

The Voice

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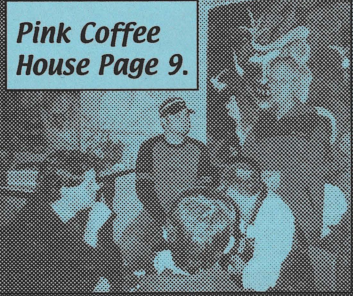
Volume Four

April 2002

Issue Seven



Steve Walkers print, "And The Flag Was Still There" was auctioned for \$600.00 at ACCKWA's Ninth Annual Chairs for Charity. See Page 8



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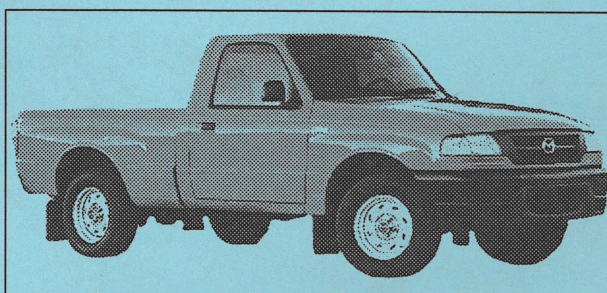
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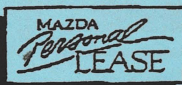
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THE VOICE

We welcome feature article contributions and encourage writers to contact the editor for submission guidelines.

We are online at:

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Look for changes coming to our web site soon.

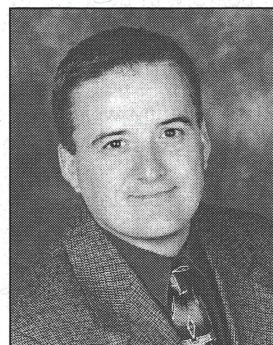
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FIRST WORDS

Voice Changes and New Community Focus

By A.J. Mahari



As with all things changes and improvements are part of any on going process This is very true here at The Voice Magazine and has been reflected throughout the many changes that we've made in our four year history thus far.

Watch for a new-look Voice Magazine beginning with our May issue. (see ad on page 5) As we work to get this next issue ready we anticipate it being distributed in mid- May as opposed to our usual first week of each month. So we may be a little later but *we will surprise you* and we believe *we will be well worth the wait!* We are making several changes and increasing our circulation considerably as well.

Along with our up-coming new look we will be featuring, in the coming months, many new writers. We look forward to the widening variety of issues, comments, and opinions that these writers will bring to our pages. A few of these new writers have articles in this month's Voice to give you a sneak preview of what is to come. This month we feature six new writers who are all local with the exception of Sally Sheklow a very entertaining lesbian writer from the United States.

As we increase our circulation and are read in more cities we are strongly committed to reflecting the interests and events that are of importance and relevance to our readers in their various cities.

We begin to reflect this renewed commitment in this issue with our Community Focus section. (See page 4) This month's Community Focus Section is one page and happens to focus on K-W. We hope, in future issues, to add a focus page per city as we interact more with agencies, groups and organizations to get the information flowing. If you would like to con-

tribute something to The Voice's new Community Focus section about what is going in your neck of the woods please email us at

Submission for the Community Focus section should ideally be between 200-250 words.

We are not resting on the laurels or past success of our magazine. We are going to continue to build on all the success that we have had to date with doing what we do by doing that even better than we've ever done it before.

As we take this next big step forward we want to take this opportunity to publicly thank all of our advertisers with particular great big thanks to our long-standing and loyal advertisers for their continued support. We could not be here without them. We very much value the working relationships that we have forged with them over the last four years. Some of our advertisers have been on board with us since the very first issue of The Voice Magazine in October of 1998.

In speaking, recently, with many of our advertisers, about our up-coming changes and events in our community we have been very pleased, touched by, and appreciative of their unwavering respect and appreciation for what The Voice Magazine is, does and stands for.

In line with the changes to our actual look and distribution The Voice will also be unveiling a new look on our web site some time, we estimate, in late June or early July, so watch for that too!

Have an opinion on this column or anything else you read in The Voice? Why not share it with us in our Have Your Say section or on our new Opinion Page?

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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 picked up The Voice and Pride Pages recently. I first looked at Pride Pages and was pleased to see what the WWRP is doing. I then looked at The Voice and was shocked to realize what is really going on. Where I picked them up they were together. Here I thought the Pride Pages was an insert that just fell out of The Voice. I think the WWRP, which is doing good stuff for Pride, has made a big mistake here. Putting out something like this and hustling Voice advertisers must be an amazing duplication of hard work. WWRP is has a lot of potential to a lot of good for our area I hope they will do just a bit more and work this thing out with The Voice.

-- Katherine Murray, Guelph

As someone who has worked in a number of large companies over the years, the Pride Pages are quite familiar. They are (politely) called, among other things, association newsletters. They are attractive documents written in the lowest form of journalistic style called PR, meaning "public relations." Someone on WWRP has some experience with this type of publication and has adapted it. Sure it has news and events, but it is written in an annoying "perky" prose meant to stimulate enthusiasm. A sure sign of this is all the exclamation points after almost every headline and in the title. Most don't even notice this but makes what they read seem more exciting. It was quite fun to see in the beginning of their March issue their variation on the standard PR phrase, "Here we Grow Again!" The Voice has nothing to worry about. What The Voice does, and has been

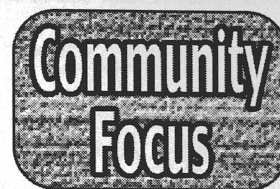
doing for four years now, is real journalism and completely superior! You will be around long after Pride Pages has faded from memory! Just keep doing what you do best!

-- Karl Martin, Kitchener

The March 2002 edition of The Voice was wonderful. Thanks go to Charles Westfall's beautiful and moving article: "When the Bloom Begins to Fade." Thanks to editor A.J. Mahari for her stinging indictment in "Conservative Assault on The Homeless." Also thanks to Lyn McGinnis for yet again taking us beyond our limited experience to see how others in the world think with "Manifestations of the Divine" about queer life in India. These three articles, written by persons living in K-W and Hamilton, along with others, should be proof enough of how superior The Voice Magazine is to these "Pride Pages." There is nothing wrong with that publication. It is very attractive and the committee has clearly gotten a lot going for them. All the WWRP's good work has been spoiled for me by this news about why they stopped writing for The Voice Magazine and began this newsletter. Shame! How sad to see what is behind this sunny front is blind ambition to accomplish some personal payback. The result is clearly creating a divided community. Isn't WWRP supposed to be doing the opposite?

-- Tracy Brown, Guelph

More letters on page 32 in our Opinion section.



Friends of Dorothy Bowling

More than Just a Bowling League

Friends of Dorothy's Bowling League held their 3rd Annual "Dorothy's Best" Charity Bowling Tournament on March 9, 2002 at Frederick Brunswick Lane

The day was a great success for the participants and the charities alike. There were over 70 Bowlers/Participants who helped us to raise \$605.00 for both, The Cancer Society and ACCKWA The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo & area. This Annual event has raised over \$3,500.00 for Charities in the past three years.

Participants came from all over Ontario, including guests from Toronto, London, & Hamilton. There was a strong Community presence at this local Fundraiser. This event included many contributions made by local Artists, Business's and Individuals, as well as just being a great day of fun! This Event could not be the continued success it is without all the sponsors and participants. For the newcomers and Out of Town guests, Dorothy's Best has given KW & Area the reputation of a Fun and Caring Community.

The Friends of Dorothy's Bowling League, which was established 3 years ago with only 8 Bowlers and now has grown to over 50 Bowlers, consists of GLBT & friends of GLBT members. They meet every Sunday at 3pm from September to the end of April, at Frederick Brunswick Lanes. The League is 10 pin and Cosmic Bowling. If you would like more information on Friends of Dorothy Bowling League or would like to know how to join next September's session please feel free to contact or email Jason at [redacted] or call [redacted]

Submitted by Paul Curzon

Chairs For Charity

ACCKWA raises over \$10 000.00 from Chairs For Charity

On Saturday March 16th, 2002 ACCKWA held its 9th annual Chairs for Charity Auction and Art Show at Kitchener's City Hall.

Once again the Chairs For Charity & Art Auction, hosted by ACCKWA, succeeded in not only raising much needed funds, but also in raising community awareness and support. With a target of \$10,000.00 for this year's Chairs, ACCKWA and the Chairs Committee are pleased to announce that this event raised approximately \$15,000.00 this year.

Once again the donations from many local artists and community supporters made for a fun, exciting and very colourful evening. ACCKWA would like to extend a huge thank you to all artists, volunteers, committee members and to the community for showing their on-going support for ACCKWA and the continuing battle against HIV/AIDS in the Waterloo Region.

Money raised from the auction will be used by ACCKWA to fund programs and services, such as financial assistance for PHAs, education and prevention programs and direct services for anyone infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

Plans are already underway for next years Chairs For Charity, which will only be bigger and better than this years.

*Submitted by Rob Alexander
Director of ACCKWA*

The Voice reports on Chairs for Charity see page 8

The Pink Coffee House

New Social Initiative In K-W

On Wednesday March 20th, at Muses Cafe, 10 King St. E., The Pink Coffee House has its first social/game night. Twenty-one people attended. The Pink Coffee House is being held each Wednesday night from 9:30-11:00pm.

The Pink Coffee House, according to organizer, Gordon Husk, *"was an idea actually struck between myself and Dan a 20 year old student at UW who felt that he wanted to have a place where gay men could gather, off line (we are both on gay.com chat rooms) and some alternative to the bar and also off-campus."*

When asked about the reason for implementing the Coffee House idea Husk said, *"[It is intended to] essentially be a place where those of the GBLT community can gather, relax, have good comradery, and fun without the attitude and the general din of the usual places like bars, and also the unreality of cyber-chatting life. A personally important aspect was also the intergenerational mixing: there is generally such distrust and unease between older and younger men."*

If you haven't been to Muses Cafe, yet, it is worth attending the Coffee House just to experience the wonderfully esthetically relaxing and artistically creative atmosphere that owners, Daniel DesRosiers and David Bell have created. Muses Cafe is a gay-owned business that is very supportive of activities in our community. (See our Voice Spotlight on page 27 for more about Muses Cafe)

The Voice reports on The Pink Coffee House see page 9

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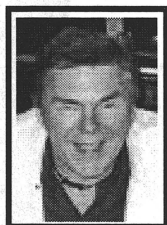
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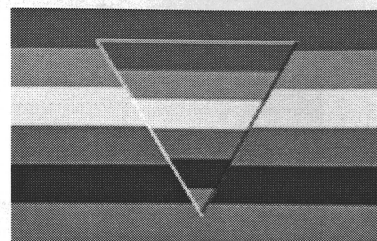


LGBT SPECTRUM



PRIDE, PREENING, PRETENCE AND PERCEPTIONS

By Charles W. Westfall



It's that time of year again. Time for tapping Maple trees, time for planting, time for spring cleaning, time for mating and time to get ready for PRIDE.

That has set me to thinking seriously about what PRIDE is and what it is not. Certainly, it means different things to different people and often it turns into a mere parody of what it claims to represent.

When it comes to the LGBT Communities and all those who hang on to those apron strings and labels, I am proud about many things. I'm super proud of Rosie O'Donnell. She came out in flying colours and did us all proud with her eloquent, capable and powerful challenge to the Florida adoption laws.

I'm super proud of the moving, graphic and compassionate portrayal, on TV, of The Matthew Shepard Story. Without ever becoming maudlin or preachy, that film demonstrated exceptionally well the tremendous impact simple story telling can have. Would that other film makers and activists would follow its example.

I'm proud of the way in which sexual orientation is becoming less and less an issue in many of life's fabrics, less and less an issue in the political arena and less and less something to be belittled, ignored or attacked.

I'm tremendously proud of the way

many LGBT's are getting on with their lives. They have found a measure of peace in their homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces. They are not so much involved in the activist scene or bar scene, not because they think these unimportant. They just don't feel at home in those contexts anymore.

I'm tremendously proud of being associated with THE VOICE. As someone who attempted to establish a similar publication, I'm aware of the

tremendous challenges and demands involved. And for those who might wonder, everything published under my by-line here is totally original and exclusive to this publication. I wouldn't have it any other way.

I am, however, not proud of those

who cannot shake off the ghetto mentality.

I am not proud of those who are busy fabricating a subculture that is hedonistic, narcissistic and youth oriented in nature but lacks real substance when it has to come to grips with what is often brutal reality.

The moving portrayal of The Matthew Shepard Story reminded me of how ineffectual the LGBT communities have been in involving the younger members and helping them find the kind of acceptance, belonging and direction they need and crave. I'm not proud of that.

I am not proud of those who, in the

name of PRIDE, exclude those very members of the LGBT communities who most need support and acceptance. I am not proud of those who reject and isolate kindred spirits because they don't meet up with arbitrary and superficial standards of what it takes to belong. I'm talking about the seniors, disadvantaged and handicapped, of course.

Unfortunately, those doing the rejecting now will someday feel the sting of their rejection, themselves. I'm not sure how much compassion they can expect when that time comes. I'm not proud of that either.

I am not proud of the way PRIDE is often celebrated these days. It seems that everyone has to hold a PRIDE celebration. Most resemble Sunday School picnics, at best; mandatory Company Outings at worst. What is actually celebrated is not so much sexual orientation, anymore. It's just sexuality, or liberality, or promiscuity, or androgyny, or vulgarity, or simply the amount of beer consumed by a limited amount of people in a limited amount of time.

The Toronto PRIDE bash at least attracts people and attention. It makes a lot of noise and is hard to ignore. It, sometimes and in spite of itself, even makes a point or two in terms of social or political awareness. At the same time, where once community, service and support groups dominated the area with an impressive display of involvement and effective caring, now it's hard to find that kind of representation among the many commercial and entrepreneurial displays.

I guess that when PRIDE comes to MONEY, there's no question about which will win in the long run. Unfortunately, there's also no question about which will lose.



When PRIDE comes to politics, it has already lost, especially if it is the politics of the LGBT communities. A united front will help influence decisions and policies. A divided front simply emphasises division and conflict. Too often it is this latter image that seeps through the razzle dazzle of PRIDE celebrations. Worse still, it often tries to present itself as united in a transparent and increasingly futile attempt to portray a non-existent dimension.

Within any social sphere, people do things for two basic reasons. Either something needs doing; or, someone needs to do something. In the case of PRIDE, I think that we are somewhere on the line dividing those two motivations. With the onslaught of PRIDE Season, it might be good to examine just what that might imply.

For me, there is merit in celebration. Celebration, of its very nature, involves excess and exuberance. I love the Rainbow colours flying everywhere, in banners, balloons and pennants. I love to see bare torsos soaking up the summer sun and the admiring gaze of thousands. I love the dancing in the streets, the overflowing suds, the general sense of camaraderie and the remarkable display of resources and resourcefulness.

My reservations lie in the nature of what is, in fact, being celebrated. Is it the widening acceptance of diverse sexual orientation? Is it political and social gains in terms of human rights? Is it the commercial exploitation of that acceptance? Is it simply the well-sculpted or badly maintained bodies, bared for the multitudes? Is it a common sense of identity, commonality and purpose? Is it mutual acceptance, encouragement and support?

I'm not sure I have the answers to these questions. I am sure, however, that they lie at the heart of what PRIDE celebrations are, or should be, about. I'm also sure that some of the more significant values often get lost in hoopla, short-sightedness and, dare I even hint at this, self-serving interests.

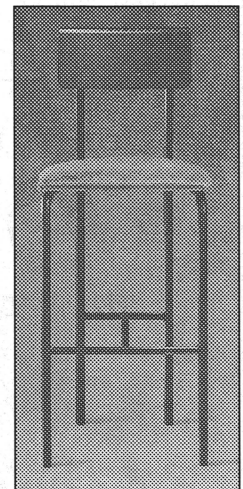
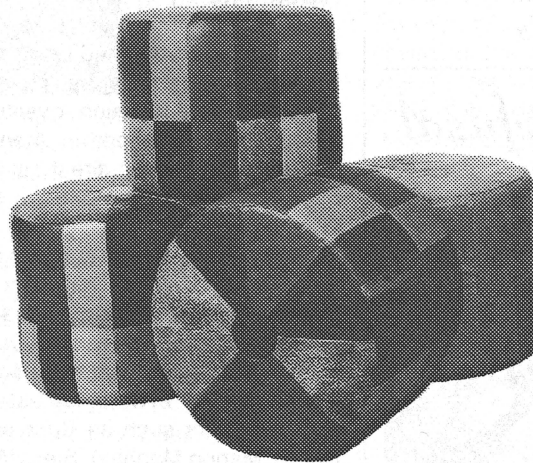
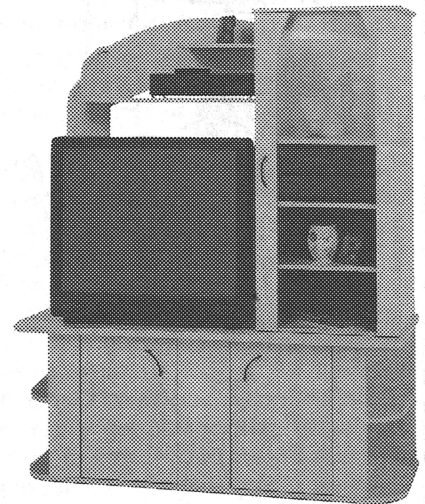
Because I don't have the answers, I won't be at any PRIDE celebrations this year. I probably won't be missed. That's not important. What is important is that I have found my own PRIDE, in who I am, what I am and what I have achieved. At least some of this is due

to past PRIDE celebrations. I find that more and more individuals are making the same discoveries, perhaps for the same reasons.

So, formulate rhetoric, hang out Rainbow Colours, bare pecs and bosoms and butts, don finery and leather harness, strut sequined and coifed bodies, let suds flow freely, let condoms and lube abound and booming music sound. PRIDE Days are just around the corner.

I can't help wondering, though, how many of them will be around the bend, off the wall, out of sight or just plain pointless. As with many other events, it would seem, maybe only time will tell. I guess it's just not quite that time yet.

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



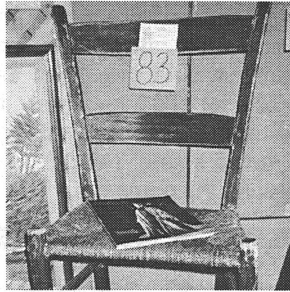
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Chairs For Charity

By Darren Kregar



"As poignantly indicated by an artist, the chair is a practical item with strong connotations of support and comfort, both of which are fundamental to the work of ACCKWA." (Pg 4, Chairs for Charity Program)



The Aids Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo & Area (ACCKWA) hosted the 8th Annual Chairs for Charity & Art Auction on March 16, 2002 at the Kitchener City Hall Rotunda.

Chairs for Charity is ACCKWA's second largest annual fundraising event. It is second in size only to their "Aids Walk" which is held each fall. This event allows ACCKWA, and those who support the mission and vision of ACCKWA to raise the funds necessary to continue in the battle against HIV/AIDS.

In these times of government cutbacks, more demand on charitable donations, and a continued increase in the rate of HIV infection, events such as this are more important than ever.

ACCKWA provides direct support to over 250 people in Waterloo region living with HIV/AIDS.

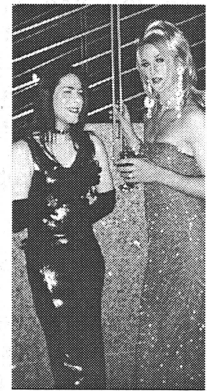
The event was a huge success raising funds for ACCKWA. The event relied heavily on the support of artists, volunteers and sponsors. Over 80 pieces of art were donated by local and international artists. Artists and photographers such as Susanne von Harpe, Marion Manning, Steve Walker, Tom Wright and many more.

Prior to the auction, the crowd was entertained by local performing artist, Pat Skinner who performed music from her latest CD, "Sundays For Maud", which is available at Words Worth Books. A silent auction was also underway with numerous items displayed going to the highest bidder.

Kool FM radio personality, Angie Hill, introduced the lovely and talented, 'Miss Drew'. Drew put on a lively, entertaining set that had the crowd singing, clapping and cheering (... so I

am exaggerating a bit). Drew's set was entertaining, she interacted with the crowd well and put them into the spirit of spending money.

Most pieces went for an average of \$140.00. Steve Walkers print, 'And The Flag Was Still There' (Cover picture)



was auctioned for \$600.00. According to the program, this piece was inspired by the "overwhelming and paralyzing sense of fear, anger, and sadness, and the loss (that) enveloped my life and the lives of so many others" affected by HIV.

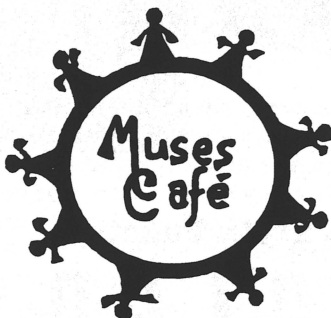
The Stratford Festival donated a painted ladder back chair from the 201 production of Twelfth Night (item #83). Glen Smith donated a set of original watercolours showing a chair each (item #46). Other pieces which I liked was a piece titled 'Winter Houses' by Frances Kirk (item #3) and an original photograph piece by titled 'Cadeira Um' by Guilherme Maranhao which I am the proud owner of.

I would like to personally thank A.J. Mahari for the opportunity to be able to attend Chairs for Charity on her behalf.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers and sponsors who put on an event that I will be sure to attend for many years to come. (and not to forget, thank you Muffy, Victoria and Drew for a great night afterwards at the Ren)

This article is a Voice Exclusive. Photos by Darren Kregar.

*A polite refusal
to accept the
mediocre*



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The Pink Coffee House

By A.J. Mahari

The Pink Coffee House got under way on March 20th with a turn out of 17 people. Organizer, Gordon Husk, said he was encouraged by the turnout but added that this Coffee House will run each Wednesday through until the end of April, at which time the group will assess the viability of it by reviewing the overall turnout, interest, and enthusiasm for this type of a social activity.

Gordon Husk is someone who has other initiatives on the go in our community besides the Coffee House which is his latest effort. He is contributing a great deal to try to

help bridge the various gaps and schisms that our fragmented community still has to overcome in order to be strengthened in a way that most of us would like to see. I spoke with Husk about his concept of and hopes for the Pink Coffee House.

Husk was most encouraged by, "the reaction of those who attended, the friendliness of it all, the simplicity, and willingness to 'play board games'. It was so different from the usual ways that we often gather — where we seem to preen ourselves and pump ourselves up more — 'the attitude' factor. Also I was encouraged by the fact that many said they'd re-

turn and would look for others to come. I also felt good that we are in effect supporting a local gay [owned] business, Muses Cafe. I was also encouraged that The REN was fine about us advertising at the bar. In effect it's good for them also. My guess is that those that some will probably go to the REN afterwards for some dancing."

When asked why he thought the initial night of The Coffee House was attended by men, (with the exception of yours truly) Husk replied, "at this time, we are both gay, [he and Dan] and have focused on that. Now, we invite the lesbian and other sectors of the community to join us, and help us to expand. In keeping with my own posi-

tion of 'keeping it simple' and devoting just as much energy toward this that is required to make it go by itself, we've mainly focused on the cyber addicts, like myself, to get away from their screens and actually meet one another for socializing."

Husk wanted our readers to know that in up-coming weeks he. "hopes there will be some live entertainment, like reading, music playing, but we are very much following the 'KISS' [Keep it simple stupid] rule, we're going slowly and within our own energy."

I had an opportunity to talk to one of the Coffee House participants, B. Patrick Plein who told me that he had heard about the Coffee House from a friend of his. Plein thought that the Coffee House was a great idea adding "I hope it happens every week."

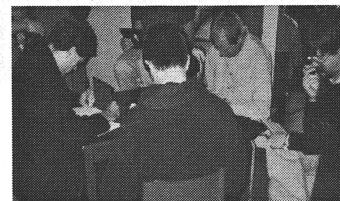
When asked why our community needs this type of social space and activity Plein said, "It gives us a sense of togetherness. Our community, at large, has had a lot of conflict and difficulty accepting one another. Men and women haven't been able to get along and be friends, just share love on the many levels that it can be shared."

Plein was motivated to come out and take part because he sees this as a great opportunity to make new friends. He said of Muses Cafe, where the Coffee House is held, "I just love the space in here. The art is everywhere and it's so wonderful. This is a very positive place to be and has a very good vibe."

Plein went on to talk about how he appreciates a very positive gay space which is not easy to find because, "when I'm in a good vibe for a while I can take that away with me and share that with others in a way that enhances my overall life experience."

With the music playing softly in the background and the not-too-bright lighting, walls covered with wonderfully inspiring art, the atmosphere was very relaxing and conducive to socializing.

This Coffee House represents initiative. It is an effort on the part of its or-



ganizers to help somewhat fill the void that many feel exists within our community's social infrastructure. Many groups have been started, initially supported only to basically fizzle out for lack of participation in the recent past. Yet the cry heard around K-W often is that there aren't enough non-bar alternative social outlets. So, if you have the time, why not drop by



one Wednesday and check it out. If you would value this type of social alternative supporting it is what will ensure that it remains an option.

Like so many before it, this initiative, too, is a good one. It may, however, need to take a look at its intended mandate of inclusivity and find a way to really get behind that. What was clear in the first two weeks was that gay men are definitely getting involved. Part of this may be that organizers admitted to not making much effort to advertise The Coffee House in areas where more women would be able to know of its existence.

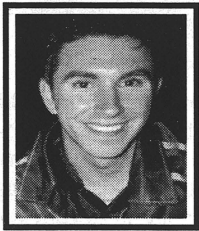
How can any group find this most delicate balance and be a welcoming and friendly positive place for all segments of our community? Being the only lesbian in a room full of men on the first



night of the Pink Coffee House gave me time to ponder that question. The idea is good, the location is wonderful. The mood was friendly. Still though the barriers of gender were obvious. The reality of the male numbers and and subsequent dominance as to how this group is unfolding in its scope and self-definition is one that must be addressed. The reality is that we need more inclusive social space that unfolds in actual practice and not only in theory.

A Voice Exclusive.
Photos By A.J. Mahari

CLUBBING



Cannibal Culture: Devouring the one gay bar town

By Ryan Porter



"It's our basement," Sean Williamson jokes of Kitchener's only gay bar, Club Renaissance. He and roommate Rachel Grimard live in the apartment building adjacent to the weekly saga they've dubbed "Drama-sance." Typically, he gets down in the "basement" twice a weekend and expects to know at least forty faces. Rachel parties at the club a little less, though she used to be as much of a fixture in the bar as the Ms. Pac-Man game. The reason she's standoffish - too much damn drama.

"I have heard people say I am with a new girl every weekend, and that's really tough to hear," she says. "I don't want to be known as 'that bar slut.'"

When Rachel started to date another regular at the bar, Vicki, she stirred up a buzz. Everyone had an opinion - including the bar's manager who had designs on Vicki's ex. Tongues wagged as talk turned to the controversial couple.

"People were saying things," Rachel says. "Like it's not going to last, that I didn't want a relationship. It's just hard to start a relationship when there's so many people bringing it down."

Though every group has its gossips, one gay bar towns are famous for their whisperings. Without a selection of establishments, bars like Club Renaissance force the queer community onto a first name basis, whether the patrons like it or not. For the young queer crowd that packs the bar every weekend, there's an approach with caution mentality. When everyone knows your name, don't expect a welcome worthy of Cheers.

In smaller cities across Ontario, where the local gay hangouts can be boiled down to "the bar", a cannibal culture prevails. With the same faces filling the floor weekly, a new addition will snap heads. And once people know a little bit about that 'fresh meat', they

aren't shy about filling in some of the details on their own.

Adrienne Barker first visited Kingston's Club 477 in 1999, before the rival Wally's had set up shop. The initial thrill of meeting other gay girls quickly collapsed under the frustration of the rumour mill. In many ways, Adrienne felt membership at Club 477 was closed.

"They thought I was transgendered," she says. "The girl who brought it up to me was like 'Oh my God, I've been referring to you as a woman, is that okay?' I was like 'Yeah, I'm not transitioning.'"

Adrienne felt the in crowd, which she refers to as "mildly evil," had circulated the rumour to sabotage her. The gossip hurt, and led Adrienne to shrug off the bar scene.

While rumour can dent a reputation, another downside of the plugged in community are the imaginary lines drawn down the dance floor. Sean finds eligible bachelors are often untouchable thanks to this chummy atmosphere.

"When I used to try and meet people at the bar, I found it really frustrating," Sean says. "It would be like 'Oh, well, I already know them, because I slept with that person's friend' or 'I was going out with that person's best friend,' or 'that person's friend tried to pick me up.'"

With bullets of gossip whizzing faster than the beats per minute of the DJ's music, some members of the queer community can't be bothered. Rachel says many of her friends who frequented the bar for years had to temporarily 'retire' from the soap opera. But where is the alternative?

Those who don't do bars have tried to redefine clubbing, uniting through other venues like gay rights activism, festivals, sports and university support groups. Adrienne became deeply involved with the Queen's University

queer group, but found when she broke into the core, there were only three or four people steering the ship. She's been left confused about where to find the lesbians in Kingston.

"I'll see random couples walking down the street hand in hand," she says. "I'm like, 'Where have you come from? I've never seen you before!'"

Though Adrienne made some close friends through the bar scene in Kingston, she doesn't expect her dream girl lurks in the bar's alcohol saturated woodwork. Sean agrees with this, saying people put on a different face when they're at the bar.

"The bar brings out different energies in me," he says. "I want to dance and stuff - but that's not all there is to me." Despite the continuing storylines crossing the dance floor at Club Renaissance, Rachel says if you see through the charades, tight bonds can be formed through a one gay bar town.

"The scene itself is a beneficial one," Rachel says. "It's an outlet. When we're in the bar and we're finally allowed to be in our world, we tend to cram as much gay into one night, into one room, as possible. Because once we're back in the outside world, we have to repress it a little bit."

With all the flashing lights, skin, bass and booze, meaningful conversation can be hard to come by. But, for Rachel, that's the only way to cut through the one gay bar bullshit.

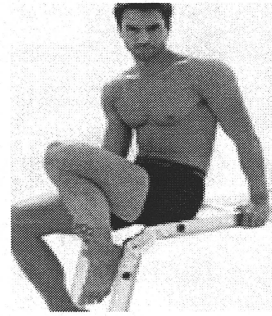
"I know what it's like to be subjected to rumours and gossip," she says. "I don't really like it, so I prefer to give somebody a fair chance. The problem with that bar is no one invests any real time in talking with you."

Ryan Porter completed his English degree at The U of W and is currently a Journalism student at Ryerson in Toronto. He is an editorial intern at fab magazine. A Voice Exclusive.

OUT OF STEP

A Night In Town (Part One of Two)

By Stephen Erastes



Leaning against a black wall in a darkened room, lit only by naked red glowing clear bulbs in the ceiling, I watch shadowy men ghostly moving silently about like monks at a sacred temple. They saunter into this room, adjust their eyes and scan the room. One side has about 10 closed doors side by side. These cubicles have shards of light flashing through the cracks and onto the ceiling above them. Every now and then a door opens lighting up the room, and two men quickly leave (often adjusting their clothing) --- without words or any signs of affection between them.

They will usually exit the building. Meanwhile the monks entering the big room, either turn around and disappear down the hallway or they lean their backs against the wall, like me ... and wait. I'm not sure exactly what I'm waiting for --- either to engage or to be chosen, but at the basis of it is sex --male sex. Is it just sex or could it be intimacy that is being sought? Intimacy, the fundamental human condition of being touched by another. The smell of testosterone perfumes the air, the sexual tension almost palatable. This is male space.

I'm smiling, that almost arrogant Cheshire grin that I get when I'm 'studying' some aspect of human behaviour. I watch myself watching, enjoying the convoluted nature of it all. Like much of my life in *Gaydom*, I love figuring out the rules of engagement (as I've done before in bathhouses, dark rooms, group orgies, and other underground gay spaces) --- sometimes purposely testing the boundaries --- like talking in the sauna, cracking jokes, or exchanging phone numbers. I stare at the younger men coming and going from the corridor. I saunter down the corridor; exchanging quick glances (yes/no), looking into the near empty porno "theatre" rooms, with their large TV screens flashing the stark black plastic chairs along the wall. So na-

ked, stark, unwelcoming and functional. No cosy engagement welcomed here. There's a large opening with bars (reminding me of one way mirrors of human behaviour studies) revealing shadowy figures silhouetted against it. This middle room between the two video rooms is truly a dark room where men can watch other men watching porno's without quite being able to be seen watching. Further in the back of this room is another "room" (really a closet) where true anonymity and sex can be experienced, without knowing who is who. I feel my way through the middle room, hoping for a feel like most others, but with all takers, no one experiences.

Wandering down the corridor again, leaning up against the wall, a young very dressed, good-looking, well-cropped Chinese man I estimate to be in his 20's locks eyes with me. After some ritualistic 'don't I know you', our mouths and minds exchange personal details about being gay, eastern philosophy, and life, while our hands explore naked flesh and body parts. Being exposed in this darkly lit room doesn't bother me, but my 'friend' is feeling awkward. Others notice but continue their *praying*. Should we engage in more obvious sex? It would be our invitation for others to join. A small crowd would form a tight circle of observation and touch -- the communal circle of joy. No rooms being available, we 'borrow' a small cubicle, and then proceed to disrobe and enjoy one another, while laughing, and learning some of our touchier areas. It's only later that I no-

tice the hetero porno on the TV behind me, and smile -- figuring he would enjoy that more, being 'bi'.

I continue to be amused at my 'fall from grace' - me, this aging man, who was such a *goodie two shoes* at an earlier age - another time and place, which now seems so dreamlike. This is now my world -- one of gay men and sex -- although my relative promiscuity on this night is more out of character to me (I think). I feel no sense of shame, or usage, or manipulation on this night. I just feel a strong need to be in physical contact with other males.

This night generally has been so crazy. Surely this is not a 'normal' night for a gay man? I had come to town for a dinner date that I had arranged on line. The phone call to the guy I was to meet with, when I was on the edge of town, had revealed a cooler, and tenser potential diner and evening partner. Hence, I was not surprised when he did not show and his phone was 'off' for the rest of the night. I decided to make the best of the night, and explore this 'just getting together', which I'd so often observed on-line. I went to the chat room in a cyber cafe and gave myself an appropriate (not gross) name, and quickly had 3 or 4 chats. One person agreed to meet me for supper. Noticing someone waiting outside

Continued on page 29

Jean-Paul Pilon

Barrister and Solicitor, Notary Public

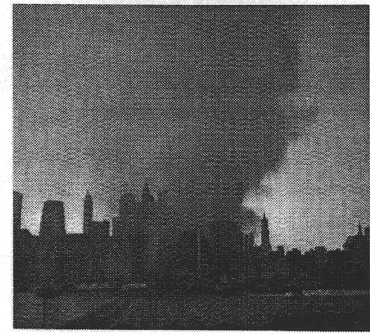
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Good Grief: A Light Shines In The Darkness (Part 2)

By Noel Springwood



Two soaring columns of light tower over the already towering Manhattan skyline and disappear into the night. They mark the site of two soaring towers of concrete, steel and glass that have, themselves, disappeared, into the ground.

The lights are an imaginative, albeit temporary, memorial intended to commemorate and honour the lives lost in the World Trade Center attack of 9/11. They are one more attempt to bring some sense of meaning and closure to what is, at best, a chaotic and painful memory. They are a fragile reminder of the fragility of human life and endeavour.

The lights are there not from any functional requirement. They are there as symbols of solidarity for those of us who survive, who live on. They are, like many similar gestures and rituals, part of the grieving process. Gestures and rituals play an important part in this process. Some help shield us from the intensity of the pain of loss. Others, like the lights, help express feelings can't be expressed in any other way.

As a society, we do a lot of things to help us live through times of tragedy and loss. Obsequies, memorial services, wakes, interments and anniversaries all help keep the memory alive while keeping the pain at bay. The sense of community and social outreach involved brings a softening, comforting context that eases the task

of grieving considerably.

There was a time when, if there was a death in a household, neighbours and relatives, even perfect strangers, would begin showing up at that door with all sorts of pies, casseroles, cakes and sandwiches. The expectation was, and the reality was, that they all returned after the burial to share in the abundance of food and to bond in a neighbourly and familial expression of care.

Much of this aspect of death and dying has now become institutionalised.

Funeral Directors and Church Organisations have taken over the task. The spontaneous expression of concern, so simple and so touching,

has been replaced by slick, pricey and coldly efficient corporate services. On an individual level, however, there still remains much to do and many ways in which to be involved. And being involved is the first step. Don't run away from someone who is grieving. Be there for them. They may only need a hug; but, it does take two for that.

In my own experiences with grieving, I found that the worst thing anyone could say to me was, "Don't feel bad." Or "Everything will be all right." I couldn't help how I felt and whether or not things would work out didn't matter. All that really mattered was the reality of what I was experiencing.

That took all my energies and concentration.

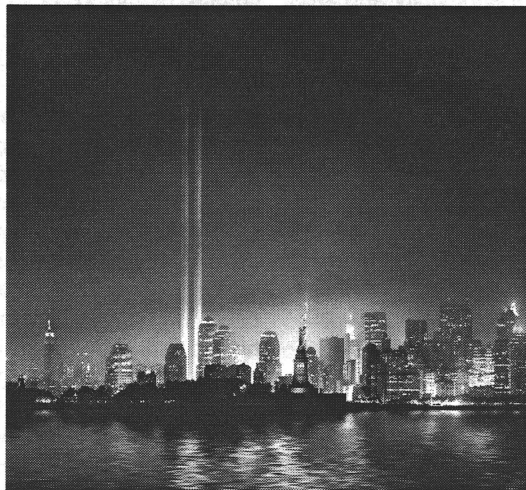
In the same way, therefore, I resented people asking me to let them know if there was anything they could do. Asking a grieving person to think of ways you can help is just about the least effective way of helping that person cope with their grief. Just do what you see needs doing and get them to the places where they need to be in order to do things. Suggest, don't ask about, the things you would like to do. Don't make the grieving person make all the decisions.

Often, in our society, a grieving person can be isolated because people don't want to intrude upon their grief. Consequently, invitations to go out to lunch or for a walk or ride can become fewer. The very kind of distractions that can be essential to getting back to normal are taken away. A grieving person can be confused, fearful or hurting. Often this can affect their reactions to overtures of affection and caring. That should not prevent others from making those overtures. They are important and can build bonds and bridges. They can help fill the void of helplessness and loneliness.

Above all, honesty and openness are imperative. Talk to grieving persons about their experience. Don't spend time talking to others about them and their experience. Grief is an important part of life and sharing it can be a powerful help in finding ways of doing it well.

More than that, to be present to the grieving person as someone to trust, to confide in, to use, to put it bluntly, as a dumping ground. Grief needs to be let out. It can't be trapped or buried inside. This usually needs someone else: to listen, to absorb and to help rechannel. In times of grieving, a friend in need is truly a friend indeed.

I have frequently given talks on grieving. One night, after one of those



talks, a woman approached me and thanked me for setting her free. When I asked how, she told me that she had lived for over four years with the guilt of not feeling excessive grief at the time of her son's death by suicide. In the talk I had mentioned that our psyche often short-circuits strong feelings so that they do not overwhelm us. In times of tragedy and loss, a kind of emotional numbness, or shock, can set in and last for some time. This is simply an automatic self-protection system. For it to last for five years, however, is problematic. I was much relieved and grateful, myself, that I was able to help that woman regain that part of her life. Often, the major problem faced by those grieving a loss is the absence of any sense of closure. Certainly, someone who once was there is no longer there in the same way. Death is a remarkable indicator of the interdependence of connectedness of human life. So, we tend to want ceremonies, tributes and memorials to help emphasise this fact and to help remind us of how often we forget it.

However, it could just be that there was no opportunity to take a final farewell. The survivors can feel deprived of what is an established ritual for parting. In this case, and in many cases, writing a letter to the departed can help bring the kind of resolution that would be, at least the imagined result, of a final farewell.

Whatever is done, nothing will change the reality. At the same time, it can help change our perception of and reaction to that reality. And so we gather to sing hymns, hear kind words, drink a toast, send flowers and cards and mark the passing of life. To mark the continuance of life, we hang portraits, burn candles and incense, erect monuments and shine lights into the sky.

Some rituals remind us that death is not necessarily the end; others, that learning to live with death is one of the great challenges of life. Grieving well will help us meet that challenge more effectively and live that life more fully. Grieving well will help us see that there is, after all, a light shining in and through the darkness.

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



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Watch Fobs

The accumulation of watches and their related jewelry has been of interest since the invention of the pocket watch in the early 1500's. This jewelry in the form of pins, chains, and fancy links was the forerunner of the present-day fob. A pocket watch with a fob was a practical timepiece as it wasn't attached to the working wrist. Fobs have been a means for companies to advertise their products. Since most men who worked with heavy equipment or farm machinery wore them, it was natural for companies to promote new products and equipment through advertising fobs. When attending a convention a ribbon was issued with a medal attached to it. After the convention the medal would be taken off and worn as a fob. Fobs have been popular for the past 100 years.

911 Victims Fund Discriminating Against Gays

By Geoffrey Young

911

The religious right has been experiencing somewhat of a renaissance in the past year or so, and that rejuvenation gained steam with the attacks of 911. All non-western faiths are being called into question and isolated as enemies of America. Suspicion of *those who aren't like us* is growing and folks we thought were done and gone are back for another round of media spots, or in one case, a mandate as U.S. Attorney General. After the incidents of 911, part of John Ashcroft's mandate as Attorney General has been to oversee the bodies responsible for the compensation of victims' families. He appointed Kenneth Feinberg to head the victims fund.

On the 10th of March, Mr Feinberg went on NBC's Meet the Press and said that same sex-partners of people who died in the 911 attacks will not necessarily be eligible for benefits from the 911 victims fund.

The administration of the funds collected to help the victims of 911 will be based on state social security and disaster relief/benefit laws.

In almost every American State, same sex-couples are not eligible for workers compensation or social security. Under the disaster coverage section of the U.S. workers compensation rules, spouses of those lost in disasters can be eligible for benefits of up to \$20,000.00 per year. Since most states do not recognize gay couples, they are not eligible for these funds either.

The State of Virginia is trying to take the high ground asserting that

claimants will be judged on a case-to-case basis where such things as same-sex marriage occur. All that is needed is a legal will that names the same-sex partner as a principal beneficiary, heterosexual couples however don't need to present a will at all. In other states, the cases will probably be solved through litigation.

This is completely incongruous to with the *interim final rule* relating who is eligible for benefits which states that the 911 fund's mandate is *"to provide fair, predictable and consistent compensation to the victims of September 11 and their families throughout the life of the program; and to do so in an expedited, efficient manner without unnecessary bureaucracy and needless demands on the victims."*

Attorney General Ashcroft has even been nice enough to include illegal aliens who lost a spouse in the World Trade Centre to the list of folks who will receive benefits averaging close to a million dollars U.S. per victim. He has stated that he will ignore U.S. immigration laws and that illegal aliens who step forward to claim benefits will not be investigated or pursued either before or after they receive their cheques. Despite this, he has shown no intention of ignoring state social security laws, which deny gays their rightful "compensation".

The ironies here run pretty deep. For example; Mark Bingham, a passenger on flight 93, which crashed in a field in Pennsylvania was gay. He is widely believed to be one of the heroes who fought off high-jackers in time to save

the plane from hitting its intended target, believed to be either the White House or the Capital building. Senator John McCain gave a eulogy for Bingham in which he stated "I may very well owe my life to

Mark and the others who summoned the enormous courage and love necessary to deny those deprived, hateful men their terrible triumph. Such a debt you incur for life". Indeed many politicians in Washington may owe Mark Bingham a lot more than the denial of benefits to his partner. Ashcroft himself probably spends a good deal of time in the capital and may well be one of those lives saved.

It is fair to say that the denial of benefits to anybody who lost a spouse or family member in the 911 attacks is morally objectionable to almost everybody. The only person I could see being alright with this is Virginia preacher Jerry Falwell who said the WTC attacks were God's revenge on gays. Oddly enough, there was a time when John Ashcroft and Jerry Falwell were co-horts in the religious right's movement of the 1980's.

Several months ago, Ashcroft was in the media having ordered the breasts on statues in his office to be covered. I am not sure if I'm making assumptions here, but if a guy finds women's breasts to be so offensive that they should be covered on statues, would it not be safe to wonder if that said guy really isn't all that into females?

Would Ashcroft therefore be saying that even he, himself, shouldn't be eligible for benefits? As it is, the criteria by which benefits are determined discriminates against women, the unemployed, and low wage earners. A secretary isn't worth as much as a lawyer, a janitor is not worth as much as a secretary and so on. In this case though, not only is an illegal alien worth more than a resident homosexual, but the resident homosexual is worth virtually nothing

Is it just me, or has the American political establishment not made any social progress since the 1950s?

Geoffrey Young is a journalist and activist who now resides in Winnipeg Manitoba. A Voice exclusive.

Peter D. Martel

Chartered Accountant

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LIVING OUT



Spud Love

By Sally Sheklow



I wasn't looking for love. Having a fling was fine, but nothing long-term for me, thanks. My "Forever" relationships had always ended in ugly scenes and late-night door slamming. Who would want that to last till the end of time?

My real "Love Forever" came disguised as your run-of-the-mill, crotch-throbbing attraction. We'd known each other socially for years, but no sparks. Exactly one month before our first night together, the future love of my life interviewed me about my trip to Gay Lobby Day on the radio show she hosted. I was nervous, she was cool, competent, a woman in charge.

I couldn't take my eyes off those chubby little fingers diddling the console knobs. During a break she took off her headphones. "You're shy aren't you?"

Wonga wonga!

Something got me about her seeing the tender inner self behind my out 'n proud persona. I drove away from the radio station vowing she'd be my next fling. Only for the sex, of course.

I invited her to stuff envelopes at the non-profit where I volunteered. She had a meeting. I asked her if she wanted to go to the Pride rally. She was fixing her sink. A movie? She had a dentist appointment.

Finally, one night at a potluck she

announced "I've got a free pair of concert tickets, anybody want to go?"

"I will!" I was too gaga to notice her trepidation. I tried to make a good impression in my vintage Hawaiian shirt, a poor choice for the chilly auditorium's metal seats. I scooted my chair toward her, hoping for some body heat. Was it my imagination, or did she scoot away? I scooted again. So did she. During the standing ovation I sidled closer. She stepped into the aisle. It was pouring rain when the concert let out. We had to run across the parking lot to her truck. I hoped she'd put her warm arm around me or at least lay one of those pudgy little paws on my thigh. I wanted to connect, win her over, get in her pants. When a huge RV passed us I said, "Ah, that's my fantasy—drive out to the boonies in a big camper and have loud sex." Silence. She didn't say a word for the whole 45 minute drive home.

I made myself wait a week to call her up. "Hi, I just harvested my potatoes. Want to come over for dinner?"

"Sure, that sounds exciting."

Potatoes? Exciting? This from the chair scooter? Maybe she finally ran out of excuses. Maybe she had a thing for spuds.

We ate our baked potatoes. She was relaxed, warm, funny. Why hadn't I ever noticed those huge blue eyes? "Another potato?" I asked.

After dinner, we took a walk, held hands, talked, laughed. We hugged good-night at my gate. Full body press. The next night we went to a GALA dance. We made out in the car and went home to my place. We shared a whole year of sleep-overs before I started using the word "Love." Even longer before "Forever" passed my lips. On our first-six-month-a-versary, she gave me a card asking "Wanna to try for another six months?" I hit the roof. "Quit future tripping. Don't lay any expectations on me!"

The moment I changed is hard to pinpoint. Maybe it was when my old dog died and my sweetie stepped up to the number one loyal companion spot. Maybe it was weathering tough times without turning on each other that let me relax into love. Or maybe it just kept being good, so I stayed.

After fourteen years, even I will admit this isn't a fling. And the love keeps unfolding—like one of those party-favor balls you unravel slowly so you don't miss any of the little prizes tucked between the layers. Who wouldn't want it to last forever?

Sally Sheklow lives and writes in the Pacific Northwest. Her "Living Out" humor column appears in several newspapers and magazines around the US, as well as in New Zealand, South Africa and Australia. Email comments to: [REDACTED] This article was submitted to The Voice by Sally Sheklow.

Investment Planning Counsel of Canada

Financial Planning Professionals

BONNIE J. BABIN - Financial Planning & Tax Consultant - Phone [REDACTED]

Mommy Dearest:

Rosie O'Donnell can do a lot of good for gay would-be adoptive parents. But can she also do harm?

(Edited) Excerpt From an article by Michael Bronski of "The Boston Phoenix"

"I AM THE GAY parent" declared Rosie O'Donnell to Diane Sawyer on ABC's March 14 Primetime Thursday, during an interview in which she both came out of the closet and declared war on the State of Florida for denying lesbians and gay men the right to adopt children. O'Donnell's statement has become a banner, a call to arms in the gay and mainstream press in the ongoing fight for the rights of queer families. But while many are noting how much good Rosie O'Donnell can do for this issue, it may be just as important — if not more so — to ask whether she can also do harm.

The coming out of the "Queen of Nice" was no big surprise. She has been repeatedly outed by the tabloids over the past two years; long before that, her sexuality was an open secret in the gay community and in most of the mainstream gossip columns and internet chat rooms.

At the same time that she publicly declared her lesbianism, she aligned herself with a queer political cause: the right of gay people to adopt children. Specifically, she is going head-to-head with a Florida state law that forbids single gay people, gay couples, and unmarried heterosexual couples from adopting children. The 1977 law was one of the wretched offshoots of Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children" campaign to repeal the Dade County gay-rights law passed earlier that year. There have been challenges to the adoption law over the decades, but this past August a federal court upheld it, a decision now under appeal by the ACLU in the US Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. The ACLU challenge takes up the case of Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau, two gay men who are raising five HIV-positive children. Three are foster-care kids placed with them when they lived in Florida. After they moved to Oregon (because of the illness of one of their parents), the kids

went with them under a standard relocation policy. They then adopted two foster kids in Oregon, where adoptions by gay people are legal. Last year, Lofton and

But O'Donnell's entrance into the perilous arena of politics and public policy — despite her good intentions — raises serious questions not only about her political sophistication, but also about the disastrous effect her words and actions might have on gay politics as a whole. She is charging around like a bull in a very fragile china shop, and who knows what the breakage will be?

The problem with Rosie O'Donnell — or any celebrity — taking center stage



and becoming, ipso facto, a movement's major spokesperson is that such a position takes on a life of its own. Celebrity politics makes a given issue hostage to the fate, character, and decisions of one deified personality. O'Donnell

isn't accountable to anyone. Hell, she isn't even — by her own admission — particularly well-informed about gay-and-lesbian political issues. Gay people might want to think they can win the hearts and minds of heterosexual America with everybody's favorite TV mom — Rosie O'Donnell as a hip Donna Reed or June Cleaver. But don't forget, the cult of media personality cuts both ways, and it can be used for any cause. The political right could as easily promote its own version of the lesbian mom: Paula Poundstone. Drunk, abusive, sullen, and too butch, Poundstone is the media's version of the anti-Rosie.

— "I am the gay parent" — O'Donnell draws heavily on a long and dangerous tradition in both feminist and (to a lesser degree) gay politics: the tradition of maternal moral superiority.

The appeal to motherhood is irresistible. After all, who in America doesn't love mothers and apple pie?

But the politics of motherhood are also deeply conservative and as such are particularly limited, even disastrous, for the gay-and-lesbian movement. Let's face it: the gay movement seeks personal freedom to act outside of heterosexual norms and to establish equality under the law for a wide range of personal choices, including the right to marry and raise children, as well as the right to have a full, varied, and adventurous sexual life.

O'Donnell *played* the motherhood card well. She undoubtedly garnered more attention for the Florida case than the ACLU would have gotten on its own. But even now, in the earliest stages of her one-woman publicity campaign, O'Donnell is acting out the obvious limitations of her approach.

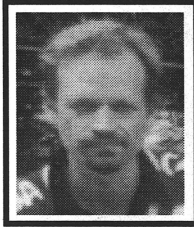
While we're at it, O'Donnell's out-of-touchness with the mainstream gay movement and politics really is a problem.

In the end, one has to wonder if organized gay-rights groups — as well as the ACLU, for which she is now an unofficial spokesperson — will want to be associated with O'Donnell if she continues to make such political mistakes and to commit gaffes like hoping publicly that her kids grow up straight or calling gay activists "Nazis." There is little doubt that Rosie O'Donnell means well and has the best intentions. It is her ignorance of the gay movement's history and politics, combined with her new position as spokesperson, that could lead to serious problems. Social discrimination against gays, laws that prevent gay people from adopting, and laws that prohibit queers from committing sodomy or looking at porn or cross-dressing are wrong because they deny GLBT people full citizenship and equality under the law. Motherhood might be good — and itself something worth fighting for when jeopardized. But in the end, it is no substitute for simple justice.

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Movie Chat: The Oscars

By Roger Albrecht



I love movies. I'm not only a fan, but also a filmmaker. I do documentaries and dramas. Its expensive, time consuming and something I have to do. It is also both an artform and an entertainment business. I try to achieve balance from both viewpoints out of necessity and because I want to reach people.

Three articles I will write here in The Voice will be about current films and those of the past. They will not just be critiques but also my feelings about the industry in general.

I'll begin with some thoughts about the Academy Awards which were handed out at the new Kodak Theatre in the heart of Hollywood. Its the first time Oscar has had an actual home. That they chose the heart of Hollywood rather than more prestigious surroundings in the greater L.A. area is commendable. Hollywood itself is not a large area and over time it has become a little seedy. Facelifts have been going on for some time, longing for the glory days of the 30's and 40's. One theatre I went to recently, The Egyptian, no longer runs main stream current releases. But instead is devoted to running daily, a film about the history of Hollywood. Nightly it runs films of the 30's, 40's and 50's often with a still living actor from the movie in attendance.

For those caught up in the mystique of Hollywood, despite all the silliness of the glamour and hype both past and present, there remains an other-worldly quality about the place. Outside remains the 'walk of fame' and Mann's Chinese Theatre.

There is much I can say about the negative side of 'Ego-town'. And I will. But then there's the dream-side. Every Oscars night I sit with friends, making our picks and placing our bets (often I win) but in the end its a crap shoot. The way it should be. You never know who will 'win'. Its not just a popularity contest and the idea of awarding one person for their performance over any other is really quite silly. Art is subjective. Can their be a 'best'. Of course not.

But in the routine of our lives, lacking in meaning and substance, unaware of a direction in which to turn, we look inward to our reveries. We fantasize about being the characters in the movies or the 'characters' who portray them. Oh the happiness they must feel!

With their money and fame and beautiful lifestyles... ah, to dream! Despite the continual reinforcement of the fact that we know money cannot buy happiness, we continue to dream.

The show itself, long and often cheesy will always have with it, an earnest attempt by some to speak about the art of film. The fashions I couldn't care less about... but Gwyneth Paltrow's gown was hideous and even her posture was bad!

This year's show was the least watched in history (sort of) and one wonders why? Are people less interested in the empty, self-congratulatory nonsense that is Hollywood? Have people begun to look deeper into the meaning of their own lives since September eleventh? Or was there a lack of blockbuster feel-good movies in 2001? Who knows... its all a crapshoot!

The theme of race was prevelant this year. Whoopi Goldberg did a lacklustre job of hosting. They gave Sidney Poitier the very deserved lifetime achievement award. It showed a film clip of various black actors and filmmakers thanking him. He went on to thank the many people in his life both black and white. Then Halle Berry won for Best Actress and gave an emotional speech about her difficulties as a black actress.

Finally Denzel Washington won for his 'okay' performance in Training Day. He humoursly mentioned having to 'chase' the legendary Poitier all his life and finally getting his award on the night Sidney gets yet another one. I know Denzel hates being compared to Sidney just because he's black. And rightly so. But it seemed that on this evening the 'difference' between black and white continued to be emphasized. Diversity



comes from acceptance. Just because you don't win an Oscar doesn't mean you're not accepted or recognized.

Hitchcock and many others never won. Its a crapshoot!

But I'm a white male and don't know what its like to have experienced racism. So I accept the tone of the evening for what it is and hope we can

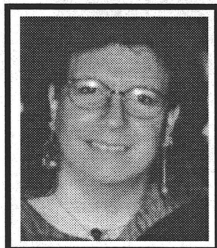
move on.

In my speech, if you're interested, I would have thanked my parents and all those who've helped me over the years. Then I would have spoke about how we talk about art in this medium of film that has vast monetary rewards for the few. Vast wealth has with it power. It is those in power who bear the most responsibility to humanize and keep 'art' alive. The lure of fame and fortune in life helps creates an inhuman society. We turn to activities that provide only provisional meaning and rarely become truly awake.

I don't like that the allure of fame and fortune continues to be pevealant in so many of our lives. But as film is a creative medium many will be naturally be drawn toward it. As a way to express thoughts and feelings, it can often be a very positive, beautiful and even challenging medium. Going to a film isn't just escape. Some say there's nothing wrong with purely escapist movies. I don't believe they ever have to be. At a very minimum I would say that candy is okay once in a while but it isn't long before you'd be very sick if that is all you ate. For me... I just gotta' make movies!

Roger Albrecht, of Kitchener is a graduate of Conestoga College's Film School, a film-maker, and the owner the photo-finishing lab, Exposed Photo. This column is a Voice Exclusive.

Voice Spotlight: GLOW



Voice Exclusive Interview Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo

By Lyn McGinnis



In late 1970, a group formed at the University of Waterloo and called itself the Waterloo Universities' Gay Liberation Movement (WUGLM). This was the first such university organization in Canada. According to Jacqueline Watson, GLOW's current Communications Director, this grew out of the general social activism of late 60s and early 70s. "I think GLOW's appearance is directly linked to the dying hippie movement of the time."

This group has changed its name a few times over the

years. In 1980 it became the Gay Liberation of Waterloo (GLOW) and in 1985, the name was amended to be the Gay and Lesbian Liberation of Waterloo (GLLOW). Now it is GLOW, Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo.

I asked Jeremy Steffler, GLOW's Phone Line Co-ordinator, if anything much has changed in terms of LGBT needs and how GLOW meetings are organized. "Yes and no. LGBT attending GLOW meetings have always been looking for social and support opportunities. While the nature

of the social opportunities may have changed, GLOW still very much focuses on these issues. It is my understanding that GLOW was much more politically active in the past. GLOW still advocates for the LGBT community when called upon by

members of the local media or as circumstances demand, but political activism is not a primary activity for the organization currently."

Given the brief and often conflict-ridden nature of other queer organizations, I asked about how GLOW

has managed to last this long.

"We are strictly volunteer based," Watson said, "so everyone is allowed to come and go as they please. I think this is a strength, because it makes people participate only if they want to. We also have support from the UW Federation of Students, so certain issues like funding and administration are taken care of for us."

Steffler agreed and added, "As a volunteer-based organization, GLOW realizes it can only commit to so much, so scales its activities up and down

accordingly. Inevitably, the work of these volunteers is enough to attract new volunteers and revitalize the organization.

GLOW has never claimed to represent the LGBT community. We only try to be welcoming and provide support to as many members of the LGBT community as we can."

According to Steffler, Watson, and Steve Lebourveau, about graduate from Systems Design Engineering and actively involved in GLOW for the past two years, GLOW exists to provide support, social opportunities for members and education to the general public.

These services take several forms, there is a weekly discussion group, a phone line, and a GLOW office. There are also occasional social events such as the "Boyz & Boyz, Grrls & Grrls" Dances.

Steffler outlined the general structure of the discussion group, "The discussion groups are organized into three major parts. The first five minutes or so, we go over the guidelines for the groups and introduce ourselves (by whatever names we choose - there is no requirement to reveal personal information and identities). In the next

Jeremy Steffler, says that GLOW "has never claimed to represent the LGBT community. We only try to be welcoming and provide support to as many members of the LGBT community as we can."

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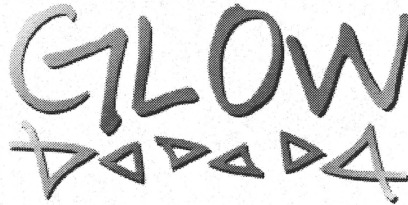
Continued from page 16

section, we present personal stories related to the topic for the evening. This discussion is facilitated, based on treating everybody with respect. In the final 15 minutes or so, we allow an opportunity for discussion of unrelated but pressing topics, announcements etc.

There is no requirement that attendees speak or contribute to the discussions and in fact, we have many members who prefer to listen." Lebourveau said the discussion group, which averages between 15 to 20 people, works well. "I know that's what I needed when I was first coming out. I think that the discussion group has evolved nicely over the past few years. The discussion is usually about some issue related to coming out. If it's your first time, you'll probably be scared, but it'll be so nice to have finally made contact with actual queer people! Afterwards, you might go over to the Grad House and hang out for a bit." For the benefit of those who haven't yet gone to this group he added, "It should be a pretty exciting experience."

Another service GLOW provides is the phone line. All three ranked the

importance of this service very highly. "I think the phone line is one of the most important things GLOW offers," Watson said. "Phone line volunteers go through a lot of training, and are the kind of people that like listening and being there for people because it's what they like to do. They are volunteers, not employees, so their motives are pure." Significantly, it appears this is an aspect of GLOW primarily serving the non-university community. "Generally speaking, students do NOT call,"



Steffler said. "We do not know the names/ages etc., of any of our callers [the service is confidential]. We estimate university-aged students make up less than 10 percent of the calls. We have no way of tracking whether or not callers eventually attend the discussion groups. However, based on the nature of calls received, we believe that the phone line services a different segment of the community than the discussion groups" According to Watson, the GLOW office

serves several functions. "It is open to the public for a couple of hours every day around lunch, and is home to the Phone line in the evening. It houses a growing LGBT lending library, the queer housing list, Speakers Bureau (currently on hiatus), and there are always friendly volunteers lounging on the extremely comfortable couches. Any question can almost always be answered at the office." It is located in the Student Life Centre and visitors can get easy directions from the staff at the Turnkey desk.

The Boyz & Boyz, Grrls & Grrls Dances seem to be a great success, along with occasional bonfires, pizza nights and regular social time at the Grad House after the weekly discussion group.

I went on to ask these three about issues GLOW has dealt with addressing the needs of a diverse student population coming to university and coming out.

"Over the past few years, GLOW has been working closely with the universities orientation committee, which includes information on GLOW in all of their frosh week activities," Steffler said. "GLOW has also spearheaded a 'Gay-Friendly' Button campaign with information on GLOW on the buttons, which have been worn by Frosh Week leaders over the past two years. As to whether or not we have made students feel safe and comfortable contacting us, it is hard to assess. We definitely have new students contacting GLOW every term, but exactly what percentage of students we are reaching is unknown." I asked about GLOW addressing the particular needs of queer students from differing ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

"GLOW has definitely had such opportunities," responded Steffler. He also explained, "People from many different faiths/cultures/backgrounds have contacted GLOW volunteers for support over the years. As a volunteer organization, GLOW is more or less prepared to deal with certain issues depending on the experiences and backgrounds of our current base of volunteers. GLOW has had members over the past few years from 'visible minorities.' All of GLOW's services are open to all members of the LGBT community and GLOW makes every effort to make all new members

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welcome.”

Another challenge GLOW has always had has to do with how few lesbians regularly attend discussion and other activities.

Lebourveau admits, “This was actually part of the reason it took me so long to feel comfortable at GLOW. I have always been more comfortable around women. There have been many attempts at getting more women to be involved, but it is very difficult for a bunch of gay guys to figure out what women want. We now tend to wait until women come to us with initiatives they’d like to have started. I have personally tried to be as encouraging as possible when women approach us about getting initiatives started. Usually what happens is that the initial results are very encouraging, but eventually the once-very-enthusiastic organizer gets overwhelmed by school-work, and the enthusiasm peters out. We do have a couple active women volunteers, but I would still say that there are not enough.”

“Most lesbians prefer the Womyn’s

Centre on campus,” added Watson. “I remember my first time in discussion: I was the only girl, with about 15 gay men. It was very intimidating. But everyone was very welcoming, and I’ve had a lot of fun since then.”

She went on to say, “I really don’t know why this is a problem. Maybe because lesbians see the Womyn’s Centre and the girl place and GLOW as the guy place. Maybe because lesbians have spent so much of their lives trying to like men, so when they finally come out, they don’t want to be around men all the time. I would assume this is the reverse for gay men. I feel that it is important to have at least some female representation within GLOW, and there are currently three active female volunteers, and lots of others on the GLOW list.”

As mentioned earlier, GLOW once upon a time had an additional political focus reflected in their use of the term “Liberation” in their name. Lebourveau has a theory why this is no longer the case. “Lately, GLOW has avoided this

question. It has let groups like WPIRG take care of the activist role, and concentrated on social, support and educational activities. As far as I know, none of us are really activists. I think the difficulty with activism in a group like ours is that it would be too difficult to choose the ‘commonly agreed social issue.’ We can easily agree about how best to organize a dance party or a phone line, but it’s a lot more difficult to find a commonly agreed upon stance on something like gay marriage. I think that if we provide a welcoming, supportive and comfortable environment, it will allow people to gain the courage to do their own personal activism.”

I asked what their hopes for the future of GLOW would be, both Lebourveau and Watson listed getting more women involved first on their list. Watson said, “I would like to see GLOW become more involved with the community and other universities, become more structured, and set longer term goals and plans. We may be the oldest group

Jacqueline Watson says she, “would like to see GLOW become more involved with the community and other universities, become more structured, and set longer term goals and plans. We may be the oldest group in the community, but we always have the least experience and a younger mindset.”

in the community, but we always have the least experience and a younger mindset.”

Lebourveau said, “The group of people currently involved with GLOW really impress me with their dedication and commitment. GLOW is such a dynamic organization, because members usually leave after they finish their degrees, so it undergoes a complete makeover every five years. I am very happy with how it’s going now, and I hope it doesn’t lose focus. Steffler hopes “GLOW can continue to help provide support for the LGBT community. We also hope to expand our volunteer base so we can provide more comprehensive and continuous support for the local community.”

Glow’s resources include a phone line give number at 884-glow and their web site at: www.glow.uwaterloo.ca/

Glow also has a lending library.

Contact Information:

Email:

gllow@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca

Phone: 519 884-GLOW (884-4569)

Office Address:

Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo
Student Life Center, Room 2101
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
N2L 3G1

Lyn McGinnis, of Waterloo, is a writer, web and graphic designer. His company is BlueStarWeb Design. He is also the ad graphics designer and the Assistant Editor for The Voice Magazine.

If your group or organization would like to be featured in our Voice Community Spotlight please call us at (519) [REDACTED] or email:



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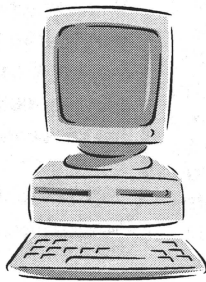
Tax Deductable Business Expenses

by Darren Kregar



Less than a month to go before the deadline to file your taxes. You have yet to organize your receipts, invoices, and all your tax slips and have no clue what information you need to find to do your taxes. First, the most obvious tax information are your 'T' slips. These slips are mailed to you in February or early March. Some of the common slips you may receive include the following: T4, T4A, T3, T5, T5007, T4RSP. If you contributed to a RRSP, you will receive a slip for contributions you made up to December 31, 2001 and also a slip for contributions you made during the first 60 days of the new year.

Other types of receipts you may have include: rent or property taxes, charitable donation receipts, medical expenses, union dues paid, child care expenses, support payments made or received, T2022A (tuition and education receipt). If you have sold shares in a business, you should look for your transaction summaries or purchase and sell documents that you had received from your financial planner, investment company or bank.



If you are self employed or own rental property, you will need to know your total sales or revenue and have receipts for your expenses.

As far as what type of expenses are allowed to be deducted from your sales, any expense that is reasonable and was incurred to earn revenue.

These expenses include advertising, memberships and subscriptions, business insurance, bank charges and interest, meals and entertainment, office expenses, supplies, accounting and legal fees, rent, wages to employees, auto expenses, telephone and utilities. Equipment, office furniture and computers cannot be expensed in the year that

you purchased them. However, you are allowed to write off a percentage of the cost on a declining basis.

For a rental property other information you will require is the amount of mortgage interest paid, property tax and maintenance and repairs on the building. If you use a personal automobile to earn income, you are required to keep a log of your mileage.

You are then permitted to deduct a percentage of your auto expenses such as oil and fuel, car maintenance, insurance, lease costs, depreciation on the vehicle and licence based on your percentage your business use.

Home expenses such as mortgage interest, property taxes, maintenance and repairs, hydro and heat can also be deducted from your sales. You are limited, however, to the percentage of space in the home that your business actually uses. If your business has a loss, you are not permitted to increase your losses with home expenses.

Depreciation is another expense that you are permitted to deduct. Depreciation is also known as Capital Cost Allowance (CCA). As mentioned earlier, you are not allowed to expense the cost of equipment, furnishings or computers in the year of purchase. Computers are depreciated at 30%, office furnishings and equipment at 20%, automobiles at 30% and software at 100%. In the year of purchase, you are only permitted to deduct half of the allowable depreciation. (For example: A computer that costs \$1,000.00 in the past year can be depreciated but only at 15%) Depreciation is also allowed to be deducted on rental property. However, if the rental property has lost money you are not permitted to increase the loss with depreciation.

It is important that any expense you deduct is supported with paperwork or receipt. If you do not have any paperwork or receipts, the amount you claim as an expense may be denied by Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

Darren Kregar is the owner of Economical Tax Services (ETS). ETS is located in Waterloo at 207 King St S and in Kitchener at Highland Hills Mall. Economical Tax Services has been providing tax preparation and bookkeeping services for the LGBT community for the past 5 years.

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HERSTORY

Third Annual Pussy Party Held At The University of Waterloo By Alex Phillips

Whitewash is a Waterloo Public Interest Research Group (WPIRG) action group dedicated to exploring women's health and finding alternatives to mainstream menstruation supplies. On March 5, Whitewash held its third annual Pussy Party at the Student Life Centre of the University of Waterloo. The purpose of the event was to explore vaginas in all their glory: menstruation, sexuality, pregnancy, childbirth and women's spirituality.

The event was held in order to promote awareness through providing a safe space for education, discussion and (theoretical) exploration of a topic, which is widely avoided and shunned within our society. The daytime activities consisted of education tables from which women and men could browse the materials. Additionally a pad making station and a cunt colouring table were available. The evening event (women only) involved a drum circle, followed by a yoga session, potluck of foods women eat when they menstruate and lastly a discussion.

Vaginas unite all women, yet the topic rarely comes up in day-to-day conversation. The topic is shrouded in secrecy, something women should be ashamed about, not celebrating. The nicknames assigned to this body part are hardly complimentary.

The Pussy Party worked to destroy this stereotype by rejoicing about the power of vaginas. Organizer Sarah Kerton commented, "our vaginas are wild and wonderful creatures - they bring life to the earth, they cause us pain, happiness, pleasure; myriad sensations - and yet we never mention them or discuss them amongst ourselves." This is a serious difficulty: the fact that we cannot openly talk about vaginas.

The Pussy Party aimed to create a dialogue by discussing names given to vaginas by women. Realizing that women were comfortable with acknowledging their vaginas and reclaiming names such as cunt and pussy from the depths of dirty connotations.

The educational topics included were diverse with focus upon women's health, sexuality and spiritual issues. Educational materials were made accessible to all in attempts to counter pressure by society. Alternatives to conventional products and procedures were included with emphasis on menstruation and midwifery. Organizer Tara Payette commented that she views midwifery as an extension of her feminism beliefs.

"The Pussy Party created a venue for women to educate women, opposing the patriarchal system that is largely oppressive to women. Women should have control of their bodies, health, safety, expression of self and overall, their lives."

Menstruation issues including alternative menstruation products and methods for minimizing cramps were tackled. The pad-making workshop provided women with the opportunity to make re-usable pads themselves. Information about the Keeper reusable menstrual cup was available contrasting with displays discussing the negative environmental and health effects of conventional menstruation products.

The evening events started with a drum circle and a yoga session: two activities that aimed to relax women and make them feel more comfortable. The potluck featuring foods women eat while menstruating included mostly dessert items (emphasis on chocolate). The potluck stimulated an environment in which women could casually chat with each other, before the onset of the discussion. Kerton commented, "there is nothing like being surrounded with so many women who you don't know, to talk about some-



thing so personal and yet so common between you. It is an instant bond between women."

The discussion began with a reading from Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues. The feeling was largely casual as women began discussing their vaginas. A discussion of alternative menstrual products started off the discussion complete with show and tell. This allowed women to examine the product without embarrassment and ask questions about their usage. The environment created permitted women to clear up any misconceptions they may have had about these products in a women only space. Personal stories about menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth were shared and Payette commented that the event "gave women confidence to listen to their own bodies."

The Pussy Party was a successful event, and additional events tackling similar issues within the community would be welcomed. Kerton concluded, "I think that the pussy party will get the women who attended talking and telling their friends about what they saw and learned there and feeling more empowered to reclaim their bodies and to discuss these issues without shame."

Alex Phillips is an advocate of alternative menstruation products as well as being an active member of Whitewash. She is a currently studying at the University of Waterloo. A Voice Exclusive.



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A Memoir of No One in Particular: In Which Our Author Indulges in Naïve Indiscretions, a Self-Aggrandizing Solipsism, and an Off-Putting Infatuation with His Own Bodily Functions

by Daniel Harris

This unique, quirky book parodies conventional narrative autobiography and asks the question, "Why should we care about anyone's life?"

Many complain that the memoir has overtaken the novel and has become too influential in our current literary scene. But no one has actually done anything about it. There have been no satires or parodies of the genre-until now.

In *A Memoir of No One in Particular*, our author approaches his life as if he were a specimen in a biologist's petrie dish. Rather than giving the usual narrative account, No One in Particular tells his own personal history as a gay white male by probing the banalities of daily living and the unexplored territory of the commonplace. Dispensing with clichéd and romanticized reminiscences, he revels in the minutiae and mundane habits and rituals of modern

daily living, and finds his own unique contraption of selfhood amongst this quotidian detritus.

Why is he No One in Particular? Although he can hardly claim to be Everyman, this very anonymity sardonically thumbs its literary nose at all those who must tell their unique stories. Equal parts spoof, satire, memoir, essay, literary criticism, and autobiography, this is a radical new book that will dare you to love it.

Gay New York : Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940

by George Chauncey



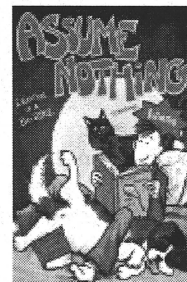
Historian Chauncey (Univ. of Chicago) brilliantly maps out the complex gay world of turn-of-the-century New York City. *Gay New York* reconstructs pre-war gay life through police records,

newspapers, oral histories, the papers of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, diaries, medical records, and other fascinating primary texts. The material is rich and much of it startlingly revealing about prewar social mores: A State Liquor Authority investigator in 1939 amiably refers to a drag queen by the feminine pronoun, boasting that "she liked us very much," while a musician's diaries tell of his often successful attempts at picking up uniformed policemen. He explores not only the mainstream culture's influence on gay urban life, but vice versa, arguing that homosexuality and heterosexuality are historically specific categories that evolved in the beginning of this century and shaped each other. Chauncey has made a stunning contribution not only to gay history, but to the study of urban life, class, gender—and heterosexuality.



Assume Nothing: Evolution of a Bi-dyke Starring Lilliane

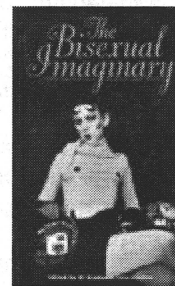
by Leanne Franson



This is a graphic novel with a wonderfully simple, sketchy, but expressive cartoon style. I assume this is autobiographical or semi-autobiographical in nature; we follow the main character as she "comes out" as a woman who loves other women -- and sometimes men. I really got into her adventures as she tries to find the right woman, checks out artificial insemination, adopts a puppy, and finds a very strange treasure in an abandoned building she squatted in for a year. Hilarious!

The Bisexual Imaginary: Representation, Identity and Desire by Bi Academic Intervention

by Louise Allen



An insightful look at Bisexual Imaginary Representation and identity and all of its ramifications and exciting realities.

Words Worth Books



Words Worth's Spring Author Events
Monday, April 15 starting at 7:30 p.m.

ROHINTON MISTRY

Wednesday, May 8, 7:30 p.m.

NINO RICCI

Both events at Knox Presbyterian Church,
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"INDEPENDENT MINDS SUPPORT INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORES"

Book Review: "The Essential Guide To Lesbian Conception, Pregnancy, and Birth"

By Julie A. Slimmon

Release date: 2002 • 300 pages • Softcover • from Alyson Books **The first book of its kind, *The Essential Guide Lesbian Conception, Pregnancy, and Birth* delivers on the promise of its title. It is a step-by-step guide to the physical and emotional aspects of conception through delivery, providing easy-to-understand charts and illustrations, checklists, groundbreaking fertility information, and personal exercises geared specifically toward lesbians.**

Despite the fact that during the March Break and I would have liked to have been able to sleep-in, like most teachers, I was up at 5 am and was most days that week. My partner and I have been driving to Hamilton for follicular tracking at the McMaster fertility clinic; trying to pin down the exact moment of ovulation, working on creating a baby. Including the actual insemination, we drive down from Waterloo about four times a cycle. This will be my sixth attempt in nine months. The roller coaster ride of T.T.C., or "Trying To Conceive", does have its extreme highs and extreme lows. Trying to conceive for any woman can be stressful. For lesbians, bisexual women and single women, queer or straight, many aspects of this journey may seem overwhelming.

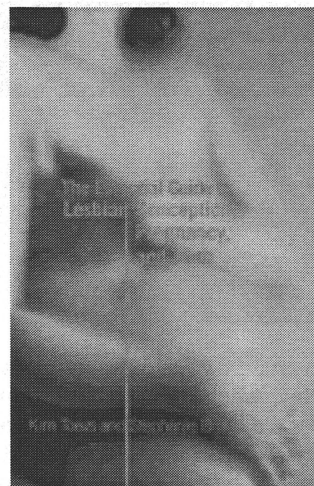
It is important to have supportive family and friends through any stressful time, but when trying to conceive, arming yourself with lots of information is just as important. [The Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception, Pregnancy and Birth](#) by Kim Toevs and Stephanie Brill is an excellent book for women who are just starting to think about the possibility of having children, for women who are already actively involved in trying to conceive, for women who are pregnant, and for anyone in between.

Decisions, decisions, decisions... Once you have decided to become a mother there are many more decisions to make and things to consider! Toevs and Brill start at the beginning. What kind of family model do you want to follow? Because lesbian and bisexual women live outside mainstream models of "family", we have the opportunity to create new models of family with our children. Toevs and Brill carefully outline a myriad of possible family configurations, from single

parenting, to lesbian couple parenting, to co-parenting. Their philosophy is to do what feels right and serves your children's needs best.

After you have thought about your parenting model you need to get down to the nitty-gritty of how this child is going to come to be. You may go to your doctor and get a referral to a fertility clinic, or you may contact a donor bank directly, or you may start looking at male friends in a new light. For lesbian, bisexual and single women, the lack of sperm in their lives is an obvious hurdle. Choosing a donor is often a difficult decision. Should you ask a friend or relative? If you do what are the legal and personal considerations? Should you use an anonymous donor? If you do what are the legal and personal considerations? And once it is decided where the "little swimmers" are coming from, one must then decide if it is preferable to inseminate at home or with the assistance of a doctor. The choices to be made seem endless, but Toevs and Brill carefully outline the pros and cons of each possible decision.

[The Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception Pregnancy and Birth](#) by Kim Toevs and Stephanie Brill is thorough in its discussion on conception. There are chapters that deal with nutrition and health, emotional preparedness, fertility awareness, as well as helpful charts, diagrams and explanations of the various tests and procedures that you may encounter along your journey to motherhood. Although the pregnancy and birth sections are somewhat smaller, they still offer a lot of valuable information. While books like *What To Expect When You Are Expecting* by Eisenberg, Murkoff, and Hathway are more comprehensive, providing advice and information for any pregnant



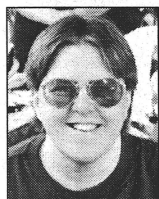
woman, Toevs and Brill do compliment such books by offering a queer perspective. The only downfall of the book is that it is American. However, procedures, prices of treatments and legalities vary from province to province and clinic to clinic anyway. Therefore it is best to do a little extra local research in these areas.

My partner and I are still on the roller coaster ride of T.T.C.; still finding our way on the journey to motherhood. We have learned much about each other and ourselves along the way and, as a result, we are trying to be patient. With the support of friends and family and with many helpful resources like [The Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception Pregnancy and Birth](#) we are working on making the highs last longer than the lows and on making our dream of motherhood come true. If you find [The Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception Pregnancy and Birth](#) as helpful as we have or if you already have children and are looking for a queer family resource, Stephanie Brill has also written *The Queer Parents Primer* which is an excellent resource for queer mothers and fathers with children of any age.

Julie A. Slimmon teaches high school for the Waterloo District School Board and lives in Waterloo with her partner Mary. A Voice Exclusive.

The Voice features book reviews of many books published by Alyson Books. Alyson Book Store where books can be purchased on line can be found at www.alyson.com

Shades of Grey



Quest For Prom Date Accidental Activism

By Ms. A.J. Mahari



A seventeen year old young man, Marc Hall, wants to take his twenty-one year old boy friend to his school's prom. He claims he is not an activist. He, like any other teenager his age, wants to have the kind of prom night that most teens dream about. A date with the person you most want to be with and the kind of acceptance, inclusion and belonging that everybody *should* be entitled to. After all, this is a *free* country, right?

The problem, once again, is religion and its systemic illusion that somehow it is on some unreproachable moral highground that invalidates homosexuality as legitimate -- big surprise eh? NOT!

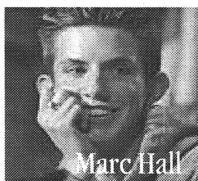
Marc Hall must be one very brave and determined young man. He doesn't just go to high school. He goes to a Catholic High School.

"Michael Powers, principal of Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School in Oshawa, told 17-year-old student Marc Hall that allowing his 21-year-old homosexual 'boyfriend' as a date for the prom would contravene Church teaching and school policy. The school board backed the decision." (www.lifesite.ca)

On Monday April 1, 2002, Ontario Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty and admitted homosexual and fellow Liberal MPP George Smitherman have written Durham Catholic District School Board trustees asking them to allow a male student to bring a male date to his prom. In the letter, obtained by LifeSite, McGuinty, a Catholic, accuses the school board of being 'unfair' and offending "the freedoms that have made Canada a welcome home for people in all their diversity."

The Toronto Sun reports that "the openly homosexual Toronto Centre-Rosedale Liberal MPP George Smitherman said he'll be unveiling a list of high-profile people who are lobbying

the school board. On the other hand, political observers note that officials defending traditional principles frequently do not hear from the many people who agree with them and who sadly take courageous actions for granted." (www.lifesite.ca)



Marc Hall

McGuinty alleges the student is 'being denied some of his most basic rights as a human being and as a Canadian.' Concluding his letter, McGuinty writes, 'I am appealing to you as a Canadian, as a Catholic and as the father of four to change your decision.'"

In response to Liberal Leader McGuinty, Thomas Langan, president of the Catholic Civil Rights League was quoted by LifeSite as saying, "In entering into this debate in this fashion, Mr. McGuinty apparently does not understand the true meaning of a pluralistic society. If the leader of the opposition for Ontario is pressuring an institution as fundamental and major as the Roman Catholic Church to change its beliefs and not be true to its faith, how can we respect his balancing of rights in society as a whole?"

Toronto Sun columnist, Heather Bird, in her article, March 28, 2002, Church out of step with the times points out that, "In legal circles, there is a body of opinion which says the 17-year-old has a slam-dunk lawsuit for the violation of his rights under the Charter of Canadian Rights and Freedoms. 'It's a school board, it's a public institution and they're subject to the charter,' says lawyer Sean Dewart. And that means refraining from discrimination."

So -- on it goes, the never-ending debate. The debate in religious circles and political arenas that, as of yet, has not produced the kind of results that we need in order to win rights we shouldn't even have to fight for.

It is high time that religion and

mainstream culture work out their own issues with regard to their elitist-discriminatory practices in ways that are quite separate from them retaining anymore ability to hold our rights hostage any longer.

Regardless of the outcome of all of this, one thing is for sure: Marc Hall has stepped up to the plate of a new-style of grass-roots activism. This millennium is the age of accidental activists. More and more the issues that otherwise 'everyday' lesbians and gays' are stepping forward to bring to light are increasingly more mainstream oriented. Each seems to be more about being who one is in total with his/her own queer reality being only a part of overall life.

Many would argue that past-activists may have lost a lot of their *quality of everyday life experience* to their activism. Now, the Marc Hall's of the world, more unknown, and the more known, and famous Rosie O'Donnell's of the world, step up to the plate issue by issue within a much broader context of their humanity.

What remains to be seen is how queer culture deals with all of this mainstream assimilation. Many fear queer culture will cease to exist. I would argue it will continue to flourish but in much more open, positive, and much less isolating ways.

We still have a long way to go when the institution of religion is in the mix.

I hope Marc Hall and his boyfriend make it to the prom. In challenging these outrageous and discriminatory policies they have paved the way for the further advancement of queer rights. That is reason enough for Hall and his boyfriend to dance up a storm on Hall's prom night.

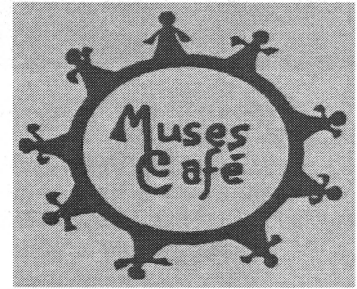
The opinions expressed in this column are those of A.J. Mahari, only, and are not made from any editorial standpoint of The Voice Magazine.

VOICE SPOTLIGHT: MUSES CAFE

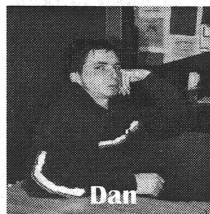
By Sheena Allan

Muses Café provides Downtown Kitchener with a friendly, comfortable, non-discriminatory atmosphere; a place that promotes local artists, musicians and fashion designers; where customers of all lifestyles are welcomed with equal enthusiasm.

Muses Café is committed to providing its customers with quality vegetarian and vegan food, a selection of coffees, teas and other non-alcoholic beverages, and customer oriented service, at reasonable prices.



Trying new things has been rule number one from the very beginning. Whether it's a décor change, a new menu item, or simply the occasional flair for style often seen around the café, Muses Café will never be monotonous. Even the ever-changing styles of art are enough to wake and enlighten the dreariest guest.



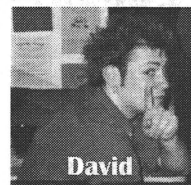
Daniel DesRosiers and David Bell met in 1998 through acquaintances at a local social group. Both Dan and Dave had been going through the motions of trying to enjoy their roles in the foodservice business and were rapidly tiring of the same old thing. Regardless of where in the restaurant one works, unless you're the owner, there is very little sense of satisfaction derived from the work accomplished. One will often find that in all aspects of foodservice (service, preparation, cooking or managing) as well as all styles of foodservice (cafeteria, fast food outlet, doughnut/coffee store or fine dining) employees are often underpaid, under-appreciated, and have the highest turnover rate than in any other industry.

In the fall of '99, Dan decided to begin working on an idea he had toyed with in the past about running a small, eclectic café, and in February of 2000 entered the Venture Creation Program at City Hall in Downtown Kitchener. After six months of schooling, co-op and business plan editing (6X!) and a summer of more planning, 10 King Street East in Kitchener was finally being renovated.

After a lot more trials with all kinds

of infractions that the previous occupants had not remedied and extensive work on erasing all images from the past business, Muses Café finally opened the doors in November.

"To be a successful business and a successful entrepreneur, you have to need to do new things," says Dave. Hiring good staff is also a definite must, he adds since "they enable you to have a little time to get other things done." That's why Dan and Dave decided on hiring their friend Alysia Sachs, whom



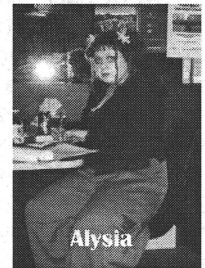
had already made herself a valued member of the Muses team by assisting with renovation ideas and the actual renovations themselves. "Without Alysia, Muses would not have been as successful," recalls Dan.

Throughout the next sixteen months, Muses Café continued with a track record of success after success, steadily making goals and surpassing them every time. Sales figures just kept on getting better and better. When Muses Cafe started catering meals and platters to downtown business and various groups it received even more attention: it seemed the timing was right, as everyone had tired of uneventful and bland platters of sandwiches and veggies. Even when other similar or small businesses were not doing as well in the Downtown, they just kept on smiling, making every customer feel like it was their first time dining at the café, and having fun doing it.

Many of their customers enjoy the alternatively minded café: in fact, the support shown by many of their more conservative crowd has been

overwhelming.

Being a publicly open couple, as well as business partners in a traditionally hard-to-succeed business has been a mainly positive experience. The troubles to be had with downtown youth, late night partyer's, and occasional hate mongers can be counted upon one hand, with



nothing serious. By presenting themselves honestly to their customers and guests, they have garnered respect from all they deal with. To the LGBT community, they show themselves as being able to accomplish something constructive and open, as well as providing an open haven to many people who don't have the option or want for going to the bar or a social group, especially the younger generation. As well, there are many older couple who patron the café frequently. Their support for this venture has been amazing, bringing people from as far as Michigan and Alberta on a fairly regular basis.

In closing, Dan, Dave and Alysia, as well as all the other staff of Muses Café wish to thank everyone who has supported them and shown generosity through-out the past year-and-a-half. And keep your eyes peeled for their new menu, as well as some exciting changes being planned for the next eight months!

Sheena Allan, is a resident of Kitchener and has been a part-time employee at Muses Cafe for over a year. This article is a Voice Exclusive. Photos By A.J. Mahari.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Character Assassination of Disabled Serves Corporate Agenda

By Carole Payne



Nobody is really dissin' the disabled by pulling the rug out from under their collective wheelchairs, walkers and or delicate and unique psyches right? Special interest groups, bank-bashers and anti-privatization protesters just have to grow up and get a life because everybody has a hard luck story. (Ontario's public electricity system sell off peddled by poor, old, Enron, and encouraged by their \$15,000 donation to Harris - just another brick in the wall between the have's and the have not's.)

Suddenly, I'm curious about stories. How about a book based on ostracizing newborns to adults from Charter rights? Isolate them from community resources, social housing, academic development through public education, and respect because their "special" brand of uniqueness and genotype does not qualify for patent or for profit and therefore investment.

It goes like this - the Liberal ambiguity behind "revising" criteria for the Disability Tax Credit is purposefully confusing and therefore intimidating to the mentally impaired -- and a frustration to their doctors. Pertinent questions and anecdotal reporting is replaced by bureaucratic balderdash and ignorance of medical and psychiatric issues. "Does your patient think, perceive or remember?" (If breathing or not?) Clinical depression or paranoia makes life a struggle yet these citizens can still "remember" their name and "perceive" the light coming through the window.

Reducing taxable income is as much about coping, as an acknowledgement from society through Government that our vulnerable citizens are valued and encouraged to succeed. Now, doctors are caught in the middle without pertinent knowledge of the tax law. The tax law that applies to the disabled hasn't changed, the process to assess eligibility for the Disability tax credit has. This is discriminatory and against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Big business just has to flash its' greedy smile to get huge tax incentives and

breaks.

Propagandizing the disabled as lazy and dependent, being used as pawns is mere strategy. "Pull up your boot straps", even if you can't afford a pair or have the fine motor skills to complete the task. One rates if making a professional wage in order to buy copious amounts of commodities because by stimulating the economy we are all saved from anti-globalization anarchists, even terrorists right? (The history of the disabled includes being used as human shields during warfare).

Cut backs to special education and educational assistants as well as downsizing to the municipalities which weaken community resources have become road block to acquiring the social-academic skills essential for employment as well as full citizenship. The door is shut firmly in the faces of children despite their natural curiosity to learn and grow and to belong.

What a perfect set up. Back someone into a corner and blame them if their abilities are less or finances minimal. Frame that within the private for profit and user fees agenda and guess who has the power and access to resources and who doesn't.

Canada's street people are abandoned citizens. Betrayed on some level whether incest victim-made-child prostitute or untreated schizophrenic or the teen deserted by homophobic parents to cite just three examples. A revealing microcosm of these morally disabled times eh?

Alberta's Government, only a generation after Hitler worked the "feeble minded" to death in labour camps and purged the Aryan race by murdering them in group homes, facilitated extinguishing "mentally retarded" citizens from society by forced sterilization. The blind trust of innocence matched with societal detachment, violence and the sexual repression of the Cold War permitted reproductive butchery. No need to invest in human potential through special services when there are so few

to "drain the system".

Better to burn out parents resulting in family break ups and have their vulnerable adult-children jailed as the "illegally" homeless right? Is there such a thing then as legal homelessness?

Former Ontario PC Premier Bill Davis' Bill 186 brought about the desegregation of special needs children through public education. This milestone has been ignored by a "Common Sense Revolution" that closes schools, shuts down programs and creates new criteria that eliminate the ability for many who need it from getting a hand up.

Autism - quite a disability eh? Autism within the artist? Glen Gould, the brilliant Canadian pianist with the Mozart "Memory" was celebrated as a national treasure, a musical export to the world. Despite his obvious eccentricities (the piano bench legs cut to accommodate his perceptual challenges) Gould received acceptance because he was famous, thus privileged, and high functioning.

Using pain as justification for the unspeakable is an easy trick when the moral issues people are trying to resolve (on the backs of the disabled) are their own.

What's next on the Corporate Agenda? Cutting back on palliative care to cut back on the disabled?

It's imperative that through celebrating diversity and thus social justice; the citizenship becomes David to the Goliath of Corporate Government.

Each day a new disability example of injustice is born. For example, evidence the fact that in Walkerton, it only took a glass of water for those most vulnerable to lose not only their rights, but their very lives. The government's corporate agenda needs to be stopped. The citizens of this country, abled and disabled need to come first.

Carole Payne, of Cambridge, is a gregarious disability advocate who endorses The Citizen's Agenda of a New Politics Initiative. A Voice Exclusive.

OUT OF STEP

A Night In Town

Continued From Page 11

the well-known Second Cup, I went outside, and after two minutes, he declined supper. Both of us were relieved, and I was feeling more energized. I had supper by myself, briefly entertained the idea of engaging the drunk beside me, but went back to the cyber café. The night was still young and I was going to 'enjoy myself' and push my boundaries, as so often I've done in *Gayland*.

I have come to let my hedonism prevail. I am being careful that I'm not consciously using other people without their consent and mutual need for touch and pleasure. This is now done so easily for me, it continues to amaze me. I recall the shaking nervousness of earlier encounters even ten years ago, when I'd be thinking so much about meeting another for sex. I've stopped wondering about where I fit in, in this so varied a community of communities --- this 'gay' community! As much as we are coming into our own, and out into the mainstream, so much of our evolved underground lifestyle remains out of sight and barely touched by the 'decency' of the moral majority. Even within our own community, there is much discussion and disgust about men just enjoying one another, this promiscuity that seems to define our group. I don't care. Tonight I want to experience the touch and feel of other males, and the night is still so young.

End of part one. Next month: part two - the rest of OUT of STEP's, A Night In Town.

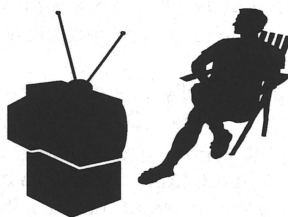
Stephen Erastes is the pen name of a resident of Waterloo who has come into the gay lifestyle "later in life"... and who is curious about his new found life. A Voice Exclusive.

Major International Conference

The International Lesbian and Gay Law Association (ILGLaw) in conjunction with CERSOGSIG and Informagay will be presenting a major international law conference entitled "Marriage, Partnerships and Parenting in the 21st Century" June 5-8, 2002 in Turin, Italy. This conference hopes to build on the huge success of Rob Wintemute's exciting conference held in London in 1999. A dazzling constellation of international experts is slated to speak, including Evan Wolfson of the USA, Daniel Borillo of France, Justice Edwin Cameron of South Africa and Jenni Millbank of Australia. The conference will open with an activist/politician panel featuring our own John Fisher and Svend Robinson MP, and the conference will conclude with a judicial forum chaired by Canada's own Peter Cory.

For full details, go to the conference website at www.gbltawturin2002.org.

Out In The City on Life Network



Life Network (channel 41, locally) will be showing a 13 part documentary series on Gay and Lesbian life in Montreal, shot last fall, titled Out in the City. The series follows the lives of a number of characters through various adventures over the 13 weeks. Each show is 30 minutes tv time composed of a string of story "capsules", 3 or more per show. They go back and forth from the various stories over the 13 weeks. The editing is reported to be excellent, no narration, and the stories interesting (some more than others). The first episode of this series airs on Life Channel on April 9th at 9:30 PM.

New Documentary "Family Fundamentals"

Arthur Dong, who made the documentaries Licensed to Kill (1977) and Coming Out Under Fire (1994), has a new film "Family Fundamentals" that is just beginning to show at the film festivals.

At the film's official website:

www.deepfocusproductions.com/page_html/film_FF0.html it says:

"Aimed with a digital camera, Dong takes viewers into the private, and sometimes very public lives, of three conservative Christian families with gay and lesbian children. He asks: What happens when parents believe that their own kids represent the very element that will lead to the destruction of the human race?"

Among the film's profiles are: a Pentecostal church leader with both a lesbian daughter and a gay grandson who founded a Christian ministry for parents with children who have "become homosexual"; the gay son of a Mormon bishop in rural Utah; and Brian Bennett, the gay former chief of staff to conservative (and Catholic) Congressman Bob Dornan (R-California), who once

OUTMUSIC Awards

The Board of OUTMUSIC is pleased to announce the 2002 OUTMUSIC Awards (OMA) celebrating excellence in LGBT recording, songwriting, and cultural activism. An online submission process will allow us to easily upload our submissions to the OUTMUSIC web site and enable us to become more familiar with each other's work. Voting will take place in a combination of judging by music industry pros and members' choice awards. An OMA event in NYC in early June will both celebrate our accomplishments and promote our music to the media and the general public. For more information, submission guidelines, and the OMA submission form - link to:

www.outmusic.com/oma2002/oma2002_info.html

OUT on The Screen: ROMEO AND JULIET COME OF AGE ON-SCREEN

By Steve Stewart



J.D. Salinger's 1951 coming-of-age tale, The Catcher In The Rye, is one of the most popular books ever written. Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, published in 1885, is another coming-of-age American classic. But the mother of all tales of young love, of course, is Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, first published in 1592.

The 1968 movie version of Romeo and Juliet starred Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey. At the time, every gay boy fantasized that he was in Juliet's shoes. Likewise, every lesbian girl fantasized that she was in Romeo's shoes. We won't even get into Cinderella and Prince Charming.

In the 1960s, American films featuring glbt teens didn't exist. Even today you won't find many mainstream American big-budget movies dealing with the topic. The heterosexual coming-of-age film American Beauty swept the Academy Awards a few years back and the smaller-budget Billy Elliot was a big hit the same year with mainstream audiences worldwide. Both had gay sub-plots, but these were exceptions. For the most part Hollywood continues to crank out the same old mindless,

formula-driven teen comedies. Fortunately, independent and foreign-film directors have realized the popularity and timelessness of rite-of-passage films (especially those dealing with glbt youth) and have embraced the genre. Recent films such as Beautiful Thing (1996/Great Britain), Get Real (1998), Eban and Charley (2002), Ma Vi En Rose/My Life in Pink (1998/France), The Incredibly True Adventures Of Two Girls In Love (1994), Set Me Free (1999/Canada), Show Me Love (1998) and many others are finding burgeoning glbt audiences.

Classics such as This Special Friendship (1964/France), Blue Jeans (1978/France), The Devil's Playground (1976/Australia) and You Are Not Alone (1980/Denmark), have long been favorites.

Two recent movie books, The Coming of Age Movie and Video Guide, Volume 1, by Don Lort, and The Coming of Age Movie and Video Guide, Volume 2, by Brandon Lacey (both available only from www.companionpress.com) between them review more than 1,000 rite-of-passage films from around the world. Of these, more than half involve glbt youth.

So what, exactly, is a glbt coming-of-age story? Author Don Lort believes "a coming-of-age story is one in which a child or a teenager reaches a critical turning point or event that results in a loss of childhood innocence. Not surprisingly, most often this turning point revolves around adolescent sexuality. It's the quintessential coming-of-age experience."

"It's a trying and confusing time for both parent and child. It's even more trying and confusing if the adolescent is struggling with the dawning realization that he or she is gay or lesbian," he adds.

Why is this genre so popular? Is it simply nostalgia? A longing for simpler times? First times? "Time and time again, people tell me that they are coming-of-age movie fans because such films remind them of their own childhood," says author Brandon

Lacey, explaining the popularity of this particular brand of movie.

"I used to run a film club," he continues. "I was one of the major suppliers of the films we watched and would always bring a selection of three or four titles to each meeting. No matter what I brought, about ninety-percent of the time the group would pick the film about the kids."

Just as music lovers around the world never seems to tire of love songs, movie audiences never seems to tire of tales of young love.

One of the better new coming-of-age films is Fögi Is A Bastard (F. Est un Salaud). A 1998 French film, just now being released in the U.S. by Water Bearer films, the title should have been "Love is the Drug" like the 1975 Roxy Music hit. In this moving tale, Vincent Branchet plays a boy obsessed with the male lead singer of a rock band (but this is no music video. Set in Zurich, Switzerland in 1973, Branchet plays Beni a 16-year-old gay teen who becomes addicted to love. The object of his affection, Fögi (Frédéric Andrau) is a rock singer in his 20s, addicted to drugs. When the group disbands, Fögi slips into a suicidal, drug-induced, downward spiral. A slave to his love for Fögi, Beni turns to hustling gay older men to support them both. In the end, the two lovers decide to commit suicide together, but only one of them is successful.

Also from France is director Andre Téchiné's nostalgic Wild Reeds/Les Roseaux Sauvages (1994). The year is 1962 and the setting for this stunning rite-of-passage saga is a provincial town in southwest France. Taking place primarily in a boys school, when Francois (Gael Morel) is seduced one night by a curious fellow student, Serge (Stephane Rideau), he discovers his true nature. Serge, however, was just experimenting. Unrequited love is a common theme in both life and in the movies.

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Sweden's box-office blockbuster Show Me Love (1998) is directed by Lukas Moodysson. This all-too-real drama revolves around Agnes (Rebecca Liljeberg), an unhappy and lonely 16-year old high school girl who falls in love with Elin (Alexandra Dahlstrom), the most popular girl in school. Elin falls for Agnes, as well, but can't deal with being different and rejects her new love for a boy. But her feelings for Agnes are stronger than her resolve and she eventually gives into them.

Another recent film dealing with the pangs of unrequited love is Nico And Dani (2000/Spain). In the tradition of Beautiful Thing and Get Real, Fernando Ramallo plays 17-year-old Dani, a boy who finds himself attracted to his best friend Nico (Jordi Vilches). Nico is straight and has a girlfriend (Marieta Orozco), however, but doesn't completely reject his best friend.

Australian director Bruce Beresford's The Getting Of Wisdom (1977) is set in a Melbourne girls school at the turn-of-the-century. Alix Longman plays Chinky, a student who develops a crush on fellow student Laura (Susannah Fowle), and is expelled as a result. Laura, however, is in love with a young teacher (Hilary Ryan), but this affair is also short lived.

Teachers are often the object of affection, going back to the 1931 German classic, Maedchen In Uniform, directed by Leontine Sagan. The film is light years ahead of American movies in its level of maturity. Set in a boarding school for girls, the film revolves around Manuela, a 14-year old girl who falls in love with her lesbian teacher. When the teacher is forbidden to have contact with the girl, Manuela attempts suicide.

A year before the world fell in love with the two mates from Beautiful Thing, Roger Tonge's Two Of Us (1995/Great Britain) featured Phillip (Jason Rush), a 16-year-old gay student who falls in love with Matthew (Lee Whitlock), another gay student. To be alone together the two boys go on a "honeymoon" to the seaside. Phillip's girlfriend Suzie (Zoe Nathenson) nearly comes between them, but the boys stay together in the end.

Films of young love have blossomed quite often in Denmark and Friends Forever (1986) is just one of many

favorites. Set in Stockholm, three 16-year-old school boys explore their sexual identities when Kristian (Claus Bender Mortensen), a shy transfer student to a new school arrives. Kristian is befriended by Henrik (Thomas Elholm), but when he discovers that Henrik is a "faggot," he rejects him. He takes up with Patrick (Thomas Sigsgaard), one of the school's most popular boys. Patrick is also gay, however, causing Kristian to reexamine his homophobia and their friendship.

There have even been a few memorable films from the U.S. In The Truth About Jane (2000), Ellen Muth plays Jane, a 16-year-old high school student who realizes she's a lesbian, when she falls in love with fellow student Taylor (Alicia Lagano). With the support of a lesbian teacher and a gay friend of the family, played by RuPaul, Jane and her family come to terms with her lesbianism.

In director Alex Sichel's All Over Me (1997), also from the U.S., Alison Folland plays Claude, a gay teen who falls in love with her best friend Ellen (Tara Subkoff). Ellen is straight, however, and has a homophobic boyfriend (Cole Hauser). When he murders Claude's gay neighbor Luke (Briggs), Claude finds comfort in the arms of Lucy (Hailey), who helps her move on.

"To fans of this genre it comes as no surprise that directors, the calibre of Francois Truffaut, Louis Malle, Agnieszka Holland, Federico Fellini, George Lucas, Rob Reiner and other award-winners have all taken a shot at recapturing youth<theirs and ours," states Lort.

"Good coming-of-age films are treated just as seriously as any adult film<the subject just happens to be children. For the most part, these are adult films made for adults," claims Lort. "We still get the Kevin McAllisters and Dennis the Menaces from the big studios, but these are not coming-of-age movies, these are children's movies made for children. There's a big difference. How many incarnations of the Porky's formula can you sit through and retain your sanity?"

"It may be true that you can't go home again," says Lacey, "but with coming-of-age movies you can take a walk down memory lane and a trip into the past any time you want."

Steve Stewart is the author of OUT ON THE SCREEN: The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Guidebook to more than 2,000 movies and videos from around the world. For more information about this book, or to receive his FREE monthly "Full-Frontal Newsletter to nudity in the movies" visit <http://www.companionpress.com>. OUT ON THE SCREEN is not sold in bookstores and is only available directly from the publisher at <http://www.companionpress.com>. Or write to: Steve Stewart, PO Box [redacted] Laguna Hills, CA [redacted]

This article was submitted to The Voice by Steve Stewart.

Be sure to check out Steve Stewart's column in the initial new-look issue of May's Voice Magazine. Steve writes about celebrating gay/lesbian father/mother's day on screen.



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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.

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.gpcamp.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]

KW-Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling - Sundays at 3:15 pm at Brunswick Bowling Lanes - Frederick St. Mall. For more information contact Katherine at [REDACTED] or Mark at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

MONDAYS

The Rainbow Community Conversation Group is now on hiatus until September.

TUESDAYS

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

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.

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. 7:30-9:30 pm at the Harcourt United Church at 87 Dean Ave. in Guelph. For more information call Bob Miller, Director, Rainbow Chorus at [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 Wednesdays, 7pm to 8:30pm, Oasis Club, 146 Wyndham St., Guelph. For more information call Marilyn at (519) [REDACTED]



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: htspg@gto.net <http://home.golden.net/~kcr/htspg/htspg.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 [REDACTED] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [REDACTED] (Cambridge) or email them at: [REDACTED]



Do you have a group that is not listed here?
Would you like to change that? Email us at

[REDACTED]
or call (519) [REDACTED]

Help us keep you informed!

The Voice welcomes submission of articles, community news, opinions and views. Write to us and Raise Your Voice.

Coming Soon in The Voice boxed business classified ads. Call us for rates and details.

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]

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- 745-1166

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

The Pink Coffee House: Wednesday from 9:30pm-11:00pm at Muses Cafe, 10 King St. E. Kitchener. Contact Gordon at (519) [redacted]

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

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

WOUF: Waterloo Ontario Ursine Friends, or big and hairy gay men and their friends. For more information email: questor24@yahoo.ca

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) [redacted] outline@uoguelph.ca www.uoguelph.ca/~outline

Rainbow Chorus: A choir that performs (see Community Groups- opposite page), and hosts dances for the LGBT community the second Friday of each month (not including June, July, August) at the CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway N. in Guelph. For information contact Bob Miller at [redacted] or Dave at [redacted]

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. Catherines: (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.

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

GLBT 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

London Lesbian Film Festival

Friday, May 3rd, 7pm; Womyn Only

Saturday, May 4th, 3pm ; Womyn Only

Sunday, May 5th, 3pm; Open to All



The London Lesbian Film Festival is a celebratory gathering at which we project our images, challenge our politics, and reflect upon our lives. The festival aims to portray the richness and diversity of lesbian experiences and to strengthen our communities.

Ticket Info

\$9/screening

\$25 Festival Pass gets you into all three screenings

Tickets can be reserved email or phone 519-434-██████. You will be asked to follow up your reservation request by mailing a cheque. Tickets will be available at the door, however, they have sold out in other years, so get yours early!

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APRIL EVENTS

Television

NIGHTLINE SERIES ON GAY LIFE — "A MATTER OF CHOICE?", a five part series begins Monday April 8th, ABC, Channel 6, at 11:35pm and ends Friday April 12th with a town-hall meeting show. A Matter of Choice?" reported and anchored by Ted Koppel, takes an in-depth look at the complexities of the gay experience, from senior citizens facing unique challenges in their twilight years to teenagers grappling with issues of sexual identity.

Tuesday April 9th

Life Network 13 weeks series, Out In the City begins. (Lesbian and Gay Life in Montreal documentary style minus the narration) channel 41, 9:30pm (see page 29 for more info)

Friday April 12th

Rainbow Chorus Monthly Dance at CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway N. Guelph. Doors open at 9:00 p.m. Must be 19 years of age or older to attend.

WOUF: Waterloo Ontario Ursine Friends (Bears) 7pm - Dinner at Philthy McNasty's, Westmount Place, 50 Westmount N. Please RSVP by Wednesday April 10th by emailing: questor24@yahoo.ca

2nd & 4th Wednesdays in April

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

Hiatus From April to Sept.

The **Rainbow Community Conversation Group** is now on a 5 month hiatus. They do plan to resume in the Fall of 2002, if you would like more information please contact qlife@qlife.on.ca

Saturday April 27th

London Halo Pride 2002 presents Gala Fundraiser Winter Ball 2002 (was postponed from earlier date)
Location: Delta London Armories
Gunnery Ballroom
325 Dundas Street
London ON
7:00pm Cocktails (Cash Bar)
8:00pm Dinner, dancing to follow
Dress Semi Formal, Black Tie
Optional
Cost \$60.00 per person
For ticket information email: pridelondoninfo@rogers.com
or phone: 519-860-██████

Coming In May

May 3rd, 4th, 5th

London Lesbian Film Festival Three days of lesbian-centred films held at Rainbow Cinemas, Galleria Mall, London, Ontario.

London Lesbian Film Festival,
P.O. Box 46014,
London, Ontario N5W 3A1
www.lfff.lweb.net

(see left hand column this page for more information)

May 10-12th

Conference for queer (LGBT, two-spirited, and questioning) youth from across Ontario.

LEARN about social, environmental, and queer issues through workshops and social activities. **SHARE** experiences, knowledge, fears, successes and plans for the future. **CREATE** an accessible and safe environment that is free of judgement and encourages sharing and respect. **BUILD** a network of queer youth to promote solidarity and achieve common goals.

For more information contact
Andria Green

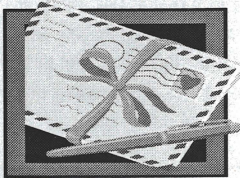
(519) ██████████ ext 2629

www.uoguelph.ca/~rainbow/

Personals

I am a 48 year old single white lesbian looking for a soul-mate 38-55 years of age. I like movies, dining, dancing, travel, animals and fun. I am hoping to find that someone special to have a long-term relationship with.

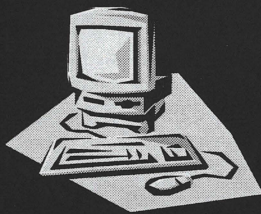
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THE VOICE ONLINE



www.thevoice.on.ca

Classified Page

The Voice Welcomes Your Submissions

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www.thevoice.on.ca

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

Watch for changes and our new look in up-coming months.

The Voice Magazine online - community at a glance!

Voice Classified Ads cost \$15.00 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.



Mailing address is at top of page

OPINION

Editor's Note: Due to a large volume of Letters to the Editor this month we have extended our *Have Your Say Section*, here, to our Opinion page. The Voice apologizes to all those who wrote letters on this issue that are not printed here. Given space constraints we have done our best to publish letters that best represent letter-writer's concerns in the letters we have published.

We want to thank the two letter writers and Mr. Regar for making us aware of the implications of the WWRP letter our business received. As "straight-but-not-narrow" supporters, we had considered advertising in the Pride Pages. Once we thought about the various issues raised in the March 2002 Voice, we have decided against doing so. This was not an easy decision as we have many friends in your community. It makes no sense for us to advertise in two publications distributed to the same locations and focused on the same market. It now seems clear WWRP is attempting to entice us to choose between The Voice Magazine and the Pride Pages. We are forced to agree with the Voice letter writers. This is a deliberately divisive move on WWRP's part. We are sorry to see this as we have long admired the work A. J. Mahari does. The Voice Magazine is a wonderful publication. For the sake of our friends and a belief in diversity, we are sorry to see this kind of discord fostered by the "Pride" committee. We hope the issues leading to this rift can be quickly addressed and resolved in a constructive manner for the benefit of our friends in the LGBT community.

-- Name withheld at writer's request

I am very angry at this silly Pride Pages business. The Voice Magazine has been here for four years. It has consistently done an excellent job. Pride committees never seem to last more than a year. They remind me of a 4 year old's birthday party. It starts out with cake and ends in tears with everyone going home mad. Please stop this pointless power grab! So you lost A.J. Too bad! She is one of the most unsung heroes of this community. WWRP, for everyone's sake, swallow your "pride" and shake hands. Don't waste time trying to compete with The Voice. -- Pat Moore, Waterloo

After reading in the Voice about what WWRP is doing I had to write. A month or so ago I was at Club Ren. We were sitting at a table near the back. Some totally hammered guys were making a lot of noise. You could hear everything they said. They were happy A. J. was kicked out of some meeting. They said

"The oppression of any people for opinion's sake has rarely had any other effect than to fix those opinions deeper, and render them more important." --Hosea Ballou

some really vile things about her and then complained about The Voice. It was sickening enough we found another table. As any lesbian knows, there are a lot of misogynous gay men out there. A lot of guys hate the Voice just because A. J. is a woman. A.J. has given many lesbians the chance to write. She also has lots of gay guys along with bisexual and transgender folks write too. Some of us are tired of "twink" writers. We are glad most Voice writers are over 21. The March Voice was amazing. Keep up the excellent work A.J. and crew.

-- Name withheld at writer's request

This was to be my first year coming out to K-W Pride. At first I liked the Pride Pages. I had missed some Voice issues so hadn't realized what the separate Pride Pages meant. I read the March Voice and talked to some friends. Now I understand what is going on. It's all too sad what happened to A. J. Mahari. She headed the WWRP committee last year and now the new committee betrays her! They force her to leave and are trying to destroy the Voice? Forget it! I'm going to Toronto this June.

-- Jenny Kirk, Waterloo

I have stayed away from any of the "sub-groups" in this gay community. I have been here for a year and this place is more fragmented than most. I have friends involved in some gay groups. I have heard some pretty strange things about how they work. The Voice is one of the few unifying things here. This means some of these exclusive groups hate it because they can't control it so they are trying to destroy it. I don't belong to any of these little clubs. The Voice Magazine is a life line to the silent majority. I like the Pride Pages, but disapprove of what they were secretly doing. I have seen it often enough before. Our self hatred leads us to attack each other. This creates community shame, not pride.

-- Dave Hunt, Kitchener

WWRP was doing a good job of getting us excited about Pride. Then I read the March Voice Magazine about the one bad thing they are doing! Why? If they are making money why sneak around and try to steal Voice advertisers? Now they are caught, how can they feel "Proud" about this? WWRP and The Voice Magazine are both very important to us. So work it out and get on with what you are supposed to be doing.

-- Elaine Stapleton, Cambridge

Thanks to the business "whistle blowers" for bringing this WWRP letter to everyone's attention. It's not often you see businesses looking beyond their bottom line and saying they have a problem with an offer to advertise. I have absolutely no criticism of WWRP regarding their fund raising contests and what sounds like great plans for Pride. Just deal with The Voice Magazine and editor A. J. Mahari in a respectful manner. Get this one spiteful item off your agenda and we will all be behind you.

-- Paul Bard, Kitchener

I have no problem with a little competition between The Voice and a new publication. The real issue is the motives behind the Pride Pages' existence. Before now, Pride committees focused on two things. One is Pride events in June. These have been more successful each year. The other is the local Pride Directory. This has improved every year too. These things must represent a huge amount of work. Yet besides all this, WWRP is now producing a monthly newsletter and having to sell advertisements. A visit to the Voice web site shows WWRP had written articles for The Voice Magazine before January 2002 when the Pride Pages came out. WWRP President Craig Hunter even wrote December's guest editorial in The Voice. Before the first issue of the Pride Pages I find no mention of such a plan. It now seems clear it is based on the committee's feelings toward The Voice and its editor. Now the Voice Magazine, surprisingly aided by some Voice advertisers, has "outed" the committee's true agenda. This tarnishes the Pride Pages. WWRP must now rise to the challenge of quickly resolving this situation with The Voice Magazine before it compromises their real job. This would show us WWRP's commitment to overcoming our community's tendency to attack each other's efforts.

-- William Cary, Waterloo

I am sick at what we do to each other! A. J. Mahari has put up with so much crap! Her crime? The Voice Magazine! Last year she took on being on WWRP. Her thanks? She is kicked off the committee this year! There have been rumours about that meeting. WWRP wants volunteers, what so they can abuse us too? No thanks. --Lynda Gilmour, Waterloo

Do you have an opinion about this topic or any other? If so, please write to us and Raise Your Voice! Our contact information is on page three. We want to hear from you!

THE BEST

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ALTERNATE WEDNESDAYS

FIRST WEDNESDAY

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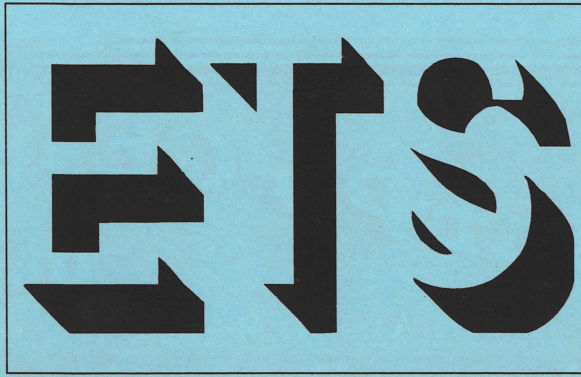
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