaign. According to Xtra West, Lorne Mayencourt, the openly gay Liberal member of the BC provincial legislature who represents downtown's (Vancouver) Vancouver-Burrard riding, has scheduled a meeting with education minister Christy Clark. He wants to modify the school's safety kits, for example, so they'll address homophobia alongside other forms of bullying and discrimination."

Aaron Webster's death underscores the violence that members of the LGBT communities face on a daily basis. The fact that Aaron was a co-op member brings that fact closer to home for many of us. Homophobia is real. And, it does happen.

As members of the LGBT Communities, we cannot let this story fade into the background. In this issue of The Voice there is a request for action from EGALE (page 8) a message and poem from the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (page 9) and an article and photograph reprinted with permission from the Toronto Star, (page 10).

We lost special member of the LGBT Communities in Aaron Webster. He was president of his co-op. He was someone's child, someone's friend, and someone's neighbour. Don't let the violence happen to your children, your friends or your neighbours.

Please note that this was a violent and senseless attack and these articles may upset some. We can all do only what our conscience tells us, but I hope we will all take the time to read Aaron's story and share it with someone.

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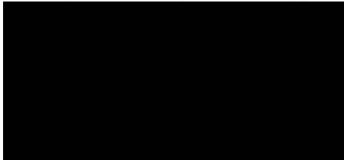
Next deadline for submissions and ad copy is December 20th, 2001.

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HAVE YOUR SAY



If you have something that you like to say about what you read in The Voice send a letter to the editor. We'd like to hear from you!

You can email us at [REDACTED] or go to our web site at www.thevoice.on.ca and click on HAVE YOUR SAY and use our form mail. If you'd like to snail mail us our address is on page two.

I just wanted to respond to Marus McKay's letter in the November 2001 issue of The Voice. I think it was great to see another congregation in the area making a statement of their total inclusiveness. While I, too, was surprised at the amount of space given to it, I think it was fine. I also think The First Unitarian Congregation of Waterloo has some very good marketing skills. Westminster United Church did something similar a few years ago, but the only coverage we got was the article I wrote. Marus, the only way The Voice will give more time to Christianity or any other religion is for people to write articles about their congregations and experiences and submit them. I don't think the editorial staff at The Voice is up on these things and it's up to us to pass on the word of other religious places that are inclusive and accepting in our area.

Paul Warder, Kitchener

As a confused gay-Christian who often feels alienated in our community for being Christian I have been meaning to write for some time now to thank you for having the wonderful column on spirituality. I have learned a lot and just reading that column ("*Spirituality*" by Noel Springwood - monthly in *The Voice*) has helped me to feel better about myself.

I wonder if Mr. Springwood would consider writing specifically about reconciling being Christian with being gay?

Robert Richardson, Kitchener

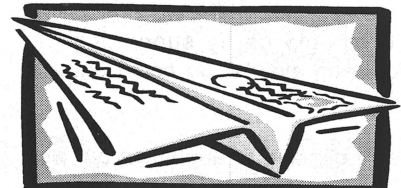
I have heard that WWRP has been in the process of setting up a 'working constitution'. As a member of the community even though I think the constitution is a good idea, I feel that the objectives of WWRP should be to put on Pride and to be a support group for other organizations in our community. WWRP could be the organization that an individual who is looking for a service, product or a support group could contact and be provided with contact information of those organizations that can meet his/her needs.

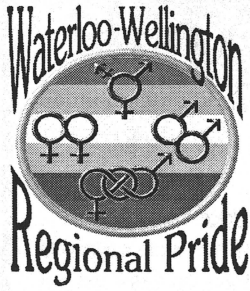
I would be interested in giving an annual donation to such an organization if I could get an income tax receipt. To join as a member, I would definitely not be interested.

At WWRP's annual general meeting which I am unable to attend. I really hope that whoever is elected into the steering committee continues to work on the constitution and the organization's structure to ensure that the needs of our community are being met and not that of personal agendas.

Anyone else out there have comments or concerns about what the WWRP is or isn't doing?

Name withheld at the request of the writer.





Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride Up-Date

By Jason Moore

There s No Place Like Home! Submit your ideas in jpeg format to our email address or submit it on a disk by snail mail. Contest deadline is Jan 31, 2002. The winner will receive a profile in both the 2002/2003 Rainbow Directory and Pride Guide, public acknowledgement at the opening ceremonies and other fabulous prizes. The winning entry will be announced on our website in February and in the March edition of The Voice. **(Entries become property of the WWRP and cannot be returned.)**

On November 6th, 2001 the Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride Committee (WWRP) held its Annual General Meeting. On that night, those in attendance elected 8 people as the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will act as a Board of Directors until WWRP is incorporated.

You can contact WWRP at wrrp@rainbow.on.ca or by snail mail at our **NEW** postal address

Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride Committee
 P.O. BOX 31009
 25 Frederick Street
 Kitchener, Ontario
 N2H 6M0

This year s theme is **There s No Place Like Home!** Our local Pride Weekend is June 7-9, 2002 but we ll be celebrating long before that. If everyone works together, we ll be able to celebrate the diversity of the LGBT communities in our region with one hell of a party! We re planning events for Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph. We intend to be PROUD and LOUD.

Check out our website at www.rainbow.on.ca for updates on our progress.

We ve got a lot of new, fresh people this year who have some very exciting ideas. Are you ready for it? We hope so. Working on the success of last year, we plan to move forward. It s our goal to bring the LGBT communities a wide variety of events, vendors, entertainment and FUN, FUN, FUN. After all, our local Pride celebrations are one of the first to kick off Pride season in Ontario. Let s show everyone why **There s No Place Like Home!**

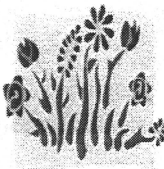
Current Steering Committee:

- Craig Hunter **President**
- Ms. A.J. Mahari **Vice President**
- Melody Alderwick **Secretary**
- Cefn Fforest **Treasurer**
- Rick Sickinger **Fundraising/Events Director**
- Jay Moore **Promotions/Marketing Director**
- Kathy Frey **Director-at-Large**
- Suzanne Botsford **Director-at-Large (appointed Nov 30, 2001)**

Here's your chance to get involved with Pride! If you are interested, please contact us at wrrp@RAINBOW.ON.CA or call our NEW number insert number here to leave a message. We need volunteers to help with events all year long and especially on Pride Weekend.

In the next little while, we ll be asking YOU to help us by supporting our fundraising events. So come out and have FUN!

We re pleased to announce our new LOGO CONTEST. We need a great logo to represent this year s theme,



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Fear and Loathing in the Middle Class

Middle-class Canadians find dozens of reasons not to help the poor. In reality, though, the cost of helping may be far less than the cost of apathy.

By Randy Richmond

Christmas must be coming; the poor are back. They're in the newspaper and on television and radio. They're the subject of teary stories and campaigns in schools, churches and charities. The sad faces. The worn-out clothing. The little kids who don't know Santa.

You know the routine. Plunk a coin in the Salvation Army kettle, throw a couple of cans of beans into the food bank bin, drop off some old clothing. God bless us, everyone, and pass the turkey. And the great thing is, they're gone by February, which is just about when our credit-card bills come in.

Let's be honest; we don't want them around all year. We don't care that much about them.

If we did care, there wouldn't be so many of these facts and figures, gleaned from Statistics Canada and local and provincial social agencies: The provincial Tory government has cut most welfare benefits and shelter allowances by 21.6 per cent, kept minimum wages frozen and eliminated a \$37-a-month extra payment for pregnant women on welfare.

About 1.7 million people lived in poverty in Ontario in 1996. About 500,000 children lived in poverty, an increase of 99 per cent in eight years. A recent poll showed 58 per cent of Ontarians approve of the job Premier Mike Harris is doing.

The federal government has limited its contributions to social assistance to the provinces and tightened access to unemployment insurance.

Canada's poverty rate in 1996 was the highest since the mid-1980s. While average family incomes in Canada stabilized between 1995 and 1996, the incomes of the poorest 20 per cent dropped. A recent poll showed 65 per cent of Canadians approve of the job Prime Minister Jean Chretien is doing.

More Londoners live in low-income households, 15.2 per cent, than the provincial average, 13.1 per cent. About 2,500 Londoners are waiting for subsidized housing, triple the number in 1995. The proportion of children in low-income households in London rose to 18.8 per cent in 1996 from 15.2 per cent five years earlier. The provincial average is 17.7 per cent.

London gives less per capita to the United Way than Windsor, Sarnia, Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto and Ottawa, and less than the provincial average.

That's a lot of discouraging facts and figures, and my gut response is likely the same as many others in the middle class: Oh Lord, please don't let me become poor.

That's one reason for our indifference, if not outright hostility, to the poor. We're so busy trying to avoid poverty, we have little inclination to help those already stuck in it. After two recessions in the '80s and '90s, thousands of job cuts and several stock market scares, no one is taking their seat at the middle-class banquet table for granted. It's become a game of musical chairs; every time the economy slows, another seat is taken away.

And we've got our own statistics to keep us awake at night. The mortgage, car payments, tuition fees and credit card bills. Average family income, single income, male income, female income, young income and old income fell between 1990 and 1995, according to Statistics Canada's 1996 census, released this year. Meanwhile, the price of living was going

up.

"The middle class has become far more nervous about their own security and stability," says Rev. Susan Eagle, a city councillor and anti-poverty activist who spends much of her day trying to get the middle class to care about the poor.

It's not just the recessions, stock market tumbles and never-ending layoffs that have us middle-classers worried, she says. We're feeling smothered by taxes. That's because governments and corporate leaders looking to cut spending have been telling us that for

years, says Eagle.

"It creeps into the language," she says. These days, the media routinely add "tax-weary" to the word "Londoners" whenever budget stories arise, she adds.

We used to happily pay for these programs, so long as we were getting good services for our taxes, says Roderic Beaujot, a University of Western Ontario sociology professor. But debt-conscious governments began cutting the level of services -- services that the middle class used. The middle class turned its back on universality of social services. "We lost the middle class," says Beaujot.

Social programs eat up so many of our tax dollars, so we're told, that it makes sense -- common sense -- to cut them to save us all. And we middle



classers don't mind if those programs are ones that help the poor, because, even though we may fret about our slipping economic status, we really don't think we're ever going to go on welfare. Everywhere we look, we've got proof of how well we're doing. We've got nice houses and nice cars and nice neighbourhoods. Many, if not most of us, live in the suburbs. The closest we get to poverty is spotting a panhandler while we're stopped at a red light downtown.

"The less exposed we are to the poor, the less we see their side," says Eagle. The less we see, the more we think it's not really that bad to be poor. In spite of all the cuts, most people still think there's a good safety net for the poor, says Eagle.

There's a welfare office and there's the Children's Aid Society, the middle class think. These people are being looked after. Even when we try to help, we wonder why we bother.

On Halloween night, my wife came back from the door shaking her head at dropping a few pennies into a Unicef box.

"I hate doing this," she said. "We put pennies into little boxes and the poor in some country can eat for another day, while the corporations and governments that cause the poverty keep doing what they've been doing all along. What's the point?"

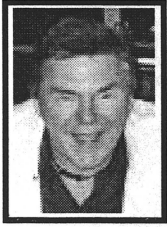
And if our politics can't bring ourselves to blame the government or our corporate society, we can always blame the poor themselves.

The stories that have run in The London Free Press this week about poverty have raised a few eyebrows all right, not just about the level of poverty in the city, but about how some poor people spend their money and live.

No one is telling us anything different. The mainstream Christian churches, though hardly perfect, used to temper middle-class greed with the occasional lesson about helping the poor. But how many of us bother going to church any more? The religions replacing Christianity -- self-help books, affirmation seminars and personal enhancement videos -- have little to do with helping others. It's hard to worry about the poor's salvation when we're working on our own.

You can't argue with spirituality. Or any of the other good reasons to forget the poor. Take your pick: It's their fault. It's too big a problem. There's wel-

Continued on Page 21



Santa Baby: This Is Your Last Chance

By Charles W. Westfall



I'm getting fed up with Santa Claus. With Christmas hot upon us again, I'm writing my usual letter. This year, however, it's more of an ultimatum. I've had it. Year after year of being good, writing and waiting - for nothing. It's more than I can bear. So this is it. No more. If I don't get what I ask for this year, good bye Santa. Good bye for good.

OK That sounds pretty desperate; so, let me explain.

I started writing Santa a long time ago. I write very polite, almost poetic letters. I always ask for the politically correct and socially laudable things: peace, understanding, patience, prosperity, community, comfort and joy. Then, almost as a second thought and quite slyly, I think, I slip in my own special request. It's always the same. I ask for a handsome, gorgeous, sculpted and hung hunk to share my life.

Now, I ask you: is that so terrible? Good grief, you can look in almost any Gay publication and find hundreds, thousands, even millions of guys doing the same thing. So, it seems to me to be perfectly acceptable to ask Santa to bring me someone special.

Well, apparently Santa doesn't find it so easy. The *Porno Magazine* subscription I got a few years ago just didn't cut it. At least, Santa knew better not to send a VCR or DVD. I don't have either of those technical advancements. Moreover, vicarious companionship and out and out exhibitionism isn't what I'm looking for anyway. For the most part, those productions seem far too athletic and no one ever seems to be having any fun. Never knew that Sex could be so dismally serious.

Same with the Dildo of the Month Club membership that arrived the following

year. It isn't that I wasn't fascinated by the shapes, sizes, colours, textures and, often, mechanical features of the Plastic or Rubber Priapus that arrived each month. They were intriguing. Also, the thought that maybe someone had actually served as a model for the original cast roused a bit of curiosity, if nothing more. No, that was, ultimately, a disappointment, too.

Last year's Ken Doll was simply embarrassing. Not that I didn't enjoy getting a Ken doll. No, it was the fact that Santa would even think that I'd settle for that kind of Toy Boy. That's totally laughable. I'm far more discerning.



Mind you, the Ken Doll does look comfortable surrounded by my collection of stuffed animals. And, I can be happy that he didn't leave the gift I've dreaded most: one of those inflatable simulators that are supposed to be hard to distinguish from the real thing. The grotesque and fixed smile alone is enough to turn me off.

There's usually a collection of sex toys scattered among my gifts. Most of them have clips, straps, applications, flavours and instructions that leave me quite bewildered. Often the prospect, not of pleasure, but of pain and discomfort they promise prompts me to relegate them quickly to a closet

shelf. But, what good is a closetfull of toys if there's no one to play with anyway?

So, this year, I've decided to help Santa Claus. It's a last ditch attempt to be perfectly clear and uncompromising in my request so that he can be perfectly clear and uncompromising in what he delivers.

For starters, I checked out some personal columns. Immediately, I discovered why Santa might be experiencing some problems, even confusion over what I thought was something simple.

The categories of hunk, companion, lover, trick, boy toy, man toy and partner available were almost endless. Check these out, from just one ad: Romance, Friendship and Hanging Out, Phone Buddies, Transsexual and Transgender Relationships, One Night Stands, Total Tops, Submissive Bottoms, First Timers, Bi-Guys, Bi-curious Guys, Bears and Big Men, Leather and SM, Fetishes, Kink and Raunch, Transgender Admirers, Semales and Cross Dressers. Another was more general, offering simply Hot Men, Hard Men, Hung Men and Horny men. Most promised that with just one phone call and just a few dollars per minute, I could get, if not one, at least some, they didn't specify one or some of what, and that I could get some that very night. I wondered if they might even include Pizza and Wings. Probably not because these weren't even the professionals, just the lonely guys.

Well, Santa, I was beginning to experience the very dilemma you must face when you get letters that have requests like mine. Without even reading the individual ads available, my head was fairly spinning with the wide array of choices to be had.

Oddly enough, and as an aside, I didn't find the same kind of attention getting services available for women. Do Lesbians do it differently? They must know something that Gay Men don't. At least, they know how to be more discrete and indirect about it. Maybe I should become a Lesbian. That seems to promise a less volatile existence. Or maybe I'm just reading the wrong mags.

In the meantime, I'm getting desperate. So, desperate, in fact, that I'm thinking of trekking down to the local street worker corner and standing there provocatively until some John comes along and picks me up. On second thought, though, at my age the very fact that I'm standing at all is often provocative enough. In fact it is often evocative, too, of sympathy.

Well, the upshot of all this is, that time is running out, for me and for Santa Claus. If my gorgeous, loving, sexy, caring, rich and generous hunk isn't under the tree this year, that's it. Over and done with. No more letters, Santa. I might even start a rumour that he's just a myth anyway. A man of empty promises and false hopes. Come to think of it, not a superman, but someone not so different from a lot of the men I've met. But that's another story. Meanwhile, it'll be Bah Humbug for me from this year on if I don't get what I want for Christmas.



For the moment, however, I'm still a believer. So, my letter is on it's way to Santa, along with my wish for peace, prosperity, joy and love for all, especially my readers, friends and family.

Happy Holidays and Happy Hunting to all.

Charles W. Westfall is a writer living in Hamilton. This column is a Voice exclusive.

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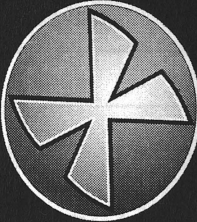
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EGALE recognizes both physical and verbal assaults as hate crimes. We lobbied vigorously to see gay-bashings, and other crimes motivated by hatred on the ground of sexual orientation, included as hate crimes under the sentencing legislation (Bill C-41) back in 1994-95, and our submissions also called for the simultaneous expansion of the hate propaganda provisions of the Criminal Code. A copy of our submissions can be found on our Website at:
<http://www.egale.ca/politics/c41/c41.txt>

For those unfamiliar with the relevant Criminal Code provisions, the two sections dealing with hate crimes are:

(a) Section 718.2 of Bill C-41, which provides:

“(i) evidence that the offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor, ... shall be deemed to be aggravating circumstances.”

(b) Section 318(4) of the Criminal Code creates a substantive crime of promoting hatred against identifiable groups. The definition of “identifiable groups” is underinclusive, however, and does not include hate propaganda on grounds such as sexual orientation, gender, disability etc. There is also a ‘religious exemption’ for those who promote hatred based upon their sincere religious beliefs.

The recent Action Alert calls for community support to see sexual orientation included in the hate propaganda provisions, and also for the reform of provocation law so that gay-bashers are no longer able to rely upon the ‘homosexual panic’ defence.

EGALE ACTION ALERT

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HATRED!

The Background:

- On Saturday, November 17, 2001, gay Vancouver resident Aaron Webster was viciously beaten to death in Stanley Park;
- Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people are common targets of hate crimes across Canada;
- We are currently excluded from federal hate propaganda laws, making it perfectly legal to promote hatred against our communities;
- In addition, gay-bashers are often able to rely on the discredited ‘homosexual panic’ defence, claiming they were justified in committing murder because the victim ‘came on’ to them;
- In 1999, Justice Minister Anne McLellan said she would make “necessary changes” to the Criminal Code to protect gays and lesbians under hate propaganda laws “in the coming months”. She has done nothing;
- NDP MP Svend Robinson recently introduced a Private Member’s Bill to include sexual orientation within federal hate crimes laws;
- Justice Minister Anne McLellan has said she will now re-consider the issue, but needs to “consult” with provincial Ministers.

THE TIME FOR TALK IS PAST! ACT NOW TO HOLD MINISTER McLELLAN TO HER COMMITMENT!

Please phone, write, fax or e-mail the Justice Minister today!

- Tell her it’s time to take action to protect lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people from hatred and violence;
- Ask when she will be amending the Criminal Code to include lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people within the hate propaganda provisions;
- Ask when she will reform provocation law so that gay-bashers can no longer rely on the discredited ‘homosexual panic’ defense to justify violence against members of our communities.

You can contact the Minister of Justice (postage free) c/o:

**The Hon. Anne McLellan, PC, MP
Minister of Justice
House of Commons,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6**

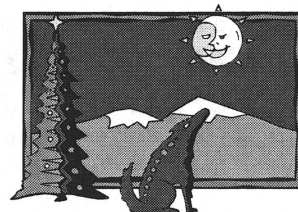
Ph: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

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Murder Victim was President of City-View Co-op

Reprinted with permission CHF BC

Cityview Housing Co-op members are grieving the loss of their president, Aaron Webster, murdered in Stanley Park on November 17th in an apparent case of gaybashing.

The following is a poem written by a member of the co-op on behalf of all Aaron's friends and neighbours at Cityview:

*With all our love
you are in the arms of the angels now*

*How do you let death in
when life itself is such a struggle?*

*How do you embrace
brutal bruises and blows
think comfort for
the unthinkable?*

*How do you save a life
when the last breath is already gone?*

*If I could wrap my arms
tight around you
carry you through the pain*

*open the windows wide
for the light to shine in*

*I would carry you a million miles
to hear the song of the sea again
scatter your nightmares
across the face of the sun*

*I would smile with you
surrender you to the heavens
watch your spirit like an eagle
soar free*

At CHF BC's annual general meeting on November 24, delegates stood for a minute's silence in memory of Aaron. Also CHF BC directors Diane Winkler and Cathy Andre took time out of the AGM to attend an emotional public service held for Aaron held

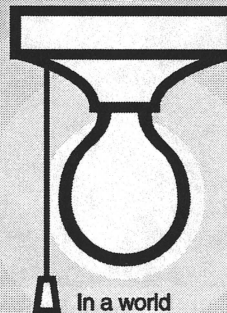
at St. John's United Church.

In Toronto, housing co-operators (including members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgendered Peoples Caucus) and members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgendered Communities at large held a vigil in memory of Aaron in Cawthra Square Park on Church Street.

Cityview members ask that, in lieu of flowers, donations be sent to groups working to fight intolerance and hate crimes. The co-op will accept cards and letters sent care of

Lisa, #403 - [REDACTED] East Pender Street,
Vancouver BC
V5L [REDACTED]

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Vigil remembers gay man beaten to death

'We have lost a brother'

By Nicholas Keung (Toronto Star Staff Reporter)

They all feel they knew Aaron Webster - if not personally, at least through the familiar experience of feeling threatened simply for being gay.

Thousands of kilometres from Vancouver's Stanley Park, where the 41-year-old man was killed Nov. 17 in what police call a gay-bashing attack, 150 people gathered in Toronto last night to mourn his death - and condemn the senseless violence against one of their own.

"I did not know Aaron, but I know he's yet another gay man who had been a victim of mindless, senseless homophobia," said Tom

Warner, an activist and educator against homophobia.

"We have to stay strong to be visible, speak up, make demands and bring about changes."

Vancouver police said Webster was attacked by three or more assailants,

some armed with baseball bats or pool cues, early that morning in Stanley Park, a cruising spot for men to meet other men. His bloodied body - naked except for hiking boots and socks - was found in a parking lot about 2:30 a.m. Yesterday's vigil at Toronto's Cawthra Square Park on Church St., near Wellesley St., followed a memorial service last Sunday at Stanley Park, attended by 2,000 outraged Vancouver residents.

"I feel sorrow and anger," said Helen Knight, who has a lesbian daughter. "It could be my own child. Things have changed,

but this (attack) set everything back 10 years." Peter O'Neill agreed. "We must stand up for anti-violence, not necessarily for gays and lesbians, but anybody. I'm overwhelmed that people could do this to one another," said the 56-year-old Toronto man.

Toronto police Constable Judy Nosworthy, liaison officer with the city's gay and lesbian community, told mourners, "We have lost a brother, and we have to make sure it doesn't happen again."

Ernie LaCasse, a community member of the police liaison committee, said issues involving the community's safety were raised at its recent meeting, and he encouraged victims of gay-bashing to report to police.

"We do not need tolerance; it makes us less than who we are. We want full acceptance," said LaCasse, before signing a condolence book to be delivered to Webster's friends.

Vancouver police have received about a dozen tips and interviewed four witnesses, but are still hunting for suspects.

Community rallies after gay-bashing

Aaron Webster, 41, savagely beaten to death near popular gay stroll

Members of Vancouver's gay community are set to march down Davie Street on Sunday November 18th, in the afternoon in honour of West End resident Aaron Webster.



The 41-year-old was the victim of what police say was a brutal gay-bashing in Stanley Park early Saturday.

"It's early in the investigation, of course, but we certainly see some earmarks that that could in fact be the case," said Vancouver police spokesperson Det. Scott Driemel. "The fact that we have a victim that is naked (and) it is in an area that is frequented by a number of people in the gay community in the city of Vancouver ... we can't discount that. It is a possibility."

Webster was found badly beaten near the Bridle Path, across Park Drive from Second Beach, at about 2:30 a.m. He had been hit repeatedly in the head and upper body with what police say was a baseball bat or a pool cue by at least three men.

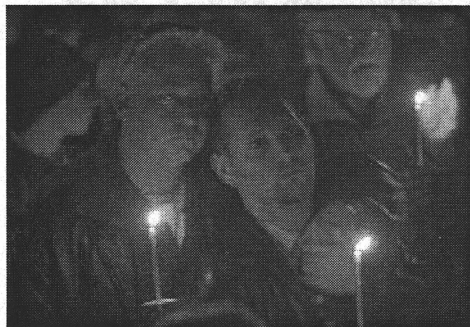
Driemel said Saturday that the police were "putting out a caution to members of that community who attend the park at night for social activity."

"The park after dark can be a dangerous place," he said.

The march is expected to get underway just after 1 p.m. The walk starts at the Little Sisters bookstore at 1238 Davie St. and will head down Davie towards English Bay.

Once there, several people are expected to make speeches including Vancouver-Burrard MLA Lorne Mayencourt and a member of the police department. Some people will then head into the park to the area where Webster's body was found.

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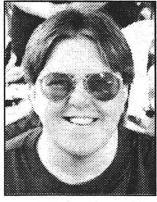
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SHADES OF GREY



Sex In The Park Was Not What Murdered Aaron Webster

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

On Saturday November 18th, Aaron Webster, a gay man, was beaten to death in a Vancouver-area park. The scene of this crime is described as being a "well-known gay stroll in the park". (Globe & Mail, November 20, 2001 - "Park slaying won't stop encounters by gay man") Police have determined that Webster's murder was a hate-crime.

In The Globe and Mail, on Tuesday November 20, 2001, Robert Matas, in his column, "Park slaying won't stop encounters by gay man", writes, "The killing of Aaron Webster ... angered a lot of people in the gay community, but it will have no impact on Mr. Takhar's preference for anonymous park sex.

When "cruising," he prefers the park to Vancouver's numerous gay pubs or sex-phone lines, Mr. Takhar said ..."

Matas continues, "They have responded to the killing with defiance, defending their right to be in the park. Park sex is widely regarded as an important part of gay culture in the city."

Apparently the spot where Webster was murdered has been a popular area for park sex for years.

These facts notwithstanding, clearly, Aaron Webster did not deserve to die, nor should he have met with such hate and violence. Many said that he was beaten, and ultimately killed, for being gay and not because he may have been in the park that night to engage in sex in the park.

Some who engage in park sex say it is 'safe' because it is spontaneous and anonymous and that they seek it out so that they do not have to be concerned about others in their lives knowing about their orientation.

The question all hate-crimes raise, is, how 'safe' is park sex?

C. Franklin, of Montreal, recently shared the following on an email list:

"I'm sorry to say, but I have a REALLY hard time understanding the concept of anonymous, public (and to my knowledge, illegal ??) sexual activity to be of "cultural" importance.

I, for one, do not understand the compulsion to have anonymous sexual encounters with other people in a public area and put oneself at risk for disease (if names are not given, surely medical histories are not exchanged!?!?), arrest or violence.

Please understand that I am NOT suggesting that anyone who goes to a park for sex is asking to be beaten or killed. I am NOT suggesting anything of the sort. That is just as ludicrous as suggesting that a woman is asking to be raped because of what she's wearing.

I am, however, slightly questioning the wisdom in judgment of people who knowingly put themselves in harm's way for something that can be done in the privacy of one's own home, a hotel room, or scores of less conspicuous or dangerous places.

I personally find it offensive to suggest that illegal public sex is in any way part of my "gay culture".

I find that these sorts of statements only reinforce the widely-believed notion that being gay is all about sex - nothing more - and that is very hard for me to stomach, especially knowing how that fact negatively affects struggles for equality and protection under the law."

(re-printed with Franklin's permission)

Whether one agrees with park sex or not, Webster's murder should give long pause for thought. Another brother, is gone, murdered at the hands of homophobic-hatred. Murdered, according to witnesses, not because of his reason



for being in the park that night, or for the area in the park that he was in, but murdered, that night, because he was gay. **That is absolutely unacceptable.**

How far have we come, really? Does the answer to this question matter even half as much as the answer we need to find to the question, how much further do we have to go?

How much further do we have to go in order to end such senseless hate-filled and bigoted violence? How much further do we have to go to educate those who just don't understand that no matter what differences exist between people, there is no such thing as a difference that gives licence to disrespect and devalue the right of another to his or her life?

It is that long road that we still have to travel that is one major reason that gay pride is still so necessary. Pride is not just a party, it's about visibility and education too. When you attend any Pride Celebration, think of Aaron Webster.

The loss of one is a loss to us all. The act of homophobic-hatred that took Aaron Webster's life throws the brutal bloody ball back into our court. Yes our court. It is up to each and every one of us to do his/her part in caring enough to be a part of the solution -- education! We must continue to work peacefully to ensure our safety and basic human rights.

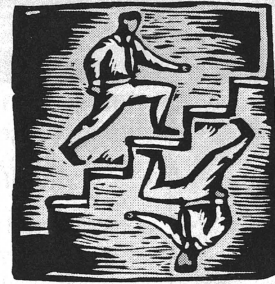
When you think about gay pride, remember Aaron Webster.

The opinions expressed in this column are those of A.J. Mahari, only, and are not made from any editorial standpoint of The Voice Magazine.



Starting a Small Business: The Advantages

By Darren Kregar



Back in the September issue I listed some of the disadvantages of starting a small business. Some of these disadvantages include: irregular cash flows, no benefits, paperwork and time consuming. This month I will now focus on the advantages.

Opportunities

You have the opportunity of making more money working for yourself than for someone else. Even though there is no limit on what you can earn, it is limited only by your energy, management skills and financial position. Studies show, however, that making money is not one of the main motivating factors of small business ownership.

If you continuously monitor your business and be willing to change and take risk when necessary. You must also watch the competition. As a small business, you can usually add new products and services quickly. Recently I discovered that one of my larger competitors is offering tax advice online for \$19.00 per inquiry. The company will respond within 2 days. Since I am currently setting up my own website, tax advice online would not be very difficult to add. It also allows my company to be a part of the e-commerce fad.

Your Own Boss

Being your own boss, you set your own priorities as the decision maker. You have control over your own destiny, as

you are the only person responsible for the success of your company. You may set the hours you want that can accommodate your personal and lifestyle needs. You can determine your own style and type of work environment. As you are your own boss, you cannot be laid off or be fired.

Even though you are your own boss, your customers are essentially your boss. You must satisfy them by being open to when they want your product or service. Set prices that your customers are willing to pay. Provide products and services that your customers want and need. If you don't pay attention to your customers, they can essentially fire you by taking their business elsewhere.

Tax Advantages

There are some tax benefits over people who are employed. For example medical insurance premiums can be deducted at 100% as a business expense instead of as a tax credit. If you operate a home based business, you may deduct a percentage of your home expenses based on the space you use in your home.

Some of the expenses that you can deduct from your income that as an employed individual cannot is a portion of your internet and cell phone costs, travel expenses, computer leases, percentage of all auto expenses that relate to earning income and books and subscriptions that you purchase to remain up-to-date in your business.

Prestige and Status

If your business is successful, you will receive status and recognition. People will look up to you as a successful entrepreneur. You will be able to drive the vehicle you want, such as a BMW or a Mercedes. You can become part of networking groups, participate in community events and receive media attention.

If you are planning to start a small business and would like to meet to discuss your idea(s) and the tax consequence, call (ETS). Darren Kregar, owner of ETS is a graduate of WLU's Diploma in Accounting program. Along with assisting business in developing their business plans, ETS also offers book-keeping and tax planning for self-employed individuals.



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Fake Cop Blackmails Man In Park Sex Scam

by Jack Siu
365Gay.com Newscenter
in Toronto

A closeted Toronto man has been bilked out more than \$10,000 by a phoney police officer who threatened to tell his wife her husband was having gay sex, and police believe there may be more victims.

Police tell 365Gay.com the victim was cruising for sex in a park in the city's east end when he was approached by a man. When the victim indicated he was interested in the sex, the man identified himself as a police officer. The phoney cop said he was on undercover duty and gave a false name and police badge number, although no badge was shown.

The fake officer took down the man's name, address, and elicited other personal details, including the fact he is married.

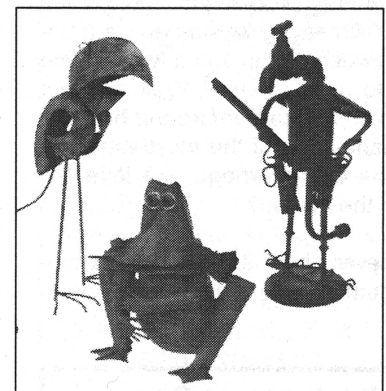
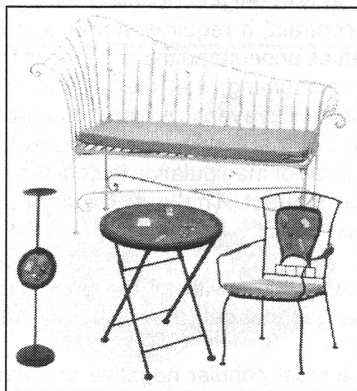
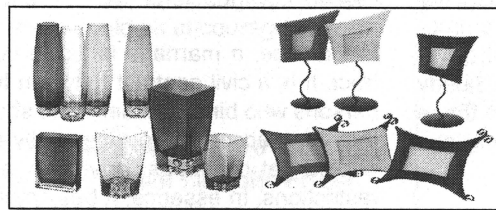
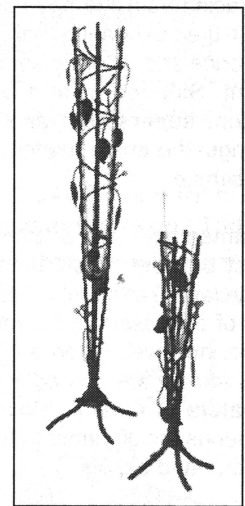
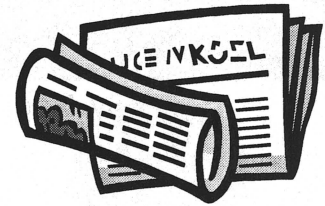
The victim was told he would be charged with indecent assault unless he paid \$500. The shakedown artist also threatened to tell the man's wife. In addition, the phoney cop told the man that there was video surveillance of the man.

Over the next few months the victim was conned out of more than ten thousand dollars. Finally, he got up the courage to go to police.

When the fake officer made another attempt to get money out of the victim, police moved in and arrested him. None of the money has been recovered.

Charged with extortion and impersonating a police officer is 38 year old David James Spurrell.

Police say the victim does identify himself as being either gay or bisexual, and believe there may be other victims out there. Officers are urging anyone who has been blackmailed by a man purporting to be a Toronto police officer to come forward and call the Major Crimes Unit at (416) 808-4201.



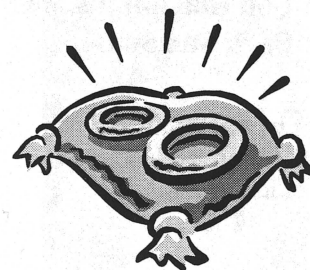
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Spiritual Life: The Quest for Freedom

To Have And To Hold ... Till Death

By Noel Springwood



As same sex couples across Canada place their lives and marriages on the line again before the courts, the same tired mishmash of specious arguments is surfacing from the nay sayers. I for one am tired of hearing them and want to try, once and for all, to set the record straight. Stripped of all the rhetoric, emotion, superstition and religious trappings, the entire matter is actually quite simple.

Fundamentally, it is a question of a conflict between basic human rights and the law. That shouldn't present too much of a problem. It becomes problematic, however, when a lot of extraneous factors are poured in to muddy the waters of debate. Most of these extraneous factors arise from religious traditions and beliefs.

Chief among the false arguments is the one which says that marriage is a union between a man and a woman who want to raise a family. Well, that not only puts the cart before the horse, it diminishes one of the most important aspects of a marriage: the love between the partners.

Whenever I hear the procreation/family argument, I'm reminded of a state-

ment I read on the subject in the early 60's, written by two of the most respected experts of the day, Frank and Maisie Ward. As near as I can recall, they said that if a couple based their decision to get married on the desire to have children, "their wooing was much too sociological."

That statement has stayed with me and served me well as I helped many heterosexual couples prepare for marriage. I think it can also serve in the current arguments over same sex marriage.

In essence, a marriage is just a contract. It is a civil contract between two persons who bind themselves to share their lives according to a generally accepted set of values, privileges and restrictions. In essence, it has nothing to do with religion or child bearing. As a contract, it requires simply that the parties understand the obligations they are assuming, that there is no legal obstacle preventing them from doing this and that they are free from any kind of force or manipulation in entering into the contract. That's it. No more; no less.

Now, to deal with all the apples and oranges that get tossed into the fray.

The most popular negative position is that legalisation of same sex marriages will destroy the very fabric of our social structure. It is encouraging to note that few opposition voices still use this argument and that fewer still actually believe it. It is born simply from deep rooted homophobia and has little logic or evidence to support it.

Children do have a place in the picture. While it is no secret that marriage is not at all necessary for procreation, it can be a help for those who choose to have children without the protections it offers. From this point of view, marriage can provide a kind of stability and

security for the nurturing and growth of the child. The family structure can be a helpful nucleus for social development and interaction. When all the parts are in place and working well, this is true. The fact that the family is considered, and proven to be, the most violent of social structures would seem to indicate that it doesn't always work.

Also, from this point of view, it is the child that becomes the excuse for the marriage and ultimately an object of resentment for parents who get to thinking, "If it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be in this mess." Whether admitted or not, this is undoubtedly one of the main underlying reasons for divorce.

Only the Roman Catholic Church exacts an assurance from those entering marriage that they will "accept children lovingly from God." At the same time, it is no secret that children do not or may not ever come into the picture at all. It all depends on how careful a heterosexual couple is in controlling the possibility of conception.

The same Church, in a marvellous juggling of principles and theological distinctions, has a major problem with any but the "natural" method of birth control. Most other religions are much more liberal in accepting the options available in this respect. However it works out, even those who shout most loudly about family values in the light of same sex marriage probably dismiss them quite easily in other contexts.

Now, we get to the main religious argument, that marriage is a sacred institution, established by God to propagate the human race. Well, I'm not sure that Adam and Steve were ever married anyway. Even if they were, it is interesting to note that, in the popular Genesis story, there are suddenly a lot of people around. They must have come from spontaneous combustion or

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generations of incest, if we can believe the scripture account.

It is also important to note that much of the Scriptural emphasis on marriage comes from a strong cultural impetus to create a strong and viable society of "chosen" people who could govern themselves and others from an enlightened set of social directives. Current religious tradition seems not to have moved far from this somewhat limited vision of social evolution.

The argument gets further muddled by the popular misconception that it is the officiating "minister" who performs the marriage. Au contraire. It is the two parties directly involved who formulate and enter into the contract. Everyone else, minister, priest, best man, matron of honour, bridesmaids, flower girls, ring boys, parents, relatives, friends, ex-lovers and partners are witnesses, only witnesses, only that and nothing more.

The fact that someone may still say, "By the powers invested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife", is a meaningless barnacle. The only powers are the powers of acting as an official witness to the contract.

Marriage is a beautiful and treasured institution. Because it is, in itself, quite free of those elements that can demonstrate that fact, we embellish it with ceremony and song and celebration. These elements also remind us that those venturing upon a married life together need support and encouragement. Marriage is also a challenging enterprise.

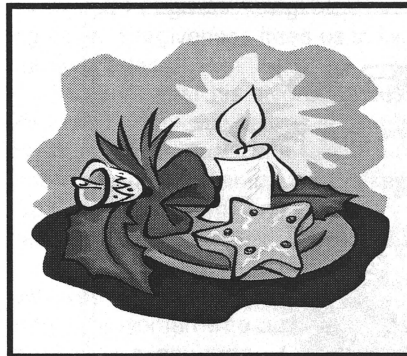
Unfortunately, social and religious custom has come to look upon the trap-

pings as the reality and has invested marriage with dimensions and limitations it does not, in itself, possess.

In the current argument about same sex marriages, we would do well not to get side-tracked into arguments that, in themselves, have nothing to do with the case. Those who want marriage to be something more sacred or more sociological or more politically correct can invest their own marriages with those things, at will, for themselves.

For the rest of us, if two persons love one another and want to proclaim publicly that because of that love they want to share their lives with one another, let them. Moreover, if they want to strengthen that commitment with a legally binding contract, let them. And finally, if they want to register that contract so that it can have the same protections as any other contract of its kind, they should be encouraged to do so.

NOEL SPRINGWOOD served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. A Voice exclusive.



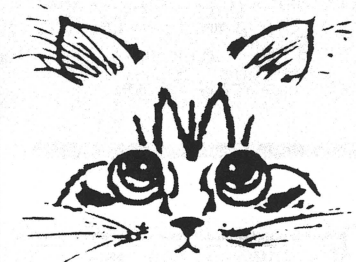
September 11, 2001:

Gay Victims & Heroes



A web site to ensure that those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001 and were lesbian or gay are remembered and acknowledged. Thoughtful site with interesting and informative links as well.

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DECEMBER COMMUNITY EVENTS

2nd & 4th Tues in Dec

Tri-Youth Pride group meets 4-6pm. This group is for LGBT high-school students. For more information call Gail at [REDACTED]

2nd & 4th Wed in Dec

On the second Wednesday of July, Glow will hold its Heart to Heart Discussion Group. On the fourth Wednesday in July the Diversity Discussion Group takes place. For more information on either group or the Coming Out Discussion Group call GLOW at 884-4569

Each Tuesday in Dec

The Rainbow Community Conversation Group meets every Tuesday at 7:30 in 373 of Hagey Hall (on the UW Campus) For more info call Glow at 884-glow

Alternate Fridays -NEW

Gay Men's Group meets from 7 to 10:30pm is open to males of all ages and orientations, with the focus on gayness of course. We will also be socializing together: dances, and movies. For more information contact Gordon at (519) [REDACTED]

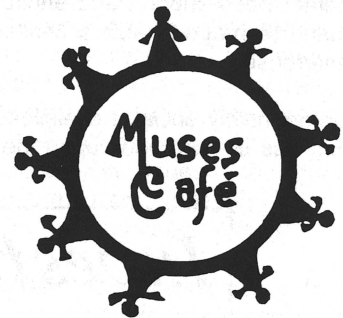
Every Sunday

Friends of Dorothy is a GLBT League was started in 1999. They are back bowling after taking the summer off. They bowl each Sunday at 3:15 pm (see classified page for more info)

Do you have an event that you'd like to publicize? Get the word out by letting us know about it so we can include your event in our events section. [REDACTED]



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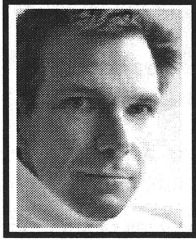
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For more information 883-2251

Waterloo Region Community Health Department AIDS/STD Program
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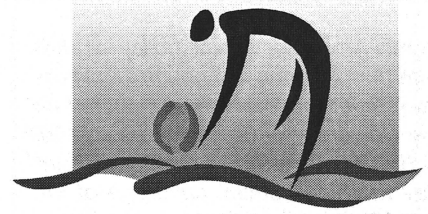


Confessions of a Late Bloomer



"If divorce is a two-way street, then forgiveness is a three-way intersection."

By Randy Siegel



If divorce is a two-way street, then forgiveness is a three-way intersection. Before asking my ex-wife's forgiveness, I had to forgive her.

Before forgiving her, I had to forgive myself.

During our marriage, I had not been honest. I had pretended to be someone I was not. While I was faithful, I knew I was gay. I've been gay for as long as I can remember.

After our divorce, any attempt at reconciliation seemed impossible. My ex-wife cut off all spoken communication.

In an effort to rebuild our broken relationship, I wrote her a letter.

"The purpose of this letter is to sort out my feelings and to set the record straight," it began.

I never mailed it. I was not ready.

I still blamed her for our unhappiness. My anger helped ease my guilt. While my sexuality may have caused the final crash, she had driven her own vehicle. I wrote:

"You played the victim, yet you controlled your fate. You accepted a relationship with no intimacy and did nothing to change it."

Anger and guilt barred my path to healing. Only time would lift the roadblock, for over time I found the courage to look at my life.

"Perhaps I knew that if I dug a little deeper, I would not like what I unearthed."

I began to understand fear had bound us together. I was afraid of coming out, and she was afraid of being alone.

Once I saw we had done the best we could, I found compassion. I began to make peace with my past.

I cannot rewrite the past, but I can learn from it. Instead of wallowing in old anger and guilt, I can be grateful for where I am now.

I was ready to write to her. I wrote I

wanted to be friends. I knew it wouldn't be easy, but I was willing to work hard no matter how difficult that work would be.

I also wanted her to know I was sorry. I loved her and was thankful for our past. I wrote:

"I am truly sorry for shaking your world by its roots. Leaving was the hardest thing I have ever done. Know I had no other choice. I had to leave or be lost."

I loved you when I married you and loved you more each year of our marriage. Thank you for our time together. It was a good 14 years."

As I wrote, years of guilt and anger began to melt like the snow on a hot Southern highway. For many of us who are gay and were married asking our ex-spouses' forgiveness signals a turning point. Forgiveness frees us to live our lives again.

Six years after his divorce, a dear friend told his ex-wife he was sorry. His ex dissolved into tears, and for the first time since their break-up they talked. True healing began, and today they have never been closer.

Another gay friend's relationship with his ex improved after she read the story of a woman who also had been married to a gay man. Once his ex understood she was not responsible for

his sexuality, she forgave herself and was free to forgive him.

After writing the letter I mailed it. I expected no response and received none. Friends tell me she is still angry; the memory of our divorce carries too much pain.

It has been almost two years since we have seen each other, almost six years since our divorce. In time I hope we can be friends.

In the meantime, I think of her often. I look for her on the street.

While I still long for her forgiveness, I have found peace. Sometimes forgiving is enough. Sometimes it has to be.

Randy Siegel is an Asheville, NC-based writer, speaker and communications trainer and coach. He can be reached through at [REDACTED]



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Protests Highlight Need For Systemic Change

Soren Ambrose, senior policy analyst with the 50 Years is Enough Coalition, from an on-air interview conducted on the University of Ottawa radio station, CHUO 89.1 FM, for their 2 hour Sunday morning special coverage of the IMF / World Bank / G-20 meetings and protests. November 18, 2001.

The meetings that go on at this time, which include something now called the International Monetary and Financial Committee, include all the most important decision-makers for the global economy. In fact the meeting that's occurring today here in Ottawa is the highest level regularly scheduled such

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meeting.

That's where these policies of structural adjustment that are literally killing people in dozens of countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean are formulated and approved, that's where the marching orders are issued.

Often these meetings are in Washington, but occasionally they travel. This year of course was unusual because of the events of September 11th, and I think because of the events of September 11th, and the questions that has raised in a lot of the mainstream media, and even in the minds of a lot of people in the movement, it was doubly important to be up here in Ottawa.

To ensure that people understand that the movement against corporate globalization is not going away and that the movement has a responsibility to be active at this time to remind people that although the context may have shifted a little bit with September 11 the situation for people in the countries of the global south has not changed in the way that the global economy works, and in fact it's gotten a little bit more difficult for people in those countries to express dissent and it's also gotten a little bit easier for countries like the United States and Canada to use their power more blatantly to try to impose their economic and political agendas on these countries through institutions like the IMF and the World Bank.

So we need to be out there to tell the decision makers and tell the public that we know that what people have been enduring in Africa, Asia, Latin America for the last 20 years under structural adjustment has been a war already and that people have been dying and that the urgency in those countries is extreme and that hasn't changed, it's only gotten worse. And we continue to say the urgency is extreme, we continue to oppose the exercise of imperial power like what we're seeing in Afghanistan

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now, and we continue to oppose it in its quieter, less spectacular forms like the imposition of disastrous economic policies that benefit corporations but impoverish people and in fact have been killing people for years.

I think what we're seeing now with the events of September 11th is kind of an externalization of what has been the reality all along. While we've known that the governments of the wealthy countries are willing to impose murderous policies economically on countries there's always been the implicit threat that when that doesn't work there will be military action and we're seeing that very spectacularly now. And just as we've known that the media monopolies in the rich countries do present a very narrow spectrum of news and opinion, we're seeing that more openly and more blatantly now through the exercise of, not official coercion, but semi-official coercion. There hasn't been a law passed or a decree issued from the White House, but there has been a very public effort to intimidate anyone in the mainstream media who might be so bold as to try to broadcast something that would make the government unhappy. I'm not even sure that was even necessary because there aren't that many in the mainstream media that need more than the slightest hint that the government might be displeased.

I think that the protests that a lot of us have been engaged in for the past six or seven years, and that have been very big news since the Seattle demonstrations of 99, probably don't have a direct impact on the decisions and the policies of these institutions, but what they do do is increase the noise level, the pressure that is operating from the outside on these people. We've heard that staffers in the World Bank feel like they're under a state of siege with so many articles in the press condemning their policies or at least airing our complaints about their policies.

So while there may not be a direct cause and effect, I think the lesson to learn there is that we're not going to end structural adjustment, we're not going to end the environmental destruction of these institutions, by persuading people at the World Bank and

the IMF that what they're doing is wrong. They've been told that for 20, 25 years. The evidence has been pretty plain for the same amount of time. What we have to do is build political power in order to make it impossible for these institutions to ignore the demands of civil society that these systems change.

And I think that in terms of what happened here in Ottawa this weekend, the most valuable thing was that there was a robust and not insignificant crowd that came out with three weeks notice, or maybe three and a half weeks notice, and it demonstrated that the events of September 11th are not going to cow the movement and people are still focused on these issues despite the change in the political climate. So we know that the people behind the closed doors in these meetings are aware that we're there, and I think they probably hoped that a lot of us would go away for fear we'd be branded anti-American or something like that.

We're here, we're not going away, we're making the equations. We're not going to let the World Bank, the IMF, or the G-20 or any other international body, try to exploit the events of September 11th by saying that they have a brand new purpose of combating terrorism or of restoring economic health to Afghanistan because we have to note that they have not restored economic health anywhere else, they have not changed their prescriptions, they have in fact been terrorizing populations around the world. So their contention that they're now going to solve these new problems is an empty and cynical attempt to get more funding and more power.

For more on the protests, visit ontario.indymedia.org



Quebec Set to Recognize Gay Marriages

QUEBEC CITY (Reuters) - The Canadian province of Quebec is set to recognize civil unions for gays and lesbians as early as 2002, Justice Minister Paul Begin said on Friday.

A draft bill, unveiled in the Quebec legislature in November is expected to be adopted next June and would give same-sex couples the same rights and obligations as married heterosexual couples, except in the case of adoption.

However, the controversial issue of adoption will be discussed at public hearings to be held early next spring.

The draft bill does not make any distinction between a heterosexual common law couple and a homosexual couple. Gays and lesbians would get most benefits of married couples, including health and insurance benefits, special tax status and rights to benefits after divorce or death.

"This is avant-garde. You need a good dose of courage to go ahead with such a legislation," Begin told reporters in Quebec City, the capital of the predominantly French-speaking province, whose politics were strongly influenced by the Roman Catholic church until the late 1960s.

Begin said public opinion in the liberal-minded province led the government to move forward on the legislation.

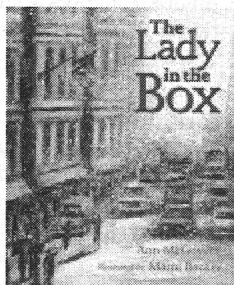
He pointed out that 20 percent of all couples living in Quebec had common law status, while 3 percent were gays or lesbians. More than three Quebecers out of four support civil union for homosexuals, polls show.

Quebec will be the second Canadian province to legalize civil unions of same-sex couples, after Nova Scotia.

<http://ca.news.yahoo.com>

BOOKS

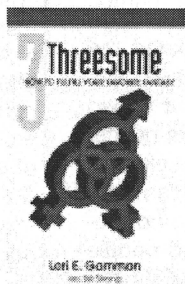
The Lady in the Box
by Ann McGovern, Marni Backer (Illustrator)



Ben, who appears to be about eight, describes how he and his sister bring food to a homeless woman, Dorrie, thereby bending their mother's rules about talking to strangers--or at least interpreting them widely. Their mother catches on to the missing food and warm scarf: "Okay, let's see your lady in the box," she says. All Dorrie wants is to be allowed to sleep over the warm grate near the deli, whose owner has chased her away; Ben's mother appeals to the owner's sense of charity and Dorrie is restored to her spot. Further, the children start serving food at a neighborhood soup kitchen. Realistic and believable, the story introduces a vast world of homelessness in simple, telling details that are enlarged upon in the art, e.g., a particularly effective picture shows that the people in the soup line are only too accustomed to waiting. Backer uses various techniques to delineate the tone of every scene, sometimes loosely sketching a detail in a thick application of oil paint, sometimes using small, dense flecks to depict snow and the frigid isolation of the conditions outdoors

For readers who witness homelessness every day, the book answers questions, carrying the message that even for large problems, small efforts can make a difference. (Picture book. 4-8) -- Copyright © Kirkus Associates, LP.

Threesome : How to Fulfill Your Favorite Fantasy
by Lori Gammon, Bill Strong



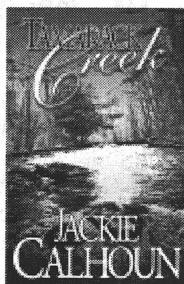
For those who fantasize about the erotic delights of a menage a trois..., Lori Gammon welcomes you into her uninhibited world. With five years of research and her own intimate adventures as a guide, Lori explains bisexual women and what they want. Then she lays out a carefully-crafted plan that allows men and women, married or single, to explore sensual pleasures most cannot imagine. She teaches women how to arrange and enjoy any combination of attractive men and willing women. Girlfriends discover how to seduce each other without fear of embarrassment or rejection. Men are taught to delicately and sensitively fan their lover's secret passions and lead their wives onto new frontiers.

Lori explains why shy women can't openly admit they want a threesome; she then reveals magic techniques that open a floodgate of eager feminine desire. Singles learn what bi women look for in potential partners. Couples learn why bi-curious women

actually NEED your help to fulfill their fantasies.

With her detailed plan as a road map, you'll master the skills to find, identify and recruit your choice of willing partners. Discover how easy it can be with an experienced bisexual beauty as your guide and mentor. Learn exactly what to say and when to say it for maximum impact. More importantly, Lori warns you how to avoid words and actions that instantly squelch bisexual desire. As a free bonus, she offers you the secret code words that bi women use to identify new partners. If you are serious about the incredible possibilities of a threesome, this is the only book ever written that explains exactly how to finally fulfill your favorite fantasy. If you can handle the most dramatic change your sex life will ever take, order Threesome today!

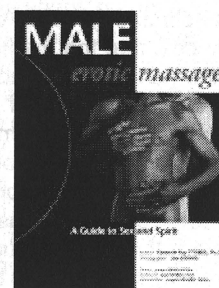
Tamarack Creek
by Jackie Calhoun



When Carly finds her lover in bed with another woman, she is at first angry but then, surprisingly, she feels a new freedom in her life. She quits her job and moves in with her gay brother at their family homestead, Tamarack Creek. Within two weeks, Carly meets Serena, their new neighbor and the women begin a passionate affair. But will Serena leave her husband for Carly and if so, will the abusive Jess ever let Serena go?



Male Erotic Massage : A Guide to Sex and Spirit
by Kenneth Ray, Ph.D. Stubbs, Jim Dennis (Photographer)



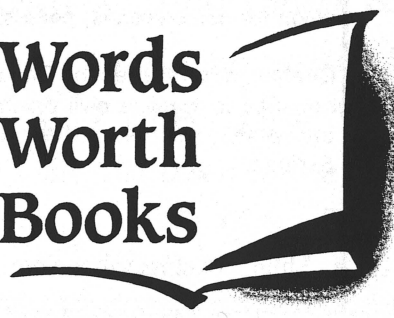
Here's a book that celebrates the Bodyspirit. Over 200 photographs reveal both the how-to and the beauty of the male body embracing the male body. The strength, the joy, the gentleness, the ardency, the tenderness, the equanimity, the pleasure--these are all a part. Including the sexual and the spiritual, Male Erotic Massage teaches about touching men.

Whether he be friend, family, lover, or stranger, your gift of massage can open new doors. Discover new pleasures, both subtle and profound, as you enter the realm of the senses where the massage is the message.

Kenneth Ray Stubbs, Ph.D., a certified masseur and a certified sexologist, has assembled here several men's expression on the nature and photographer with assignments on the life of people in India, Morocco, and Turkey, focuses his camera here on men being intimate with men.

Book descriptions from
www.amazon.com

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Fear and loathing in the middle class

Continued from page 7

fare for them. Taxes are too high already. We're too broke to help.

It makes sense, except for one leftover sociological/economic/political question: Where's my money? In spite of all the cuts that are supposed to be helping me, an upstanding member of the middle class, I don't have any more money in my pocket than I used to. Eagle has one answer. The more we're saving at one end, cutting social assistance, the more we're spending at the other.

The less we see, the more we think it's not really that bad to be poor.

She tells a story about a client she once had. The woman lost a \$300 welfare cheque. She reported it, but her social worker did not believe her story. The government did not replace the cheque and saved itself \$300. Three cheers for the fraud busters. The woman needed money badly so briefly became a prostitute. She contracted a disease and had to be hospitalized. That cost the taxpayers. The Children's Aid Society took the children and put them into foster homes. That cost the taxpayers. When she got out, she was evicted and had to go into a shelter. Cha-ching, another bill. She tried to get her children back and received a lawyer from legal aid. More bills. The CAS hired a lawyer -- keep writing those cheques -- and the children had to have a lawyer appointed. By the time the issue was resolved, the original \$300 was spent many times over.

The story is just one example of how it's less expensive to treat poverty than all the ailments it produces, such as chronic health problems, behavioural problems, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy, say anti-poverty activists. Looking after the chronically ill is more expensive than feeding people properly in the first place. Looking after the babies of teenaged mothers is more expensive than teaching them birth control or giving them decent jobs. Putting a child in a foster home is more expensive than supporting them at their own home, says Eagle.

Poverty rates are linked to crime rates, and the more crime there is to fight, the more municipal taxes go up. Increased crime rates don't do much for our quality of life either. Neither do hungry, emotionally disturbed kids in our schools. We're paying taxes so teachers can teach, not spend hours trying to control kids who are too hungry or abused to pay attention. Because of funding cuts, my wife and I have been asked to donate boxes of Kleenex to my child's school. No doubt all these kids going to school hungry and tired get a lot of colds. Which they're going to send home with my kid. Which means I'll be buying expensive asthma medicine.

It's almost as if the attack on the poor is an attack on the middle class.

Of course, I can work harder and make more money and maybe even send my kid to private school, right? Uh uh, say Allahar and Cote. That liberal ideology running the country is just that, an ideology.

If we don't help the poor, we're only going to hurt ourselves. We are going to cost ourselves more tax dollars in the long run, damage our quality of life, watch our own finances tumble and, just to make it complete, maybe even destroy our own souls.

It isn't true we have equal access to health care and education and opportunity. It's easier for the rich to get richer. It's easier for them to buy good health care, especially as more charges are introduced to the health-care system. It's easier for them to send their children to increasingly expensive universities. We middle-classers think there's a lot of economic mobility, but most of it takes place between occupations within the middle class, say Allahar and Cote. There's as much chance of me owning The London Free Press as there is the guy asking for change on the street corner becoming the managing editor.

It's so depressing, I don't think I can even buy enough things to make me happy.

"We can all feel we're doing well," with our nice VCRs, television sets, cars, stereos, says Allahar.

"But it's empty. We need a new morality."

"There is a great thirst and yearning for something meaningful in life that's more than just the next paycheque," says Eagle.

The proliferation of New Age books and movements, the rebirth of native religions, even the run of movies and television shows about angels are trying to answer a need for something else in our lives. Getting a good job and house and toys some days just doesn't feel like it's enough. "It's not meeting our deeper need, of being human," says Eagle. In *Our Neighbours' Voices: Will We Listen*, a book recently published by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Eagle and others point out that the major faiths of the world agree on one thing: we should help thy neighbour.

In the early Christian church, helping the poor was a way of reaching God. These days it might be seen as reaching our own humanity. Whatever, it's more bad news for we members of the middle class.

If we don't help the poor, we're only going to hurt ourselves. We are going to cost ourselves more tax dollars in the long run, damage our quality of life, watch our own finances tumble and, just to make it complete, maybe even destroy our own souls.

In other words, the issue isn't so much about us saving the poor, as the poor saving us.

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COMMUNITY GROUPS

SUNDAYS

Westminster United Church (an affirming congregation): Services are held each Sunday at 10:30 am. at 543 Beachwood Dr. in Waterloo.
www.westminsterunited.ca

First Unitarian Congregation of Waterloo - Open and diverse congregation respecting a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. Christians, Post-Christians, non-Christians, mystics, pagans and humanists - all are welcome. 10:30 Sunday mornings. 96 Dunbar Road South, Waterloo
www.gpcomp.com/waterloounitarian/

Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCC) 115 Simpson Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M4K 1A1. Phone (416) 466-6228
www.mccutoronto.com

AWARE K-W :Aware K-W. A discussion and support group for gay Christians, their parents and friends who have been disillusioned by the church's often negative approach to homosexuality. We meet the 3rd Sunday of every month. For more information call Gary at [REDACTED] or Ada at [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]

Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling - Sundays at 3:15 pm at Brunswick Bowling Lanes - Frederick St. Mall. \$10.00 + shoe rental, For more information contact Jason at [REDACTED] or email: [REDACTED]

TUESDAYS

Guelph Queer Equality (GQE) meets every Tuesday from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in UC536, the University Centre's Mature Student Lounge at the University of Guelph. Contact GQE at: gqe@uoguelph.ca for details.

The Rainbow Community Conversation Group Now meets on Tuesdays on the U of W Campus at 7pm. For more information call 884-GLOW.

The Rainbow Parenting Network - A forum for GLBT parents, parents-to-be, and those considering parenting. For more information call 743-[REDACTED].

Tri-Youth Pride - meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at Planned Parenthood - 4-6pm. For more information call Gail at [REDACTED]

WEDNESDAYS

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups explore issues in sexual orientation; University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: 884-4569. **A social gathering follows the discussion group weekly from 9pm to 11pm.**

Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group meets every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: 905-526-1074, toll-free 1-888-338-8278 - info@gomorrah.com

Rainbow Chorus: Holds rehearsals every Wednesday Night. The first rehearsal of the new season is Wednesday September 6th, 7:30-9:30 pm at the Guelph Unitarian Fellowship, 122 Harris St. at York Rd., Guelph. For more information call Robert at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Discussion Group: A group for people aged 16-25, sponsored by ACCKWA and held in Waterloo, 7:00-9:00 pm. To join, or for more information, call ACCKWA at (519) 570-3687

Wednesdays, 7pm to 8:30pm, Oasis Club, 146 Wyndham St., Guelph. For more info, call Marilyn at (519) [REDACTED]

Alice's Dinner Club, a Hamilton gay and lesbian group of food connoisseurs meets every 2nd Wednesday at 6:15 pm. For information call Joan/Barb at [REDACTED] or Michael at [REDACTED]

Women For Sobriety - Create a New Life, a drug & alcohol addiction support group for gay women, meets

THURSDAYS

Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF) If you are post-op or pre-op transsexual or are dealing with gender dysphoria, come join this bi-weekly peer support group. 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) 528-0207 ext.43, or e-mail: htpspg@gto.net <http://home.golden.net/~kcr/htpspg/htpspg.html>

BI- MONTHLY

PFlag (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets bi-monthly. PFLAG is a support group for those with an LGBT family member. Children or teens with a gay parent(s) may also seek support from our group. Call Evie at 742-[REDACTED] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) 650-[REDACTED] (Cambridge) or email them at: pflag@rainbow.on.ca

Want to add a resource? Contact The Voice today!

Peter D. Martel

Chartered Accountant

Phone: [REDACTED]

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COMMUNITY LISTINGS

KITCHENER-WATERLOO

ACCKWA (The Aids Committee of Cambridge, K-W and Area) 85 Frederick St. E., Kitchener, Ont., (519) 570-3687

Anselma House: A crisis shelter for abused women with or without children.
24 hour crisis line: (519) 742-5894

BMC (Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian & Gay Concerns): A social group that provides support for Mennonite GLBT people, their friends and families. Various events throughout the year. For info write P.O. Box [redacted], Eastwood Square, Kitchener, ON N2H [redacted] or call Colleen at [redacted]

Coffee Club - If you like to drink coffee and just chat. For more information call - Peter at [redacted]

Gay Men's Group - is a social group for males of all ages and orientations. For more information call Gordon at (519) [redacted]

Global: is available to help anyone in the Laurier community who is dealing with LGBT issues. Staff, students, or faculty can reach GLOBAL directly at the club's e-mail address 00global@mach1.wlu.ca Laurier Peer Help Line 884-PEER.

GLOW Phone Line: 884-GLOW. Information and peer support.

K-W Distress Line- (519) 745-1166

Sexual Assault Center:
KW.....(519)741-8633

Waterloo Region Alliance For Equal Rights-Kitchener-(519) 743-[redacted]

Women's Centers: UofW (519) 888-4567 ext. 3457

WOODS: is a social club for lesbians in K-W and area.

GUELPH

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 2 Quebec St, Suite 206, Guelph Ont., (519) 763-2255

GUELPH QUEER EQUALITY (GQE) University of Guelph - gqe@uoguelph.ca

HOWL: Hanging Out With Lesbians is a social group for women (lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gay friendly) ages 25 and up who are active in Guelph and area. Women may contact HOWL through Outline (519) 836-4550

OUTline: A support and resource phone line for people dealing with LGBT issues at the University of Guelph. **Phone lines are closed Wednesdays and Saturdays (for the summer)** Open 7 to 10 pm other evenings. Call (519) 836-4550.
outline@uoguelph.ca
www.uoguelph.ca/~outline

Rainbow Chorus: is a choir that performs and will also be **hosting dances for the LGBT community starting again in September.** For information you can contact Robert at [redacted] or Cory at [redacted] <http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Sexual Assault Center:
Guelph.....(519)823-5806

HAMILTON

Alcoholics Anonymous--For the location and time of the Gay, Lesbian and Alternative Lifestyles Group in Hamilton call: (905) 522-8399.

Alternatives for Youth- 126 James St. South, Hamilton - 527-[redacted]

Anonymous HIV testing by appointment 905-546-3541--walk-in sites:YWCA--75 McNab Street - Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. 905-546-3541-Hamilton General Hospital Outpatient Dept. Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. 905-546-3541

Community Education 546-3541 to book a presentation or consultation

Emmanuel House Palliative Care Good Shepherd Centres (905) 308-8401

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Centre at McMaster University, Hamilton Hall Room 412 - Call 525-9140, ext. 27397

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth Line 1-800-268-9688

Gay Fathers Support Group- 3rd Tuesday of each month. For information Call 522-[redacted]

Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association (905) 526-[redacted]

GLBT Centre at McMaster
Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 4:30 at Hamilton Hall, Room 412. (905) 525-9140, Ext. 27397 or e-mail: glbt@msu.mcmaster.ca
www.msu.mcmaster.ca/services/glbt/glbt.htm

Hamilton Aids Network -- 528-0854 Anonymous Testing for HIV appointment only --546-3541

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police--General Assistance: 546-4925 Jane Mulkewich, GLBT Task Force 546-4910 Complaints against Officers 546-4776 Street Crime/Hate Crime: 546-3831

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Public Health Department- Sexually Transmitted Disease Services, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 to 5:30 pm. A walk-in clinic; no Health Card required. Hamilton General Hospital, Outpatient Clinic

Kindred Spirits: a social and recreational group for lesbians and bi-sexual women in the Hamilton/Burlington/Niagara area. (905) 541-[redacted]@hotmail.com

Narcotics Anonymous
Hamilton: (905) 522-0332
Brantford: (519) 759-2558
St. Catharines: (905) 685-0075

PFLAG--Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians & Gays. For information call 662-[redacted]

Sexual Assault Center:
Hamilton.....(905)525-4162

Sexual Health Information Line 905-528-5894--Confidential telephone counselling and information provided by a Public Health Nurse regarding sexual health issues--M-F 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m

Street Health Centre-- Wesley Centre 777-7852

The Golden Horseshoe Leather Association (Hamilton) Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month & there is a bar night on the second Saturday of each month. Men interested in the Leather/ Denim lifestyle are invited to attend both. For more information email Secretary - Ron at [redacted] or phone (905) [redacted]

Women's Centre of Hamilton- 75 MacNab Street South, Hamilton 522-0127

BRANTFORD

A Rainbow of Hope.
Brant County HIV/AIDS Support Group. Call 753-4937 ext.261 for information. All calls confidential.

GBLT adult social/support group of Brantford and area. A safe place to meet people and be yourself. call 752-5132 ext.34

GBLT youth support group of Brantford and area. 753-4937 EXT 261

Pine tree Native Centre Of Brant Presents: PFLAG... Parents, Families & friends of Lesbians & gays Support group meetings held 3rd Tuesday each month. 7:00-8:30pm. all welcome. call 752-5132 ext.34 for details.

The Coalition for gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgendered youth of Brantford and area. (519)753-4937 ext.261. call and leave message. All calls will be returned. We advocate for you.

To find out more information about anything else happening in Brantford email: [redacted]@yahoo.ca

CAMBRIDGE

Sexual Assault Center:
Cambridge.....(519)658-0551

Classifieds

Community Listings

If you have a group or event that you would like to have listed in our Community Listings please let us know! Likewise if you have any new information for your group or event contact us so we can keep things right up to date.

Or if you'd also like to be listed on our website:

Transgender Issues

We are a transsexual support group, run for transsexuals, and any one else who are supporters or family or friends.

We try to get updated medical info. for our members, as well as useful tips for anything from daily living and coping skills all the way to makeup and tricks to enhance your breasts.

<http://communities.msn.ca/UKTransgenderIssuesUK&navtyid=261>

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The Voice Magazine

P.O. Box [REDACTED]
RPO Evergreen
Kitchener, Ontario
N2M [REDACTED]

Phone: (519) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

The Voice Magazine is On Line at:
www.thevoice.on.ca

Friends of Dorothy is a GLBT League

was established as another way to bring the GLBT community & friends together. The League was started in September 1999 with 8 Bowlers we had grown to over 40 Bowlers.. The League also believes in supporting the GLBT community, each year we hold a Charity



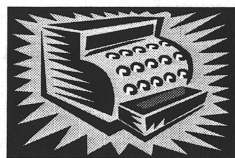
Bowling Tournament, where we ts raised over \$2,300 for Cancer Society-Breast Cancer & Hospital for Sick Kids-HIV Care.

The Voice Magazine online has news, articles, tons of links, our Pride Album, and much much more and all there for your convenience.

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The Voice Magazine online - community at a glance!

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Voice Classified Ads cost \$20.00 a month. Advertise your product or services to the LGBT community. Do you have something you'd like to sell? Are you looking for that someone special or want to make new friends or start a new group? Voice Classifieds are a great way to let others know about your product, service, merchandise for sale, or your new group.

(519) [REDACTED]

Mailing address is at top of page

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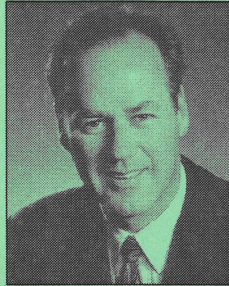
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Waterloo Region Community Health Department
Anonymous HIV Testing Drop-In Clinics

ACCKWA—85 Frederick Street East, Kitchener

Thursdays 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

99 Regina Street South - Second Floor, Waterloo

Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

150 Main Street - Second Floor, Cambridge

Mondays 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

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Monday and Thursday 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. drop in

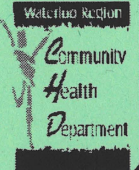
99 Regina Street South - Second Floor, Waterloo

Tuesdays 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. drop in

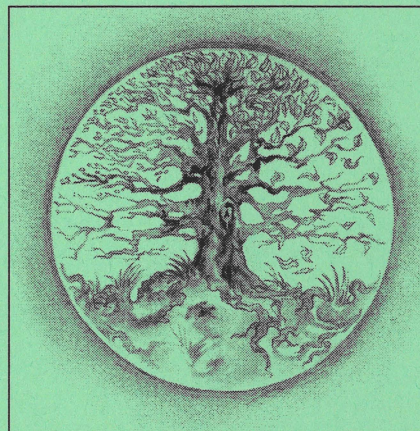
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