

## *The Voice*

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# The Voice

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South Western Ontario's ONLY LGBT Magazine

Volume Four

October 2002

Issue Twelve

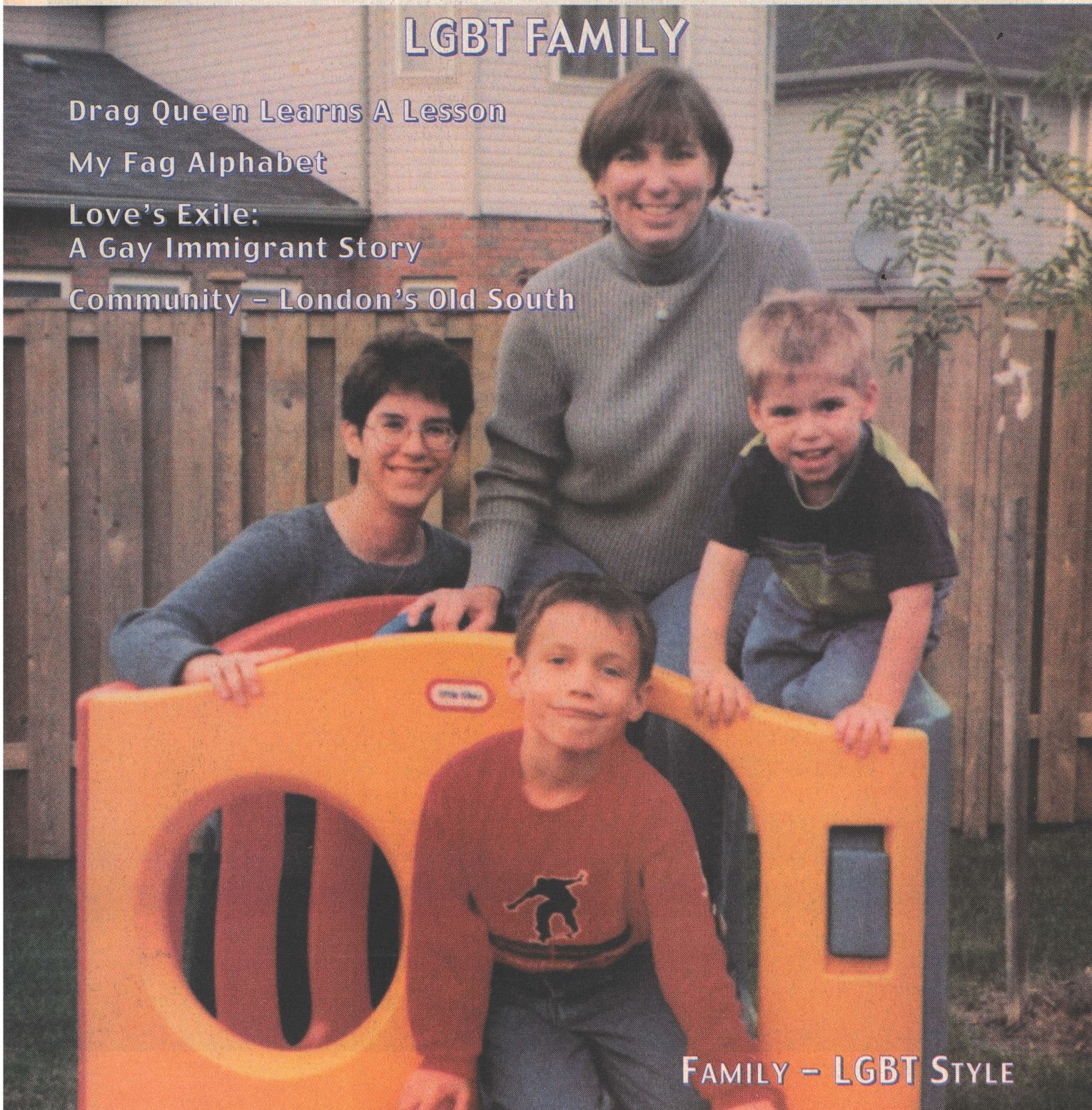
## LGBT FAMILY

Drag Queen Learns A Lesson

My Fag Alphabet

Love's Exile:  
A Gay Immigrant Story

Community - London's Old South

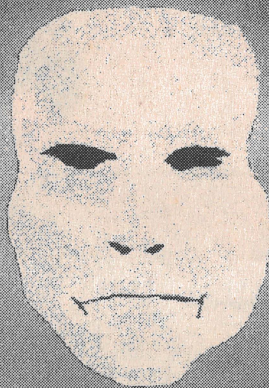


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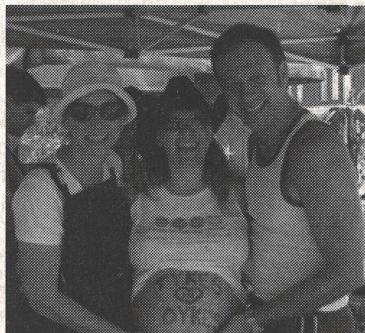
*The Voice Magazine is an independent media source published monthly.*

*It is an all-inclusive alternative vehicle for all segments of the LGBT community.*

*Our mandate includes informing, educating, and promoting tolerance, understanding and acceptance of LGBT culture and alternative lifestyles, generally, with a particular emphasis on our own sub-culture.*

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# FIRST WORDS



## Our Cover Change

By A.J. Mahari

You may have noticed that with this issue we've made some more changes. After a lot of thought and exploration we decided to change our cover from glossy to Alternative Offset paper to strengthen our product.

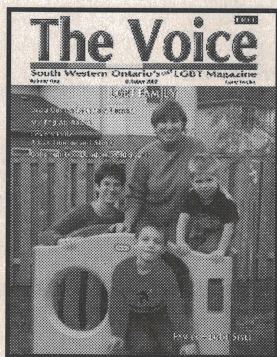
This change may appear to some, on the surface, as if it is a step back. Nothing could be further from the truth. Don't be fooled by change. What we perceive in change, at times, is often far from what drives change of any kind. For us, it represents a giant step forward. By choosing to save money in one area (the cost of glossy covers) and choosing to spend more money in other areas we are in fact still growing and getting stronger.

This change will enable us to quickly triple our circulation. Making our circulation numbers a priority over packaging shows just how committed we are to ensuring that we have more magazines out there for our growing readership. It also reflects our strong business commitment to our advertisers. Glossy covers were nice but, they are not what brings desired results to advertisers. Increased circulation and increased readership are what pays off for Voice advertisers in the long run.

We are about substance first and foremost. Therefore to move to a more modest

yet very efficient and cost-effective cover enables us to put our mandate in action even more.

This issue is the last issue of our fourth year. As we head in to our fifth year we are stronger than ever thanks to a tremendously loyal readership and a growing number of loyal advertisers who want to be seen in *The Voice* and who are in ever-increasing ways seeing a greater return on their investments with us.



It's a funny thing how change can be perceived. Change in a product or magazine, just as with change in our lives, is usually associated with growth. Change for us is a renewing of our commitment to be the best we can be.

*The Voice* not only provides a vehicle for advertisers, information and thought-provoking reflection for readers but, we also provide a lot of support to the LGBT community. We are a community-partner. We will continue to do our best in terms of adding to the communities we serve largely through corporate sponsorship and editorial coverage.

We trust that you will appreciate our renewed commitment to you.

Feedback: [haveyoursay@thevoice.on.ca](mailto:haveyoursay@thevoice.on.ca)  
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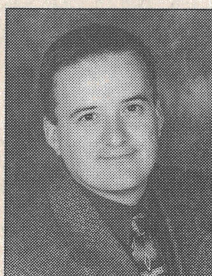
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**Waterloo:** GenerationX, Grabbajabba, Adults Only Video, Wordsworth Books, Princess Cinema, University of Waterloo, (Student Life Centre), Wilfred Laurier University, The Stag Shop

**Hamilton:** The Embassy Club, AIDS Network, The Unitarian Universalist Church, McMaster University, The WERX, Book Villa, Whitely Flowers, The Stag Shop

**Cambridge:** The Robin's Nest, Suite Surprises Xxxotica, The Stag Shop

**Guelph:** The Bookshelf, University of Guelph, Black Mustard Bistro, Cafe Aquarius

**Brantford:** The PineTree Native Centre, Sweet Dreamzz

**London:** The Pride Library at UWO, The AIDS Committee of London, City Lights Bookshop, Club 181, Our Place, Blackfriar's Restaurant, Club London, The Stag Shop

**Stratford:** AIDS Action Committee of Perth County, Fanfare Books, Poor Yorik,

**Toronto:** 519 Church Community Centre, Glad Day Books, Club Toronto, Music Authority, Good For Her, Woody's, Zelda's,

**St. Catharines:** Aids Niagara, Club Rendezvous, The Stag Shop

**Sarnia-Lambton:** AIDS Support Committee of Sarnia-Lambton

**Windsor:** Life Nite Club, The Complex, Milk & Lift, AIDS Committee of Windsor, CJAM Radio - University of Windsor

and other select locations in Toronto and other areas of South Western Ontario.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

If you have something that you would 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 [haveyoursay@thevoice.on.ca](mailto:haveyoursay@thevoice.on.ca) or go to our web site at [www.thevoice.on.ca](http://www.thevoice.on.ca) and click on **HAVE YOUR SAY** and use our form mail. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity and space.

In response to the "Dyke Rant", (Voice September 2002), I find it sad to read, that even in this day and age, there are still Hilarys out there. What does her age have to do with anything? Her age does not validate her position. That's not to say that I don't know other older lesbians. I do, and they are not all stuck in time and mindset that Hilary seems to be. I believe Hilary and Nancy Ross ("Have Your Say" Letter To the Editor, The Voice September 2002) have something in common. Both are big-ots, plain and simple. I guess Hilary has forgotten just what happened at Stonewall and who started the movement that won the rights she now enjoys. Just because some transsexuals can not afford the price to correct their bodies to conform with what would make Hilary happy, does not make any one of them "less of woman".

I have to wonder at this point just how many post-op transsexuals that Hilary has slept with, and has no idea. I'd be willing to bet some of them have been the best sexual partners she has had. I also wonder just where Hilary stands when you talk about toys. I think it's time to grow up and stop being your parents Hilary. The 'good ole days' really were not so good. She reminds me of the person that is blind all their life and by some fluke their eyesight comes back and they find that they have been spending all their life with a person of colour. Now they understand why their family and their friends left them. Bigots are everywhere, even in the queer community.

--Leslie Forrester, Mississauga

Why do so many people seem to get in a flap if we don't all get along? What is more important, what we say or what we really think? I'm glad that Hilary Albertson laid it all out on the line really clearly. (The Voice, September 2002 - "Dyke Rant - What is a Lesbian") It's about time! You go my "real" lesbian friend". Why should we pretend to accept what we don't agree with? Why should we agree that these "women-wanna-to-be's" are "real" just cause they want to "act" like "women"?

I so totally agree that biology matters and makes all the difference as to what sex we are.

--Melissa Henry, London

I am writing to express my utter outrage and disgust at the level of hatred and transphobia expressed in Nancy Ross's "Have Your Say" letter (in response to "Lesbian Lives, The Voice August 2002) and Hilary Albertson's "Dyke Rant - What is a Lesbian?" in (The Voice September 2002).

I am a biological woman who identifies as lesbian. My fiancé, is a transexual woman who identifies as lesbian. We applaud The Voice for including the story of Roberta, a transexual lesbian woman, in its August issue. Leslie and I identified with Roberta's story on many different levels. Bravo!

The Voice is a magazine that caters to the LGBT community. Correct me if I am wrong, but doesn't the "T" stand for transgender/transsexual? Gender and orientation are completely different things. A transexual person can be either lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual. Therefore, if you subscribe to this magazine you are going to see information pertaining to transsexuals, and they will identify in any number of ways, so I say just get over it already.

--Renee King, Mississauga

I am always fascinated by Pride and all that goes on in the planning of various celebrations. I have a few friends who have volunteered in different cities. They all seem to have similar challenges regardless of size. It's sad really. All the ego stuff and the control freaks. I thought that Chris Cecile's article on "Unity" (The Voice, September 2002) made a lot of sense except for the part about the Unity celebration in Toronto. It is my understanding that was not organized officially by T.O. Pride.

Like many other people I know I'd like to volunteer for my area's Pride Committee but there's no way I want to be involved with some of the power control freaks that take over and pretend to be doing it for "others" when everything they do is so self-serving.

--Phil Buillia, Waterloo

Thanks for the way that you acknowledged and dealt with the anniversary of the terrorist attacks in the U.S. It was tasteful, important and relevant. Great cover too.

--John MacIntosh, Toronto



# HAVE YOUR SAY

Continued from page 3

It's nice to see letters like the one Donald "fed up" Kaczmarek of London wrote, (Have Your Say, September 2002) complaining about the politics with Pride Festivals and how its mainly about the ego's of the ones involved. Then there's the comment about greed. I don't think Kaczmarek, along with countless others, really understands that Pride in London is normally sponsored by HALO. It is a fundraiser for the organization, to sustain services provided to the GLBT community. HALO no longer has government funding. The politics that erupted in London this year and all over this event were uncalled for but, happened just the same. I sat on the committee this year and stuck it out to the very end, along with six others. I didn't let the bullshit of what was going on bother me and I didn't care what others were saying behind my back. I carried on because I believed in what I was doing and I made a commitment to my community.

HALO has always been about the community. Pride is about London South Western Ontario and all things Canadian. Many community groups got involved in several different ways. They wanted to separately contribute to this event and thanks to the efforts of one very special lesbian, London had a parade. If you were at the community called meeting on April 10th this past year, Mr. Kaczmarek, then you would have understood that the event we put on at Centennial Hall was what our community wanted. Their support was overwhelming and made all the bullshit, all the politics, and all the headaches worth it. In all honesty, if things didn't get so screwed up with Pride after the holiday season in 2001, none of this would of happened and those who just volunteered for the first time, would have had the training to create a great London Pride.

So you see Donald, London does have a lot of pride and lots of individuals that still believe, regardless of the politics. But then again, you had only seen one side of it. For me, it was a very educational experience and I learned a great deal about my community and about some of Halo's history. I had the pleasure of working along side of some of the most stubborn, hard-headed and very dedicated individuals. That opened my eyes to a few things. So, instead of getting all hot under the collar and spouting off, get involved so that you have a better understanding. Who knows, you just might learn a few things.

--Krystoffer "Kyt" Viau, London

I wanted to write in to say that I really enjoy the Living Out Column. Sally Sheklow is a fantastic writer. She makes excellent points and with such wonderful humour. I really like the entire magazine too. Excellent content, great depth and substance.

-- Beth Kilgore, Toronto

Thanks to The Voice for bringing us such in-depth and thought-provoking stuff month after month, year after year. Congratulations on your recent changes and continued growth. The mag is amazing. I also really like the "Slouching From Gomorrah" columns by Michael Alvear. He's brilliant. I've been reading this magazine for years now and am so thrilled to see it continue to blaze such an enlightening trail.

-- Martin Sturgeous, Guelph

It was about time to see some media outlet finally give a little attention to the issue of AIDS and their fundraising. There is not enough being written and kept visible about the struggle against AIDS. Things are not getting better. We haven't won this battle. We are still losing so many people. All orientations, genders and countries are affected, infected and impacted. Kudos to the Voice for challenging its readers to keep AIDS and the reality of AIDS in and on their minds. Hope to see more on this topic.

-- Abe Norman, Stratford

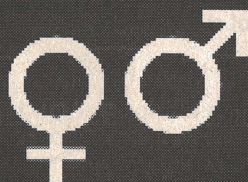
I have been just thrilled to see The Voice. I have now seen several issues of this magazine. I think it's really great how many new advertisers we are able to find through The Voice. I make a point of making sure I purchase whatever I need from Voice advertisers first. You have such a terrific magazine and they are to be acknowledged and thanked for their support of The Voice and their willingness to provide accepting, non-judgmental services to Voice readers.

--Tom Urquhart, Hamilton

I really like the new column you started running in (The Voice, "Need Wood", September 2002) about gay sex advice. It is right on. It is funny, witty and very cool. As a younger gay male, that column, along with Mark Weiser's are my favourite things in The Voice. Thanks for including something that is of more interest to a lot of gay males, like me, in their twenties.

-- Sandy Myers, Toronto

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Timing is amazing. It's the first time I picked up a copy of your publication, and low and behold a *real* article that pertains to many of us 'left-outs'. "Livin' Large" (The Voice, September 2002) It sure hit the mark with me.

Over the past few months I've been feeling a bit frustrated with the negative perceptions I've observed within the lesbian/bi community. I thought that the prejudice I felt was just paranoia until a very recent experience. A woman I fell in love with and dated for several months suddenly decided she only wanted to be friends. When I finally confronted her, she admitted that her friends felt I was too fat and butchy. She apologized for sounding so shallow and admitted that she didn't want to lose her circle of friends even though she was in love with me.

I appreciate the reality that some of us are thin, some of us are fat and to me that reality is no different than being black or white, gay or straight and so forth. In my case, I have the courtesy of being fat thanks to medications -- something I have no control over if I am to remain alive.

What I find ironic is the amount of men and women that are more than happy to admit that they like to fuck fat girls but not be seen in public with them and acknowledge us as lovers. Such hypocrisy!

I was feeling like bubble gum under a well-worn running shoe when I picked up your September issue. I must admit I am impressed with the quality of content and the timing of some of the material. Thank you for adding to the definition of humanity and femininity.

--Lee Jameson, M.A., Toronto

I noticed the coverage about the murder of Aaron Webster in your magazine (The Voice, December 2001) when I was reading it on the web recently. What has happened? Has Aaron been forgotten? Have the murderers been caught and put away? I really do not know and cannot find out. I assume this means that nothing has happened. It is a shocking hate crime, but even more shocking that nothing seems to be happening to bring the murderers to justice. Still high on the shock list is that this hate crime has dropped "out of sight" from the eyes of the media and politicians.

What the heck is going on? Here we have a violation of humanity that can be compared to that of the Matthew Shepard case in the USA - a case that helped change that country's laws. Here in Canada, it seems that after the initial shock, the moral outrage just fades away.

-- Bobby J., Edmonton

I'd like to congratulate you on a very "clean" magazine. It's great. I also think it's very skilled how you manage to cover issues and include pictures appropriate to issues or content without "selling out" to the world of sex. For me, as a gay man, even though I am in my early 30's, my life is about a lot more than just sex. I very much enjoy reading your magazine. I think all of us need to read The Voice and take time out from the "stereotypical" gay pursuits to think once in awhile.

-- David Sharp, Toronto

An all-inclusive publication, wow, what a rarity. I find the way that The Voice balances its content to actually be all-inclusive nothing short of heroic. What a vision, and it's about time. I think that most of us are interested in reading what other segments of our community care about. I know I am. As a lesbian, I care about what others think and feel and have to deal with. I have learned a lot from reading The Voice and look forward to learning more about others. I sure hope that gay men will read about lesbian stuff too and that other lesbians will read about the gay male issues. I especially think it's great that lesbians and gays can learn a great deal about bi and trans issues in The Voice too. After all we all do need to get along. All of us know what it is like to feel left out and The Voice gives us a place to feel included, together. We need more places or spaces like The Voice Magazine.

-- Lily Van Burge, Toronto

I really like your magazine. I like all the issues and commentary. This is a magazine of substance. Certainly aren't enough of those around. I was also very pleased to see that you are now including some lighter articles as well though. The articles about the London Sculptor and Timothy Findley were a fine addition to an otherwise very thought-provoking read.

-- Pam Mitchell, London

I have been reading The Voice since its inception in 1998. I feel as though I've been on this incredible journey with you. The changes and the growth are nothing short of amazing. Kudos to Voice editor, A.J. Mahari, for an especially refreshing vision. While there are many publications out there none speak to me quite the way that The Voice does. I eagerly look forward to each issue and read it from cover to cover. I've been involved with other publications in the gay community before and I know how difficult politics and so forth can be. Thanks, A.J. for your unwavering dedication to all of us.

-- Douglas Kwalski, Kitchener

I have lived in London for most of my life. I've seen Pride getting bigger and bigger. I have seen our strength -- people getting involved, giving their spare time to support what they believe in. I have also seen our weakness -- personal grudges, back stabbing, and negativity. But it was the sheer number of good, honest, hardworking caring people who came forward to help, with no ulterior motive - that amazed me - that made Pride happen.

I have seen the positive strength of people working with each other to build a stronger community and I hope it continues. If I have learned anything I have learned not to be too quick to judge people and that rumors are destructive.

This past year I had fun being one of the many who helped make Pride happen. Yes there was stress. It's not an easy job. We had just 3 months, no grant money, lots of confusion and rumors to contend with.

Remaining visible is important, we are a minority, but we're a strong one. For those that need something like a parade to come out, we were here for them. Last but not least this experience has made me a better person and now I look for the good in people and in our community. Thanks London.

-- Dan Steele, London

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## STEEL MEGALOMANIAS

By Charles W. Westfall

I know, my article title is close to the title of a film. However, I'm not talking about a film here. I'm talking about politicians. Specifically, I'm talking about the politicians, in Ottawa, who are currently representing the various sectors of this country.

It would seem that to be a politician in Canada there are two requirements. One is to be a megalomaniac. The other is to have nerves of steel.

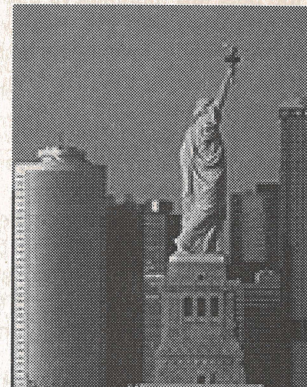
I don't want to diminish the efforts or the, all too rare, demonstrations of sensitivity by our elected representatives. It does happen that they hit the mark and actually promote and support measures that are good for the whole country. That is when and if they go beyond the kind of shallow rhetoric that is so easy to produce and disseminate.

At the same time, I can't help condemning the kind of partisan politics which places party policy and loyalty ahead of palpable parity and significant social benefits. This factor, if indeed it was this factor and I hope that it wasn't, became very evident recently.

The families of Canadian victims of the World Trade Center attack are being harassed, it's the only word that works here, for non-payment of taxes owed by the victims. Our neighbours to the south, as we so fondly call them, have gone out of their way, out of compassion, to alleviate the burdens of the families of the victims. The Canadian government, in spite of the hollow words of condolence and concern, cannot let go of the one tenuous control they have over these grieving people: taxes. No compassion there.

Policy over parity. Control over compassion. Steel gauntlets when velvet gloves are called for. Welcome to Canada, home of the free and land of the brave? No, that's the people south of the border. Welcome to Canada, home of the taxed and land of the financially clobbered - don't expect any compassion here.

I think you're getting the idea. I don't know what it is about people who win an election that makes them think that suddenly they are in a privileged position and somehow better than the people who elected them. It happens, though. It is a reality. It is more of a reality now, in Canada,



than I like to admit or accept. I also think that the civil servants who design and implement the programs the politicians promote must shoulder a considerable portion of the blame. Just where does the buck stop, after all?

Hey, on a flight to Dieppe to honour the brave Canadians who gave their lives during that proud but tragic day in our military history, those who survived the attack sat in coach class while our political representatives sat in first. The inequity and lack of feeling demonstrated by this callous gesture is more than common decency can bear. I sincerely doubt that any of those politicians, comfortable and coddled in their first class cabin, will ever come close to offering their country the kind of service that their fellow passengers, in coach, would love to forget but can't because of the horror of the whole thing.

Do I sound angry yet? Do I have your attention yet? I hope so. I sincerely hope so. These are the representatives in Ottawa who will someday, and probably some day soon, cast a deciding vote on the legality of same-sex marriages. If the kind of insensitivity demonstrated in the situations cited above is any indication, there is little hope for any kind of positive response.

I never thought that I would feel ashamed of being Canadian. I am proud to be Canadian. I am, however, deeply ashamed of current responses by our Government to significant and sensitive issues that go to the very heart of what it is to be human, what it is to be a leader and what it is to be Canadian.


So, who do these people think they are? Who has set them on the kind of pedestal they now pontificate from? Who has given them the kind of special insight that allows them to decide what's good for others? Who set up and who runs this whole mess

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anyway? Again, where does the buck stop?

Big business, a.k.a. Alberta, is making big waves about the Kyoto Accord. Well, big business, what I say to you is that if you helped break the machine, you'd better be willing to help fix it. Not only that, you've got the money and reserves and you've held the rest of us in bondage for far too long. Get with it. This is a global crisis not a fiscal disorder.

In spite of a strong lobby and a Senate Report favouring the legalization of Marijuana, there is considerable doubt that it will ever come about. Not because of any significant opposition in this country but because of a strong anti-drug campaign south of the border. All the evidence points to a favourable response from Parliament. Don't lose sleep waiting for it. The kind of myopia that is epidemic in that noble institution will undoubtedly derail any attempts at legalization. Welcome back, prohibition.

It is no secret that our neighbours to the south do not have the same degree of tolerance, especially towards those of a different sexual orientation. It is no secret that the incidents of violence, discrimination and denigration of gays and lesbians are far more numerous there than here in what we like to call "home". At the same time, our government is letting itself be led by the values and policies of the American Government. Our government is allowing the prejudices and narrow moralistic values espoused, at least in public, of a foreign nation whose values, in spite of geographical proximity, are far different from those we proclaim.

The U.S. melting pot is not the same as our Canadian cultural mosaic. Will we ever learn to recognize this? Will our elected leaders ever begin to realize this?

I am concerned. I am concerned by what I perceive as a lot of empty rhetoric. I am concerned by what I perceive as thinly disguised opportunism. I am concerned by the tendency to make party policy, rather

than the good of all, paramount. I am concerned by what is undoubtedly a kind of rampant megalomania that election to political office seems to impart.

Hey, guys and gals, you're no different than I am. You're no different from your neighbours. You're no different from the people sitting opposite you in the house.

The Pope used to be carried on a gilded chair by uniformed Swiss Guards. Behind him walked a monk, clothed in sack cloth, carrying a length of smoking rope. That monk would keep repeating over and over, amid the cheers of the adoring throngs, "Remember. You're just a man."

Maybe it is time for our Canadian politicians to take a page from Papal Protocol. After all, you can fool some of the people some of the time and you can fool all of the people some of the time; but, you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

For those of us in the LGBT communities, there can be no compromise. To let megalomania or steely partisanship stand in the way of our struggle for equal rights and acceptance within our national community, would be to abandon our responsibility to the cause and to one another.

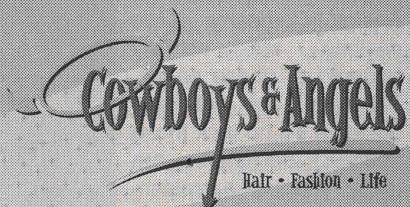
If we can only turn the steel megalomaniacs into steel magnolias, we'll have made a giant step for our communities. With a little effort, we might even change the steel gauntlets into velvet gloves. If we even accomplish that much, we'll have made a giant step for our communities and for all of mankind. (Sorry, Buzz Aldren, but your words were too powerful not to quote and paraphrase.)

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

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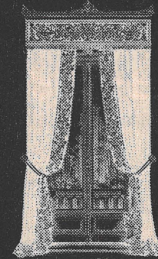
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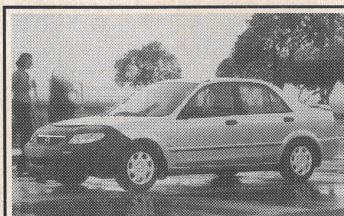


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# The Fashion Scene In London



## Featuring Fashion Designer Andre (a.k.a) "Drei" Roy

By Brad Lister



On a beautiful fall day, four gorgeous models descend upon a suburban household. It is October time for fashion tricks and treats. It is also time to see the fashions of Andre Roy A.K.A. Drei - of IRONCOW-LOTION Design Company. His designs are actually featured on these pages. The puns do not stop because it's no trick those London designers are really making a splash. Forget, Paris, Milan or New York. London is the perfect place to make a fashion splash.



Of course, for Roy he does not really feel like much a part of the scene per se. "We're not really into the London Fashion scene, not that we don't want to be but we never get invited to anything, I think they're afraid we'll break stuff." Poor guy, but hey, *The Voice* has noticed that there is a sense of some excitement and that these designers are having lots of fun.

Designer/Owner Lisa Gaverluck of Weezi in The Galleria Mall feels actually, that scene in London "goes in ebbs and flows." There tends to be an influx, she thinks, and then right now, she actually thinks that maybe there is a bit of lull. "We need people to recognize things." Of course Gaverluck wonders if maybe people are keeping some of their finds a bit of a secret. "If you find something you covet, it's people's special secret."

Well let's share some of those secrets. You cannot really go far anymore in London without seeing some new and different design work. Whether it is in independent shops, the annual show that Fashion College Design graduates

put on, or even the almost theatrical show that local organizer Sheila Zandri puts on at the Gay Pride celebrations. "We actually do at least three months of rehearsals."

Zandri definitely confirms the growing amount of local talent. "Yeah, there actually is a fun fashion scene in London. Lots of great talent coming from Beal and Fanshawe College."

HB Beal Secondary School and Fanshawe College's Fashion Design Programs seem to be "the" stop to make if you want to be involved in fashion.

Janice Hyde, program co-ordinator for Fashion Merchandising, has heard through word of mouth, that people do think very highly of the education and training that they receive at Fanshawe. "We give them a broad base of education," says Hyde, of the training that students get in



the program. Students in merchandising learn all the facets of visual merchandising, retail management, and retail technologies.

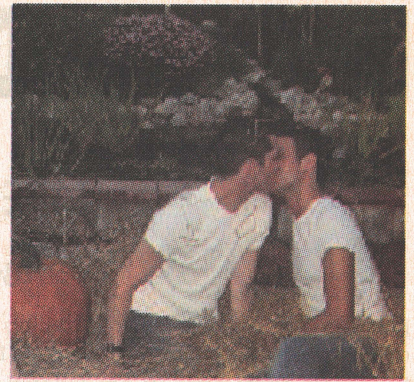
Students in the design end spend three years in a course that runs the gamut from pattern making to understanding textiles. All of the students are great.

"They are very talented and ready to take on the world." This taking on the world includes students with jobs as national marketing director for Le Chateau, buyers with Sears, and many who have gone on to work as freelance photo-stylists. "We've been very pleased with all their success" said Hyde.

Gaverluck is one of the graduates of that program and Hyde spoke of her success quite highly. From what Gaverluck is seeing, the program at Fanshawe has really developed. "Creatively what they are doing has come a long way.

She herself has come a long way since leaving Fanshawe. For years, she used to wholesale her line across the country until she was getting burned out and needed to do something different. She agonized over the decision to open the store in Galleria. She did not know if she wanted to be tied to a store. Also, "London is not like Toronto, Vancouver or New York, where there would be embracement of this" She then added, "you can probably name many things in London that should have succeeded but didn't." She did end up deciding to do it and come November it will be two years. "I'm very happy," she says of





the store's growth.

Weezi is for the independent mind person says Gaverluck and her pieces reflect, as she says, "The non-GAP mentality," -- wearing all the same from head to toe. Her target audience is from 14-40 and she sells the bulk of her items to women in their twenties. "They don't like to be told what to wear," says Gaverluck. That is the Weezi, woman.

What inspires Roy's designs? "Ironcow is a skate/snowboard line that stays true to our mission statement: function-fashion-flava. Lotion is a East coast New York styling designed for the self-styled and tech savvy young woman." This Voice Exclusive Fashion Spread really shows off this idea.

Pressing Roy further on the scene in London he made it known that he has taken time to notice the work of others. "Over the years we have met some great designers like Amy Hammer and Tim Fields."

Zandri really has noticed a lot over the many shows she has done in four years of organizing fashion events. "There are lots of fresh faces and ideas." What keeps Zandri involved in the fashion arena? "I



want to work on fundraising and event co-ordinating" That desire is also what actually got her to organize her first show. She wanted to find a way to raise money for the local AIDS Comm - ittee because she has lost a brother to HIV. A passion for fashion is

what kept her involved and she has many designers that come to her to help organize events.

The goals for many of these young designers is, of course, to achieve

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success. Roy says, "IRONCOW and LOTION have been my focus for ten years and I've spent the last two years concentrating on family things. Great garments will continue to trickle out of our studio but it will be a year or so before we assemble and get back into our full groove." Gaverluck loves the independent Moms who bring their daughters to Weezi, so that they can be guided in directions to think for themselves.

There are so many independent women and men wearing independent fashion in London Ontario.

*Brad Lister is a St Thomas/London based writer who can be reached at [redacted]@sympatico.ca. Voice Exclusive Photos by Jason Turner.*

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# LIVING OUT



## LIFE IS BUT A DREAM

By Sally Sheklow

For a really great vacation — and by great I mean coming home with a pint of sand in every pocket — take some kids to the beach. We dykes who aren't parents miss out on so much, such as the sensation of jammy fingers probing our facial orifices.

Luckily, our lesbian friends welcome us as their kids' Benevolent Aunties. On our vacation we had a good ratio of seven adults to four kids. Most of the adults were Aunties.

Naturally, being lesbians, it was much more complex than that. Two of the moms have been a couple for years and adopted their two daughters from different orphanages in China. The single mom, who recently started dating one of the Aunties, shares custody of her two girls with the kids' other mom, her ex. They each conceived by the same donor sperm and adopted the other partner's baby, making the sisters biologically related. These things are hard to explain to straight people. But the kids figured it out right away. "Look! They have two moms just like we do!"

If you're going to spend a week in a beach cabin with a herd of girls aged three through nine, it's good to have as many Benevolent Aunties along as possible. That way the B.A.'s can take the kids to play on the beach, and the moms can enjoy some, wink wink, "Grown-up Time." We B.A.'s accompanied the kids on one expedition — collecting feathers and shells and inspecting seagull poop — long enough for their moms to luxuriate in each other's juices. I think. When we got back to the cabin I noticed a certain something in the air, but then again everything at the beach smells like the ocean.

Hanging with little kids sure is fun. By some fluke of nature, they never have to go potty before you leave the house. Is anything as satisfying as lifting a kid up into the seated position so she can lean over and watch herself pee on the sand?

And have you really lived until you've put

four giggling, wired and overtired kids to bed? They can always wring out one more story, an extra goodnight kiss, one last glass of water, another trip to the bathroom and top it all off with a performance of "the butt dance."

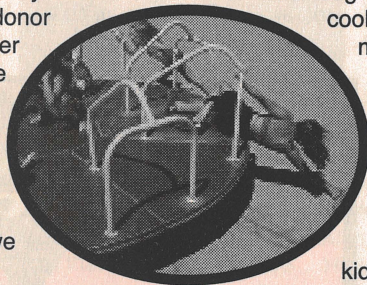
This year's best entertainment was the kids' elaborate theatrical productions, replete with death-defying balancing acts, surprisingly realistic portrayals of circus animals and a whole bunch of cartwheels. The eight-year-old emcee doubled as dog trainer and lion tamer. The youngest abandoned her role for a seat in her mama's lap, so we had no trained seal, as previously announced.

After the show, we snuggled around the campfire. Seated on driftwood logs we dug our bare feet into the cool sand and we roasted marshmallows while we sang — what else? — children's songs. I am now considering hypnosis for getting the chorus of Baby Beluga out of my head. I did love watching the kids, our kids — the girls who see us strong, confident

dyke friends and lovers as their role models — singing and laughing together. These children will know a lot more about what women can be than any of us did growing up. And they'll appreciate how cool it is to have lesbians in their lives, despite the inevitable teasing from other kids.

On our last night, a marshmallow high kept us going into the final song of our vacation. What could be sweeter than little girls' and women's voices together belting out a six-part round of Row, Row, Row Your Boat? Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily.

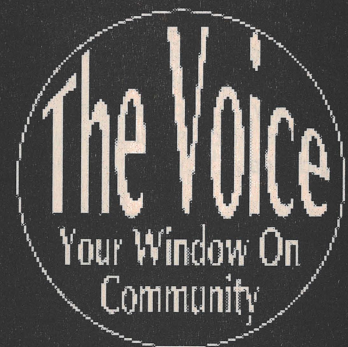
*Sally Sheklow is a writer living in Oregon with her partner of 15 years, two over-indulged cats and no children. Submitted to The Voice by Sally Sheklow.*



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# Love's Exile: A Gay Immigrant Story

## The Pain of Loss in the Face of Gain By Iona Fernandes



I watched an interesting show this afternoon about a Sri Lankan man who grew up in Canada and went back to Sri Lanka on a personal journey. This man ends up getting married to another Western-raised Sri Lankan woman, a woman approved by his two societies.

Could I be any different from this man? Laying in my bed with a little kitten on my chest in my bedroom that I share with my white female partner? A little bittersweet feeling passes through me because I am envious of him. I long to return to my homeland, to visit again, but know that I cannot anymore. It is no longer safe for me to go back home. Too many people know about me now. My parents know about me now. I do not trust that they will not try to inundate me with their Catholic beliefs that I am going to hell because I choose a woman rather than a man.

I miss my home, the land of sand and spices, where the ocean was a bike-ride away. But I choose to stay in the safety that Canada offers me. Here I choose to 'come-out' and to be the person that I could never be in the Middle East or in India. I do not know which area I would find it harder to visit. The Middle East because that is where I grew up, or India the land of my heritage. The land where my extended family continues to live.

A country in which I would be constantly barraged with questions such as "Why aren't you married?", "Why do you look like a boy", or comments like, "You have to look like a girl or no man will want to marry you". Little do they know that I would never want a man to marry me.

Sometimes it saddens me to think of how different my life is from my childhood friend, who is still in Bahrain and who is also gay. She lives a life full of lies and secrecy. My heart aches for her because she cannot enjoy the freedoms that I enjoy here in Canada. She lies to her family about why she goes on so many vacations. She doesn't tell them that that is the only way that she can survive living in a country where you can be killed or imprisoned for being gay. That her vacations are the only times that she can walk down the street holding her partner's hand in relative safety.

I love Canada for the freedom that it has

given me. I love Canada because I came into my own here and it offered me a place where I can tell the people in my workplace that I am gay. I told them that my partner and I are having a commitment ceremony next year and I was met with excitement over the disclosure, rather than the horror and misunderstanding that I would receive back home.

In Canada we overlook how much we have to be grateful for. We are continuing to fight the battle for marriage, but we have won so many battles already.

I have my partner on my benefits plan at work, I can talk about our up-coming wedding. I can make a complaint if I feel like I am being harassed because of my sexuality. I am awarded many rights that I would never have imagined before.

Despite all these rights, I still have to struggle through the heartache of watching the pain that being gay is causing my parents. They do not understand how I could 'choose' to be gay, because to them, I have signed away my life to the devil. They cannot reconcile that being gay is just another aspect to my life and that is not everything that I am.

Many people do not understand the added complications that come with being an immigrant from a culture that does not even acknowledge homosexuality.

From a culture where I literally had to explain what being "gay" meant. People assume that since gay rights are advancing here, that everyone knows who Ellen is and what it means to go to "Pride". But, for some people, like myself, I have

to go through the whole painful 'coming out' process that my predecessors had to go through, not so many years ago in this country.

And so I ask all the people who have had a safe coming-out experience, please thank those who have gone before you in this movement. They have made it possible for us to fight for gay rights, an absurd thought in my homelands.

I thank them for giving me a relatively secure space to be who I am. And I ask the universe to please help other countries make it safe for us to be who we are so that one day it won't be such an absurd thought to want to get married to the person that we love, not matter what sex they are wherever we happen to live. I ask for a world where non-Western gay people like myself don't have to sacrifice their home-country, the space that hold their childhood memories, for their love. I also ask the universe for a world where I wouldn't have to devastate my parents to be true to myself. And, I ask for a world where every land will embrace us, and give to all the gift that Canada has given to me, a place to live where I feel the warmth and safety of a home.

*Iona Fernandes is a social worker and an emerging artist. She lives outside Hamilton with her partner and their four furry friends. A Voice Exclusive.*

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# My Fag Alphabet



## Know Your ABC's

By Mark Weiser

When I was in grade three there was a big alphabet above the chalkboard. I used to look up at the alphabet and naughtily chuckle to myself because I wanted change the "F" to Fuck, and the "B" to Bitch. Very creative and original of me.

One day after recess, my teacher caught me standing on his chair and writing "Bitch" beside the "B" on the alphabet with black marker. He shouted at me, scolded me, called me a girlie-boy (which I think is rather ironic because I ended up nailing his son when we were both about 19) and took me by the arm to the principal's office. The principal naturally made "the phone call". Something my mother had grown to expect once a week. That is one memory of school that still makes me smile deviously. So I have decided to venture back to my roots. They always say history repeats itself, so, here is my 'Fag Alphabet'. And my alphabet is far more meaningful and educational, as

it elaborates! I hope you enjoy it.

**A is for Army Boy:** You know you've fantasized about one! And don't worry, they like us gay guys almost as much as they like their wives.

**B is for Bear:** Depending on where you camp, you may be invaded by a bear. But don't worry, he's just hungry and wants to eat you.

**C is for Cuffs:** You know what to do with them, and you know they can be a lot of fun. A must for every gay man's night-table drawer.

**D is for Drag Queen:** They are totally a part of gay culture and they provide great entertainment. They deserve to be recognized more so be nice and tip them!

**E is for Ecstasy:** I think all narcotics are stupid, but it makes me laugh to see the twinks put out so easily to someone they met three minutes earlier because of it.



**F is for Felacio:** Learn how to perfect it, and you could save yourself thousands of dollars in speeding tickets.

**G is for Goatee:** Finding a man with one of these can be better than dating a masseuse.

**H is for Happy:** We all deserve to be happy. So be happy! Besides, "Gay" is kind of like "Happy"? If we try really hard straight people might start calling us the "The Happy Community".

**I is for Itchy:** If this is something that you are, stay away from me and my cat and hit the nearest drug store as soon as possible.

**J is for Jack-off:** Who can do this better than yourself? You know your own equipment best. Do this regularly, especially if you have been stressed, even if your mother once told you it was wrong.

**K is for Kylie Minogue:** Whatever, I'm totally kidding!!!! **K is for Knees:** They get



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bruised and scraped and rug-burnt, but it's still fun and they heal.

**L is for Lesbian:** You're mad because she beat you at 8 Ball for the 14<sup>th</sup> time in a row and she is tougher than your boyfriend, but be nice to her. Lesbians are really cool and will treat you with respect, so drop the attitude and say hello.

**M is for Mark:** Yes, it's for Mark as in Me!!!! I think I deserve a little more credit than my beautiful picture and that "by Mark Weiser" bit at the top!

**N is for No:** Remember, no matter how loaded you get or how much someone flatters you, you can always say "No!"

**O is for Oxygen:** Why? Duh! Squeeze the air outta that condom tip, dumb ass, or it's gonna break and you might catch something. You can never be too careful!

**P is for Penthouse:** As children, the only peek we ever got at naked men was paging through dad's penthouse. All that searching through woman after woman to see that one bare ass proves our perseverance.

**Q is for Queer as Folk:** Come on, you know you've all wanted to sleep with at least one of them! ....and some of us want to sleep with all of them and that's ok too.

**R is for Relationships:** When you are in one of these, be good to your man. You both deserve to be happy, so ditch the drama and enjoy each other's company.

**S is for Slut:** It's okay to be one, just be a sneaky bitch and don't let people find out.

**T is for Truth:** Just tell the truth! Every gay guy out there is a virgin that has a huge trust account from their Grandma that they cannot touch until they are 35. Gimme a break! The *real* truth please?

**U is for Utopia:** Unfortunately, we don't live in one, but we can try to make the best of it. So be proud of who you are treat others with decency, even when you have not been granted the same in exchange.

**V is for Versatile:** Stop limiting yourself, girl! The more well-rounded you are, the more well-rounded your sex life will become.

**W is for Warts:** ...oh, that's gotta suck!

**X is for X-Rated:** X-Rated movies are a blast, and they directly relate to letter "J".

**Y is for Yucky:** Bad hair, nasty teeth, B.O and wearing curtains for pants are all yucky! Take care of yourself and you will like yourself much more, as will others!

**Z is for Zipper:** Well, it is easier than having a button fly, for both you and your trick to get in.

There. I'm done. Now I know my ABC's, and I like them way better than that ones from Grade 3 too, don't you?

*Mark Weiser is a Mortgage Underwriter in Toronto. He resides in Kitchener. A Voice Excusive.*

# NEED WOOD?

## Tips for Getting Timber

By Woody Miller

### Hey woody!

My boyfriend gives great head but it's like he doesn't want me to cum anywhere except in his mouth. He's obsessed with my semen. Don't get me wrong. I love spraying it inside him, but it's gotten out of hand. If we're fucking and I'm about to cum inside him, he'll push me off, yank the condom off me and jerk me off into his mouth. Why is this so important to him? I don't want him to stop swallowing because truthfully I love it. I'd just like to have a little variety. How do I get him to change?

### -- Looking for another spot

#### Dear Looking:

Boy, you're never going to make it as a priest if you can't figure out when someone's dying to take communion.

There's a lot of reason why guys like to swallow. Maybe they like the taste of oysters. Maybe they like to keep you up at night by clearing their throats of the phlegm.

Which reminds me, is "phlegm" not the nastiest-sounding you ever heard?

But I digress. Probably the most important reason he's obsessed with swallowing is the meaning he's put into your semen.

Semen comes from deep within you. If he swallows that, he's swallowing your very essence, and for a brief moment he experiences a sublime union with you.

Either that, or he's just plain thirsty.

How to change him? Don't ask him to give up something; ask him to add something. Don't say "I don't want to cum in your mouth every time." Say, "I really want to cum inside you when we're fucking" or "I really want to see woody's cum splat all over your chest."

Wait. How did I get in there? Easy. It's my column.

Anyway, don't ask him to change from "A" to "Not A". Ask him to go from "A" to "B" and then he'll "C" the light.

### Hey, woody

Ok here goes. I'm a 32-year old who loves to be a top with my boyfriend. Of course, he wanted some of the action

so I tried to oblige, but the problem is that whenever I bottom for him I lose my erection. When I top I have no problem, but once the role changes my dick melts like the witch in the Wizard of Oz. I have what I think is a healthy diet; I work out three times a week, although I do smoke almost a pack a day. Can you suggest anything to keep me hard when my boyfriend tops me? Is it possible that my prostate gland isn't as sensitive as his?

### -- Trying to get to the bottom of it

#### Dear Trying:

No, your prostate isn't less sensitive. What's more likely is that you respond differently to different kinds of stimulation. Try a variety of positions and foreplay until your slot machine rings a row of cherries. Remember that the prostate is up and in. If your boyfriend's dick goes straight in it's possible that your prostate gland won't be touched or stimulated. In and up and in and up. Memorize those words. They will serve you well.

You could also be harboring subconscious fears of being emasculated or losing control. Gay culture is second only to straight society in disparaging males who have "receptive sex." When was the last time you heard, "There's nothing in this town but tops?" Or, "Oh, he's nothing but a big top?"

Bottoming for your boyfriend may be triggering a fear of being "womanized," and thus, ridiculed. I don't need to tell you those fears are ridiculous, do I?

There's no magic way of getting over it. You just do it, experiment, and see where it takes you. It's like that bike metaphor motivational speakers use: "The best way to learn how to be ridden by a bike is to let the bike get on you."

*Need Wood? Ask woody how to spice up your sex life. Email him at*

*[redacted]@attbi.com*



## Unique Queer Lives: Muriel Rukeyser

By Mary Ann Moore



"The universe is made up of stories, not atoms." I rather like that quote from poet Muriel Rukeyser as I spend much of my time in circles, sharing stories with others. It's something all the cultures of the world have done for thousands of years. Rukeyser's story of her life and her poetry have to do with the female body (writing about it and putting her own body on the line, so to speak), anti-Semitism and the environment.

Rukeyser used poetry to promote social consciousness and travelled around the world to protest fascism, war and nuclear power. Her first book, *Theory of Flight*, was published in 1935.

Born in 1913, Muriel Rukeyser's poetic models were other gay poets Walt Whitman and W. H. Auden. She was married for a few months in 1945 and a couple of years later had a child. Her parents were shocked that she would raise a child as a single parent.

Rukeyser's work is included in anthologies of lesbian poetry. In a poem called "Despitals", she wrote, "Never to despise in myself what I have been taught to despise". Another, called "Looking at Each Other" is an erotic poem with the word "yes" at the beginning of each line reminiscent of James Joyce's Molly Bloom monologue.

"What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? The world would split open", Rukeyser wrote in one of her poems. Although she was very much "out" with her passion for social and political transformation such as being an opponent of racism and war, her lesbianism is, as writer Lillian Faderman expressed it, well "encoded" in her writing. Faderman believes Rukeyser was unable to drop her mask of presumed heterosexuality even though she wrote in one poem, "No more masks! No more mythologies". It may be she thought she was

"out" already in the way she wrote about the female body and stood up for those who were oppressed.

Other lesbian writers have words of praise for Rukeyser's work and for the publisher who re-released her book of essays on poetry, *The Life of Poetry*. (The book is based on talks she gave in 1940 at Vassar College published in 1996 by Paris Press.) Dorothy Allison said of Rukeyser, "She went through fear as she went through hatred, coming out the other side into hope and I took her life as an ideal . . .".

Rukeyser translated the work of other artist-activists such as Mexican poet and essayist Octavio Paz and a children's book by playwright and poet Bertold Brecht. His famous quote, I think, applies to Rukeyser: "Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it".

She died in 1980 having lived most of her life in New York City. There will be no more poetry from Muriel Rukeyser but there is much inspiration from stories of her social activism and in her poems which she called "meeting places".

It's too late now to enter a poetry contest named for Muriel Rukeyser (as well as poet Milton Acorn) as the deadline is September 30 but

check out [www.meklerdeahl.com](http://www.meklerdeahl.com) for other poetry contests sponsored by publishers Mekler & Deahl in Hamilton.

Mary Ann Moore is a Guelph writer and founder of *Flying Mermaids Writing Circles and Retreats*.

**"The universe is made up of stories, not atoms."**

**"When you say Man," said Oedipus, "you include women too. Everyone knows that." She said, "That's what you think."**

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## CURTAIN RISES ON THE PRIDE PROM

### Lights, Camera, Action!

One of the events often considered very important in the lives of young people is the high school prom. It is seen a rite of passage and perhaps just as importantly, an unforgettable evening of fun with your friends and peers. But how many LGBT people are able to attend their prom with a same-sex partner?

Last spring, amidst the Marc Hall controversy, members of GLOW and GLOBAL, the LGBT groups at the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, began thinking about about a Pride Prom: a formal event designed specifically for LGBT persons, their partners and their allies. Since that time, the group has grown and become an active committee who are working to make the Pride Prom a reality.

The event is scheduled for Friday January 31, 2003 in the Crystal Ballroom at the Walper Terrace Hotel. The location is ideal because of its history in the LGBT community and its relatively central location in the KW-Region. The Ballroom is also perfectly suited to the glamorous theme of vintage Hollywood.

The committee discussed at length the target audience for the event. It was decided that the prom should be open to all ages. The committee expects high school and university students to attend along with those who may have missed their prom in the past. The Pride Prom will begin with a catered dinner followed by a formal dance. There will be an open cash bar at the event.

The Pride Prom Committee is made up of university students from both UW and WLU as well as community members who have various ties to other LGBT organisations in KW. The group is still quite small and looking for more enthusiastic volunteers to help move forward. The current focus is on finding sponsorship to help keep ticket prices low. Tickets will tentatively be on sale in mid-October.

This will be a wonderful opportunity for the LGBT community which will allow us to comfortably experience an important life event with those we care about. Watch for more information on the Pride Prom in the coming weeks and be sure to clear your calendars for January 31st.

If you are interested in volunteering for this event you can contact the committee at: [PrideProm@Hotmail.com](mailto:PrideProm@Hotmail.com)

-- Submitted to The Voice by Scott Williams

## BOOK ON CENSORSHIP BANNED IN CANADA

Oxford University Press' home office in England has forbidden its Canadian affiliate from selling a book published by its U.S. branch: "*Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art*"

The publisher is afraid that criminal charges might be brought against it as a result of a photograph of a young boy taken by Robert Mapplethorpe that is included in the book.

The author Richard Meyer is an associate professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Southern California. He spoke on Friday, September 20 at the University of Toronto in the F. Ross Johnson/Connaught distinguished speaker series at the Center for the Study of the United States.

Glad Day Bookshop, Canada's first and longest surviving lesbian and gay bookstore, had planned to do an event with the author. This was until it was discovered that, the Canadian publisher was not carrying the title. "The picture at issue, a portrait entitled "Jesse McBride" is not pornographic or obscene in any way" says Meyer, "and part of what I discuss in the book is how the patently false charge of child pornography has been used by conservative politicians and the Christian Right as a justification to suppress Mapplethorpe's work. Using these same arguments, Oxford has, in effect, censored a scholarly book on censorship."

"For a university professor about to give a lecture in Toronto, who has his book made unavailable by this publisher's head office is outrageous. They are acting on misguided concerns over a serious and thoughtful analysis of censorship by simply silencing the author's work. However, it is also an example of how the censorship laws in this country continue to have a chilling effect to this day" according to Glad Day Bookshop's manager Toshiya Kuwabara.

### For more information:

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[gdbooks@on.aibn.com](mailto:gdbooks@on.aibn.com)

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## Crowd Tips Drag Queen During Waterloo Busker Carnival

By Muffy St. Bernard



When you step out of the door wearing a showgirl outfit with a puffy marabou tail, and then don an enormous feathery head dress to boot, it's hard to know what sort of adventures you're going to have.

Granted, being a drag queen, it's always a bit of a crap shoot when you mingle with the general public. How will you be received? Will you be harassed, embraced, or ignored? In my experience, people here in Kitchener-Waterloo do the latter: they pay particular attention to their shoes when they walk past you, but they sure as heck turn around and stare when they think you can't see them.

I've had mixed responses being "out and about" in drag...it depends on a lot of things: the outfit, the crowd, the place, the time, and the company I'm in, just to name a few. When I decided to show up at the Waterloo Busker Carnival this year on August 24<sup>th</sup> I thought I was prepared for the sort of experiences I'd have. And up until the adult show at 11:30pm I was right: the general public enjoyed having a drag queen around, the kids sure loved it. Afterwards, though, things became ugly, and I'm not just talking about my oozing, overheated panstick.

Being "Official Spokes Muffy" for Delirium Clothing in uptown Waterloo, the owners and I thought it would be fun for me to wear a spectacular Delirium creation – the showgirl outfit that we call "Ginger Spice" – and hang around the entrance to the store, enticing customers with our flair and panache.

Whenever planning to do this sort of thing I make a little mental checklist. I ask myself a few questions. Is my outfit obscene? As sexy as it was, it wasn't breaking any laws, though it sure as hell hurt (use your imagination). Will the crowd be receptive? I was expecting artsy types and families, which was correct for the daytime, and neither groups are particularly dangerous. Will there be a security force, in case things get out of hand? I thought there would be, but I was wrong.

Finally, will my friends and I appear to be intimidating, "don't mess with us because we eat little punks like you for lunch" sort of

people? Errrr...no. But we can be mighty haughty when we need to be.

Tallying the answers to my questions I decided the outing was "more or less safe" and, what's more, could turn out to be a good experience for everyone.

Before I go any further, let me address an interesting question that many people ask: "Muffy, why would you do this? What's this "everyone" business? Why do you need "everyone" to see what you're up to? Are you trying to prove something? Why not make your life easier by just staying at home?" Well, first off, why shouldn't I do it? Was I breaking the law, hurting the festival, or being aggressive? No. What I was doing was walking around and having fun, enjoying the same right to be seen that everybody else has. I brought some colour and pizzazz to the uptown core. And yes, I admit it, I was showing off a little bit, but there is no law against walking proud and being happy.

Also, I like to think that by doing this sort of on-the-town drag – which I have done before – I am sending a message to the people of Waterloo. A message that will mean different things to different groups. I send a message to the bigots and hateful people: "I'm having fun, I'm a human being with basic human rights, and you cannot discourage me." To the parents whose children run up to talk to me I'm saying: "I might be flamboyant

and silly, but I'm also an intelligent, well-balanced person who isn't hurting anybody, including your children." To the people in town who wish to be doing what I am doing and feel unable to, I'm sending a message of solidarity and security: "If you do this, I will support you, and look...nothing bad is happening!" Well, almost nothing...

During the day, walking around the Busker Carnival, I met all three types of people. I met a young kid who tried to incite hatred and disgust among his peers in the local Subway and was told – by someone his own age – to shut up and deal with it (Hurrah!) I had people come up and say that they enjoyed what I was doing – bringing some more fun and frivolity and excitement to the carnival (Yay!) I was a constant source of fascination for the children, who always seem to assume I'm some sort of cartoon character, and kept dragging their parents across the street to touch my feathers. (Wonderful, as long as their hands were devoid of fudge and cotton candy). One baby offered the ultimate compliment: he threw up a

sort of blueish goo when his father brought him over to see me. Thanks, baby! I can't imagine what you were eating.

What was heartening about this was that the children *and* the parents walked away smiling. I like to feel that, in my own little way, I was teaching by example. I





felt like a cross between Big Bird and the Pied Piper, only prettier. In short: it was a wonderful day.

Considering our good reception by the staff, patrons and buskers at the carnival, my friends and I felt secure showing up for the "Adult Show" at 11:30pm. For those who haven't been there, the "Adult Show" is a chance for the buskers to do more risqué material. All the action moves to a center stage where the spectators sit around in a large, tightly-packed mass of people.

What we hadn't counted on were the stragglers on the periphery of the circle: latecomers, groups of kids around 15 years old, and a lot of folks who were far too drunk to be doing anything but lying down. Within the first few seconds of our arrival we were targeted, most vocally by the young kids who taunted, harassed, and chanted "fag." At one point, infuriated at our presence, they appeared to actually attack a table and break it (which the table didn't deserve). Too proud to just walk away, I convinced my companions to try a different area of the crowd (on the north side of the stage), where people started throwing coins at us (an up-to-date variation on stoning, but slightly more profitable) and the chanting began again.

Things were very dark out there so it was difficult to see who was involved; from the sounds of it there were, in total, about 30 people, most of them under 16 but also consisting of young adults and some pleasant elderly gentlemen with pockets full of change and bad aim. It seemed strange to me that the street wasn't better illuminated, and I know from previous experience that aggressors in the dark are much more confident: they know you can't see them and identify them, and they don't feel intimidated by the larger mass of people which isn't involved in the harassment.

Not that they needed to worry, though, because the adult crowd wasn't doing a damn thing. I'm sure that most of the people watching the show couldn't hear the chanting, but the people around us – that solid wall of unflinching backs we were standing behind – definitely knew what was going on (some of them were getting hit with change, after all). But nobody turned around to look or to offer words of support. That stand-up comedian must have been really captivating.

And what about the police, the attack dogs, and the FBI? Nobody. Zero control. We saw some people in reflective jackets who were very far away and seemingly unaware that a drag queen was being threatened by under-age kids drinking open cans of alcohol in the street. Maybe my head dress wasn't big enough to catch

their eyes. All I know is that it was "us versus them" – 4 of us and lots of them – and that nobody was doing a damn thing about it.

I'm not saying that somebody should have jumped in and started punching people out. All that would have been necessary would be for one or two people to turn around, offer sympathy, show disgust at the proceedings, and make it look like they were aware and observant. When that sort of thing happens the perpetrators get worried and uncertain: "Nobody will believe the queer, but they might listen to that upscale guy and his girlfriend...I don't want to get into REAL trouble! I'll just yell 'fag' once more and then stand here fuming."

Well, why didn't we leave? Because I don't like running (and not just because my footwear is impractical). I didn't want to leave because, after a day of being Big Bird, I didn't want my last lesson to be: "If you taunt us, we will run." After half an hour of this, though (with no help in sight), and with the harassment getting even more vocal, we knew we'd better get our asses out of there, followed by a bunch of guys in a car screaming "we are gonna kill you, faggot," and another group on foot who were "coming to get us." Fortunately, we managed to lose the car after a few additional confrontations, and the walkers quickly grew bored.

What did everyone learn that night? Big Bird – I mean, Muffy – is gonna tell you: obnoxious, violent, and anti-social people learned that they can make death threats and throw things during a large, city-organized event, and nobody will stop them. The security wasn't there. The street was dark, and the people who were aware of the harassment were ignoring it. They learned that the streets and events in Waterloo belong to them. They learned that general public supports them.

What did I learn? Something that I need to learn from time to time, which is that as wonderful as the world is, it's still got an ugly side, and it doesn't take long for that ugly side to bite you. I also learned that I have very good friends who will stick by me when I need help, but that I can't depend on strangers. I learned that I don't want to be beaten with a baseball bat, and that such things are entirely possible. Sadly, I learned that sometimes you *need* to run.

But have I learned the biggest lesson, the

one that the people in the crowd wanted to teach me? Do I know enough to play it safe now, stay home, and avoid the Busker Carnival next year?

No sir.

Next year I'm going back, and I'm bringing anyone who'll come: drag queens, lesbians, fags, leather men, sailors, freaks, friends, neighbours and their lovers.

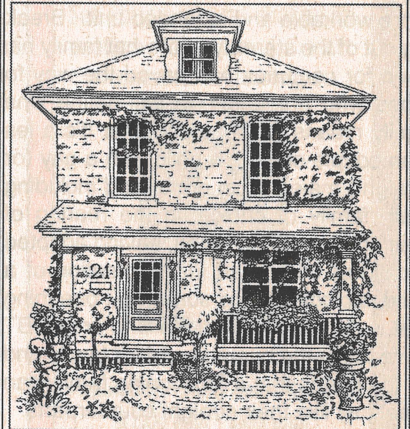
Want to see the Adult Show, Voice reader? You're invited! We're going to go and enjoy it just like the rest of the fine, safe folks of Waterloo.

And if the crowd wants to throw money at us, I'll have a little performance of my own ready. I want to teach them a lesson that they should have learned by now: they *don't* own the streets and the festivals. And if they're going to tip a drag queen, they should do it while she's dancin'.

Muffy St. Bernard, of K-W, is a local performer, DJ, and radio personality. Visit her website at [www.dazzled.com/dangermuff](http://www.dazzled.com/dangermuff) to find out what she's up to.



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# FAMILY – LGBT STYLE



## The LGBT PARENTING NETWORK

By A.J. Mahari

Family - LGBT style? That's right. Move over straight nuclear family. Not only is there is room for more than one style of family but alternatives families are increasing in recent years.

While those who are lesbian, gay, bi or transgender have had families from previous straight relationships, now, more than ever before, they are consciously planning families and giving birth to, or adopting, and rearing children in record numbers.

Four decades of strong and persistent counter-cultural challenge through the gay rights movement along with advances in reproductive technology have produced a marvelous thing -- the carefully planned queer family. The many and varied compositions that make up queer families in this still rather young century, are not only 'as good as' straight families -- they are forging new frontiers in the make-up of a much more workable and extended unit. Breaking out of the stereotype of what family has been for centuries has paved the way for those who are LGBT to self-define what family means to them. Whether it's a lesbian couple sharing a child with a gay (or straight) male sperm donor and including their 'family of choice' in the rearing of their child, or it's gay men, having adopted a child or taken part in the creation of a child, biologically, via surrogacy, one thing that is certain is that those who are LGBT have the same human need for family and all the needs that a functioning family can meet just like their straight counterparts.

With the proliferation of gay parents, The Counseling Foundation of Canada decided that it was interested in doing something to support LGBT parents. They approached the Family Service Association, (F.S.A.) and one of the programs of the Family Services Association is the David Kelly Gay Counseling Service who partnered in this project with The Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario, in London, where Family Pride Canada, an internet initiative has been developing over the last year and amassing an amazing

amount of information.

There, James Miller, M.A. (Oxon.), Ph.D. (Toronto) Faculty of Arts Professor at the University of Western Ontario; Founding Director of the Pride Library and the UWO Research Facility for Gay and Lesbian Studies; also took on the role of Project Director for Family Pride Canada. Family Pride Canada, is part of the LGBT Parenting Network project and its main mandate has been the creation of the project's web site. (see opposite page for more on the



web site)

Miller had some very interesting observations about family. "Freud wasn't wrong with the 'family romance'. In many ways straight-patriarchal-nuclear families are a hot-bed of discord. It always strikes me as massively-ironic that we hear we have this psychoanalytic understanding of the sexual, political, and social tension within the nuclear family. "The queer family trend is a very good corrective to this irony. It's a way



of actually breaking that irony by saying though families are very constructed social groups they aren't posed ideologically from above. You make your family up as you go along. Another part of this is that families never stay the same."

Rachel Epstein has a long history of working in both community-development and community organizing and has an M.A. in sociology. She is half way through a P.h.



D. in education at York University -- which she actually left in order to become the co-ordinator of the LGBT Parenting Network. The LGBT Parenting Network has been in operation for a year now. This project is her dream job. Listening to Rachel Epstein talk about her work with the LGBT Parenting Network it was quite evident that not only her heart is in her work, but, that her soul is also. Epstein was emotional a few times when talking about her daughter, her work, and the children of lesbian and gay parents, generally. She has an amazing passion for her work.



"In that first year we held a series of focus groups with different groupings of LGBT parents to talk about what kinds of things would be useful to people, what they wanted to see. We also did an on-line needs-assessment survey."

Out of the results of those groups and that survey we are just now developing a bunch of programs."

When asked what needs they found LGBT parents have, as the result of their focus groups, Epstein said, "It's a huge area because LGBT parents encompass a big group of people with lots of different needs. One of the biggest things is that people really want to learn how to network and be in touch with each other."

Another need that was identified was what is a universal need that most, if not all LGBT parents talked about, the need to address what is happening in their children's schools.

Epstein very passionately added that

*Web Site information opposite page. Story continues on page 20.*



## FAMILY PRIDE WEB SITE

<http://familypride.uwo.ca>

### Mission Statement

#### What's distinctive about our site? The following combination of features -

\* It's Canadian in focus - though you'll find plenty of information here about queer family life in other countries and cultures.

\* It's non-commercial: we've got lots of information and encouragement and community wisdom to share with you here but nothing to sell.

\* It's interactive with our users, which means that everything on the menu (even the Glossary) can expand and change to meet your needs and interests.

\* It's inclusive: unlike many queer sites, which turn out to be for gays or lesbians only, this one's for bisexuals and trans-folk and their families too

\* It's comprehensive, providing access for you and your family to the rich history and culture of LGBT people through our link with the Pride Library.

\* It's research-based yet user-friendly, linking recent academic studies of queer family life in all its diversity with the down-to-earth social realities of the LGBT community.

\* It's progressive, countering the social isolation of queer parents and their families by providing a virtual forum for constructive discussion and information-exchange.

*The six principal objectives of Family Pride Canada are:*

*To answer the pressing need for a specialized resource centre focusing on the social, legal, political, educational, spiritual, and psychological issues facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans parents and their families across Canada;*

*To provide Canadians from all walks of life with reliable information on LGBT family issues in a variety of scholarly and popular forms (e.g. academic books, specialist periodicals, magazine articles, documentary videos, parenting manuals, children's books) without commercial bias;*

*To make the family-related resources at the Pride Library not only virtually accessible at the Family Pride Canada website but actually retrievable through the Interlibrary Loan System connecting all the public and university libraries in Canada;*

*To counter the social isolation of LGBT parents and their families by creating a forum where parenting wisdom can be shared, current issues can be discussed, and community encouragement can be offered;*

*To illuminate the challenges facing LGBT parents and their families in*



*Canada by contextualizing queer resistance to homophobia and heterosexism both historically (against the background of queer culture and politics) and cross-culturally (in relation to LGBT family life in other countries);*

*To affirm the dignity and pride of LGBT parents and their families everywhere in accordance with inclusive contemporary definitions of "family."*

*(Re-printed from their web site with Family Pride Canada's permission)*

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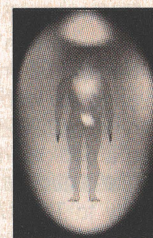
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"Schools are still very much environments where LGBT values are not represented. Homophobic bullying is one big problem that has many LGBT parents concerned."

In response to a question asking if she thinks that there are different needs that families have in smaller cities, Epstein agreed that they face a lot of isolation and difficulty in identifying how they can find, connect with, and support each other on their parenting journeys. She then said, "We are going to set up a message board on the web site and we are hoping that the web site can play some sort of role in helping people to connect with each other."

Miller pointed out that the web site was launched, in May of this year, a year after they got the grant. "Like all web sites, it's a progressive project, we are building on it." He then added that, "What we want to build up on the web site are happy, life affirming photographs of gay and lesbian families at gay and lesbian events. We are building up a collective family album from across the country." Miller regards this as a "family dignity project."

The web site is very impressive and equally as comprehensive. Epstein produces a bimonthly newsletter, called, "Pride and Joy" and it is available,

in PDF format, on the web site. Ways that the newsletter can be delivered to those interested, aside from its web presence, include, email, fax and snail mail.

Miller stressed that, "The books, articles, and CD's that we've collected here at The Pride Library, on family issues, form an actual resource centre. Anyone, living in South Western Ontario can go to the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario and make use of their resources. For those who don't live in that area or who don't have easy access to transportation to get there, they can go to the web site to search the library at: <http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/pwpbrowse.html>

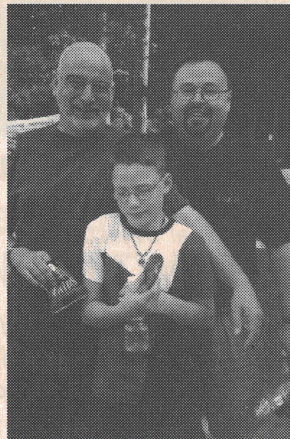
When they find a book or resource that they'd like to read they can just click on "to request a copy or use inter-loan services" and then email directly to The University of Western Ontario library system. People can then request any book be sent to their own public or university library to pick up and read."

While a great deal of the focus of the project and its developing programs has been centred in Toronto, Epstein stressed that she is very open to hearing from LGBT parents in South Western Ontario. She would like to know more about what needs are out there. She also wants readers to know that she would be willing to help, with the support of the LGBT Network, anyone in any city or smaller area that would like to start up a group for parents. Epstein can be contacted by phone at (416) 595-0307 ext. 270 or by email at [rachelep@fsa.toronto.com](mailto:rachelep@fsa.toronto.com).

They have a year to go on their grant but Epstein pointed out that a year goes by very quickly. They are looking for people who'd like to get involved and help out. Areas that they need help in are unlimited but there is particular need for those with interest and strength in fundraising or grant writing.

The LGBT Parenting Network seeks to bring parents and families together to connect and to share support in facing some of the challenges that still exist out there in raising children in a society whose institutions still (to one degree or another) reflect homophobic attitudes about queer families.

Queer families are on the cutting edge of revolutionizing the institution



of the family. Love makes a family. LGBT families are putting the ideal of "it takes a village to raise a child" into action. The results are nothing short of remarkable. Kids are growing up with a much more open and tolerant mindset concerning differences. There is no doubt that the children of queer parents reflect back to society, as a whole, the living proof that Family-LGBT style is a viable, healthy, positive way to be raised and is proof that there is room the love and nurture of children in whatever style a family reflects. Family, LGBT style, is different from the



'traditional family' but is certainly not, in any way, 'less than' the traditional family.

A.J. Mahari, of Kitchener, is Voice editor and a freelance writer. A Voice Exclusive.

## Jean-Paul Pilon

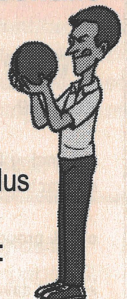
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# THE TRANSEXUAL ACTIVIST

## “Getting it Right”

By Leslie Forrester

I'd like to welcome everyone to the “Transsexual Activist”. As the title may suggest, I am about change. Being willing to accept what is handed to me is not me and that is just how A.J. found me. I was mixed up in a fight on a list serve about what is right, and so she figured, why not? So enough about me, let's get on with today's education class.

Some of you may have noticed that I spell Transsexual with only one “s.” There are many reasons for this. My three main reasons for using this spelling are: this was the original spelling of the word; the dictionary defines the word “trans” to mean “across, through, beyond, and I am not any of those things; simply, I like it that way.

I was emailing with a friend the other day and she said something that I completely agree with. Now, if you knew me, you would know that this is a rare occasion indeed. We found ourselves writing to each other about the word “transgender.”

Transgender was a term that was first used as a derogatory word to describe transsexual women. The “second-wave” feminists used it to exclude us. To them we were spies for the male dominant society, so we were not to be trusted. Transsexual men by the way, were considered confused and brainwashed by this same group. Since that time a metamorphosis of the word has taken place, and the “new” meaning of the word now refers to everyone. Not everyone knows this and when I have shared this news with others who were also surprised. Transgender now means anyone that crosses the gender “norms.” For example, butch dykes, femme men, intersex, transsexuals, gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, drag kings and queens, cross dressers and so on.

Now, this friend of mine was saying that things have become so bad that, as a transsexual woman, she feels that she has less and less in common with other transsexual women. This is a direct result of the word “transgender” being used by many other transsexuals. To me it seems as though we have forgotten the past and then got lost in the present. I have no direct problem, even though I despise the word, with someone using the word transgender to describe themselves, but I do have a problem when other direct labels are used with them. What I mean to say is that hearing someone say “I am a transgender bisexual” is to me like hearing someone say “I am a white Caucasian.” It means the same thing. This is crazy.

I have spent the last few years explaining to others that transsexuals are not a 20th Century phenomenon. We have been around since the beginning of time itself. Our history has been stolen by the straight world who had no idea that we were not exactly as we seemed and by the lesbians that felt if a *genetic girl* (gg) person dressed and/or acted like a “guy” then the person was just a big butch dyke. Christ, a perfect example of this was Brandon Teena. Our past has also been stolen by gay males in the same way. A genetic male (gm) that appears to dress and act like the other gender is a drag queen.

Well, I'll say this about that: “*I am not a fucking drag queen.*” Remember that line from “*Better Than Chocolate*”? Judy, the transsexual woman, said it then.

Another instance of our past being stolen, one of the most shameful examples, occurred when white Christian settlers forced

the natives of this land to abandon their beliefs in favour of a Christian “god”. A simple note about this group of “people”: before they did this to the natives, they went about doing this to the Pagans. In the native society we, “and” there were many names for us then, were the leaders. We were the leaders, the healers, the wise ones, among many other roles. In most cases we were respected. Unlike what others may claim, “we were not identified and trained, but rather we were able to self- identify and discover who we were. We then chose our path and learned everything we needed to learn.

When I “came out,” some new friend (my old ones left) told me that I was brave to do what I was doing. At that time, I asked why. “Because doing what you are doing takes courage.” Now, don't you think that is an odd way to look at it? I am just being myself. I didn't run into a fire to save someone's life. I did, however, decide to live. When it comes right down to it, even though I have tried to kill myself in the past, I don't want to die. That scares me. That would be being brave. No, I am not brave.

I found my real self. I stopped being the actor, pretending to be someone that everyone told me that I was. I read an article that said Stonewall was started by the lesbians and gays. I suppose that no one told this person that the transsexuals, drag queens and kings were the leaders. It was because of them that the “gay” rights movement got started.

Did you know that the transsexual community is the single-most diverse group in the world? This explains the wide variation in times that transsexuals “come out.” Think about it. We encompass the straight, lgb and two-spirit peoples, all from within one community. Now that is diverse. A “gg” or “gb” cannot do all of that. This kind of diversity makes us extremely special.

Transsexuals face many dangers in world of ours. Most of the queer community knows and understands most of these dangers.

**The Police:** These fine upstanding members of the human race have yet to attempt to understand what transsexuals are all about. They will openly laugh and make remarks, refuse to use correct pronouns when addressing us, but oddly enough, seem to go out of their way to find and harass us. Transsexual women and transsexual men frequently go through this terror.

**The Clarke:** My favourite danger is a place called “The Clarke.” This institution receives all sorts of government money. They study us like rats. They even used to use electrodes on us. The Clarke used to be the only place in Ontario where a transsexual could go in order to receive a letter (...a letter informing the government of Ontario that the recipient was eligible for extended health benefits to cover the cost of the surgery.) that said “yes,” to the government of Ontario, “pay this surgery.” To obtain this letter one would have to be interviewed by several of their “specialists.” If they concluded that you were a transsexual, then you would be invited to join their “group.” The other part of their requirement was that you had to live one full year in the “proper” gender without the help of hormones. In year two they would then allow for the hormones.

Leslie Forrester, of Mississauga, is a transsexual activist. *A Voice Exclusive.*



## MEETING YOU, MEETING ME

I would like to introduce myself to the community. I am a Life Consultant and a Reiki Practitioner.

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## GAY FATHERS SUPPORT

### Waterloo-Wellington Gay Fathers Support Group Begins In Guelph

*Who are gay fathers and why do they need a support group, anyway?*

On October 21, the third Monday of October, a Gay Father's Support group will hold its first meeting in Guelph. This group will be open to any who may classify himself as a "gay father", and who would benefit from a peer support group.

If you are not a gay father, you may wonder what this is all about and why there is a need for a support group, anyway. To define or categorize the "gay father" is to attempt to attach an all-inclusive label to an extremely diverse group of men. As we witness all too often in the LGBT community, labels fall frustratingly short of explaining the nature, life-style, or background of the individual.

For simplicity's sake, we use the label "gay father" to refer to men who have fathered children and who may identify themselves as gay or bisexual. They may be living common-law, be married, be separated, be divorced, or be widowed. The term can also include men who have donated sperm and have a connection to the resulting child in a parenting role, or gay men who have adopted children.

Clearly, in such a diverse group the needs, problems, and issues that arise will be equally diverse. Not all of the men mentioned may ever feel the need to be part of a support group. Most have developed, to some degree, their own support network of friends, family, or indeed their own children.

Many gay fathers do, however, face enormous and sometimes seemingly insurmountable problems and crises. These may range from acknowledging their own sexuality to coming out to spouses, children and extended family. There is frequently a subsequent marriage breakdown with all of the heartache and difficulty, which often follow such situations. Gay fathers often are dealing with issues of being a single parent whether custody is sole or joint.

Financial difficulties frequently are very challenging, especially where child and/or spousal support must be paid (often the father is paying for the expenses of two households). The gay father often is dealing with issues of self-esteem, family rejection, sexual health, and re-entering the dating scene in "mid-life". Throw in religious issues, ethnic background issues and workplace homophobia (not to mention the possibility of a new partner who has never had children) and it is easy to see that even the "strongest" of men may feel the need to reach out for support and encouragement.

A support group is not a replacement for professional counselling. The purpose is to provide a safe environment where fathers can talk, share problems, listen to the experiences of others and, if nothing else, feel less alone or isolated in an often-frightening set of circumstances.

For location and meeting times call:

Jon at 519-823-██████ or Dave at 519-821-██████

*Submitted to The Voice by Jon Dobbin, Guelph, Ont.*





**A Year after 9/11: Living in An Uncertain World**

**By Jeffrey Chernin, Ph.D.**

It's been a year since the 9/11 terrorist attack, and a recent poll suggested that most of us have gotten "back to normal". For instance, people are travelling again. But there's one catch; a lot more people drove this past Labor Day week end than in prior years, and the airlines are still hurting. So, maybe on the outside, we're back to normal. But that doesn't say anything about what's happening on the inside. Maybe the increase in anti-anxiety medication prescriptions in New York is more telling about what's really going on.

The increase in anxiety is happening in part because one of the most difficult situations for many of us to deal with is uncertainty about the future. In this post 9/11 world, we are uncertain about when and where the terrorists may strike. We naturally worry if we or our loved ones will be harmed. This situation also causes us to feel helpless, because on an individual basis, there is nothing we can do. Collectively, we are trying to stop terrorism, but being unable to stop it so far gives rise to feeling powerless. We also live with confusion, which has been made worse by leaders who have continued to tell us to "get back to normal," while they made drastic changes in their lives and are making huge changes in the law.

The sad reality is that we will never get back to normal. And while we go through daily activities as we have been, we're still unsure of all of the precautions to take in order to remain safe. When life is changing as it has and still is, it can create many challenges. The purpose of this article is to discuss difficulties that can result from ongoing uncertainty so that you can identify the problems and take steps to correct them.

It's useful to look at the current situation through the lens of a stress management model. Simply stated, stress occurs when demands exceed resources. Demands include needs, expectations, and the physical environment, as well as changes that affect the home, work, and the community. Resources include abilities, attitudes, and assistance from friends and family.

When demands exceed resources, we attempt to find ways to cope. Some ways to cope are helpful. Others are harmful and may cause you to fall back on or develop unhealthy activities. For example, one person mentioned that after the terrorist attacks she made a decision to go back to smoking even though she had quit several years ago. Other people are overeating and are using drugs and alcohol. While these forms of coping may help to get through the day, they create new demands on your system. In a vicious cycle, the need to escape produces unhealthy coping strategies (demands), and these demands lead to emotional instability, thus leading to more reasons to need to escape. This added stress may create physical and emotional problems. Milder physical problems resulting from stress include headaches, stomach problems, and a lowered immune function.

One emotional problem that can develop is known as post-traumatic stress. Signs of post-traumatic stress include re-living the traumatic event, insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks, being easily agitated, and hypervigilance. It can also give rise to depression. Symptoms of depression include withdrawing from formerly pleasant activities, feeling "blue", significant weight change, fatigue,

and difficulty concentrating.

Uncertainty breeds anxiety, which is another consequence of ongoing stress. Signs of anxiety include feeling restless, irritable, and muscle tension, as well as having difficulty falling and staying asleep, and panic attacks.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, it is important to find ways to reduce stress by reducing demands and increasing your resources. For example, walking 15 minutes per day can contribute to emotional health. Adding yoga or meditation to your fitness schedule can also help. Many people find solace in spirituality, which can be valuable. Another way to increase resources is to keep a journal, which not only benefits people emotionally, but also leads to better physical health. To further increase your resources, try to surround yourself with loving family and friends. In fact, it's helpful to look at your current relationships. Spending less time with people who are an emotional drain and more time with people who supportive can reduce stress.

If friendship and family support is not enough, another option is to seek counseling. Individually, or in a group setting, counseling can reduce stress as it provides critical social support. In addition to counseling, you may wish to find a support group.

Which ever forms of support and coping strategies you employ, remember that you have choices as to how you react to uncertainty. With enough support, you will find it easier to choose ways that are constructive and beneficial.

*Jeffrey Chernin, Ph.D. is a Marriage and Family Therapist in Los Angeles. He can be reached at [redacted]@AOL.com. Submitted to The Voice by Dr. Chernin.*

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## A WINDOW ON THE WORLD: GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

By Noel Springwood

I was standing on top of the world. Actually, I was standing at the Window on the World. That's what the sign said and it was right.

Standing on top of the World Trade Center in New York City was a thrill that it's hard to forget. The entire city spread out beneath me like a Lilliputian town. Favourite places that were hours apart in walking distance could be included in less than the span of a hand.

It was windy but silent. The sounds of the traffic had faded far below. This was another world. A world removed and remote. A world that did, indeed, give a new perspective on size and distance and height. In spite of the elevated mass, there was a sense of fragility about it all. Little did I think how soon that fragility would be tested and would fail.

Last month, I stood at the edge of a 16 acre pit: all that remains of the massive structures that had so captured my imagination just a few years before. The pit was close to 10 stories deep and seemingly endless streams of people were silently making their way into it. They didn't expect to find anything, to see anything, to learn anything. They were there to pay tribute to the dead. They were the family, friends, neighbours and curiosity seekers. They were drawn, not by the majestic towers so symbolic of wealth and power. They were there because of what had been lost. They were there because more than concrete, steel and glass had been lost. They were there in a desperate attempt to make some

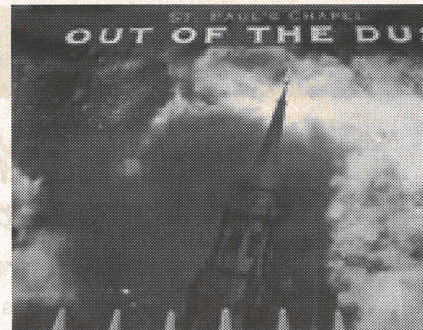
sense out of what has been a senseless loss of human life.

It was hard for me to remember how the twin towers had dominated this area. They were so massive and imposing that they made the streets around them seem much narrower than they were. It was hard for me to imagine the thousands of people fleeing the area as those pillars of power collapsed upon themselves. It was hard to believe that anyone or anything in the vicinity had actually survived the ordeal.

When I was invited to share the anniversary of 9/11 with friends who had lived through it and the ensuing months, I was both humbled and grateful. I knew that from a distance, I would never find the words or expressions that could give them the kind of confidence and encouragement they needed. At the same time, I was fearful of what I might find. So much had changed.

Much had changed. Crossing the border, this time, meant a two dog sniff test. One for drugs and the other for explosives. Add to that the fact that the Eighth Avenue exit from the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York was blockaded by barriers. Cabs could let passengers off there. They couldn't pick up fares. Moreover, there was a battalion of police officers on hand to make sure that no exceptions were made.

In the days of my visit, I learned many things. New York City had, in the preceding year, been turned into an armed fortress. Blockades, snipers, helicopters, military planes, blimps and almost endless sirens



were everywhere. Where bright lights had given the city an almost magical aura, widespread darkness now cloaked and hid the fanciful and diverse architecture of this brave and beautiful place. Most of all, there was a gap. A gap in the skyline and a gap in the topography of lower Manhattan. Especially moving was the sight of St. Paul's, the oldest public building in New York City. Its majestic spire had been destroyed in the September attack.

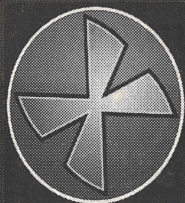
The fence around St Paul's Chapel was covered with silent, fragile and simple tributes and pleas. Some were photos with the word "Missing" in large letters beneath. Some were religious symbols, crude messages scrawled on cloth, paper banners. I fought back the tears as I saw a Canadian flag with the inscription, "From the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of Canada". The tears flowed when I saw another Canadian flag with the emblem of the Metro Toronto Police Force on it. Someone had placed piles of CD's around the area with the simple inscription, "This is my gift to you in memory of 9/11. The few souvenir vendors who dared hawk their wares were sheepish in their calling and largely ignored by the thousands who were there not for souvenirs but for memories.

My friends had only one plea. They wanted some time for themselves. They felt that New Yorkers needed a time and opportunity to grieve. They just wanted a moment when media and curiosity seekers left them alone and let them bring some closure to what had been a terrifying and tragic experience for all.

Yes, as has been said many times, the world has changed since 9/11. At the same time, the citizens of New York City have been all but ignored in the rush to find some kind of relevance and personal interest in the events of that tragic day. The fact that they have lived with sudden and unexplained security measures and seemingly unwarranted and arbitrary diversions and restrictions has, largely, been ignored by the media.

Even President Bush, consummate politician that he is, had managed to use the disaster to bolster his own image and pros-

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pects. Pundits admit that 9/11 was the best thing that could have happened in terms of his failing performance as president.

He only visited New York City once after the disaster. It was a wonderful press and photo opportunity. In a windbreaker and cap, he went no closer to the disaster area than many New Yorkers had already done in the days before it was cordoned off. He never returned. He never made good on the funding he promised to help the city rise from the ashes. He chose to spend his vacations on remote golf courses rather than in the borough of Manhattan, where his presence would have inspired confidence and hope.

The moving ceremony on the anniversary itself was a triumph of simplicity and good taste. Watching with friends in respectful silence, it was hard not to be moved deeply by the eloquent silence that characterized the event. As thousands moved down the ramp to place flowers in and around a primitive and rustic ring created for that purpose, the full impact of the disaster became more and more apparent.

As each name was read, in somber and well-modulated tones, the fragility of human life became ever so much clearer. Two moments, in particular, struck me as especially noteworthy. One was a daughter who read a letter to her father, one of the victims, telling him how much she regretted never telling him how much she loved him. What really moved me though was her voicing of the unvoiced wish of everyone there, "I just hope it didn't hurt too much."

The other moment was the reading of a poem by a young girl in honour of her father. In the poem, she imagined her father speaking to her, reminding her that he was with her "in a hundred winds" and "in every dawn".

By the time the string quartet had performed their impassioned version of the Star Spangle Banner, I had few tears left. The friend I was with, turned to me and said, "Now, it's over. Now, we can get on with our lives. We've had the funeral. The people have had their day."

He was so right. For a year, the people directly effected by 9/11 had been the last to be taken into account. Their city had been commandeered and their sensitivities had been ignored. They had become a notch in some kind of media machination. Their feelings and sensitivities were rarely, if ever, taken into account.

The day before the memorial, one of my friends was obviously disturbed when he came home from work. "They were there again today. The inspectors looking for body parts on the roof of our building. I just want it all to end."

The time has come to lay much to rest, if possible. However, questions of reimbursement, compensation and litigation have arisen. The funeral may indeed be over; but, the fighting is just beginning.

It is hard to put a monetary value on human life. In an attack like 9/11, it is even harder to assign culpability or accountability. One woman is suing the World Trade Center simply because it was there and her son was on one of the planes that crashed into it.

President Bush could not catch up with Osama bin Laden. Now he's after Saddam Hussein. He wants and needs a war to further his own political aspirations. New York City has an apartment vacancy rate rarely seen in this bustling metropolis and rents are plummeting. Broadway Theatres are dark and shows are almost giving tickets away in an attempt to stay afloat. Streets continue to be barricaded and uniformed and plain clothes police are very much in evidence everywhere.

On the eve of the anniversary itself, a clever political ploy gathered over 90 national leaders to Battery Park. They were there to share the eternal flame that is to burn in front of the immense metal sphere that once marked the World Trade Center Plaza. They were there because the leader of the United States of America was supposed to be there among them. Instead, he was on Ellis Island, delivering a speech, summoning the world to war.

The first lady distinguished herself by saying that children should not be allowed to watch the images of the attack. I wonder if she was even aware that the images of the actual collapse of the towers and the people jumping to their deaths prior to that had never been shown in New York City. She added insult to injury by adding the New Yorkers had become much nicer since 9/11. The wonder is how she knew that. She rarely, if ever, had visited the city.

The world has changed. The events of a year ago are gradually being laid to rest.

The repercussions will be felt for some time to come.

The ancient Greeks had a name for it, "Hubris". It meant overconfidence. It meant that overconfidence was a certain road to disaster.

In the light of 9/11, it would be truly tragic if hubris emerged as a motivating force for reprisals. It would be doubly tragic, since evidence is mounting to show that hubris was largely to blame for the disasters already experienced.

Try as we might, there is no real way to make sense out of the tragedy of 9/11. One thing is sure. Compounding the loss and risking lives in a futile war will never fill the gap left by that dark moment in our history. If the President is that bent on going to war, let him lead the charge, aboard an open jeep or amount a white stallion.

Standing on top of the towers provided a wonderful perspective on a vibrant world of human interaction and industry and peace. The real tragedy would be that anyone, especially a respected world leader, standing at the edge of that 16 acre pit could fail to realize how fragile and transient, but precious, that human experience is.

*Noel Springwood served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. A Voice exclusive.*



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## VOICE SPOTLIGHT: LONDON'S OLD SOUTH



### The Ultimate Neighbourhood A place to get to know each other's humanity

By Brad Lister



Stand on a street corner in Wortley Village and you get a sense that you have been transported back in time. Is this really the hustle and bustle of the year 2002? Now to introduce this lovely neighbourhood to those of you who have never been there. The area, which spans from Wellington Road to Wharncliffe Road and from Commissioners Road to the Thames River, is recognized as Old South and the section of Wortley Road near the corners of Craig and Bruce Streets is known as Wortley Village.

*En Route Magazine* dubbed this one of the coolest neighbourhoods. However, it has another special distinction. This writer spent a morning there in search of what makes this neighbourhood a mecca for the LGBT community.

John Balch, of New Millennium Toys and Books and president of the Wortley Village Business Association says, "It's the people who live here who really make this neighbourhood special." He continues, "When we were first making the business plan for this place we were really impressed with the number of people who lived in the area who were in service oriented professions." That included for Balch, teachers, social workers and the like.

Balch also added that the people of Old South have a real reputation for being friendly. This very accepting area, Balch says, seems to bring about a lot of tolerance.

He also noted that since gays and lesbians live here in large numbers than any other group, heterosexuals get to know these people as their first contact to the community. Since people are so close together in the village

they learn to appreciate each other's humanity.

There is so much wonderful social interaction that goes on in Old South and out of all the LGBT groups that happen there

none has made a bigger splash than The GAYS AND LESBIANS OF OLD SOUTH (GLOS)

Derek Scott, a psychotherapist, and founder of GLOS, says of the neighbourhood, "It's fabulous." When he first came here from North York, he really liked the look of the village. The need to start GLOS came out of Scott's discovery of the large numbers of LGBT who resided in this community. With the idea in mind, he went to a meeting of the Old South Community Organization and got the start-up fee of \$100 from them. This money helped to hold the first meeting and cover costs of getting the table at Pride three years ago.

Pride attracted seventy people and thirty-five showed up at the first meeting. With all their various interest, they have developed many sub-groups. Everything from running to cats. GLOS has grown to two hundred and sixty members. Scott says, "many of the members of the group are homeowners and are older, like 35 and up."

For Scott he had noticed that many of the women in the group feel especially safe in this part of the

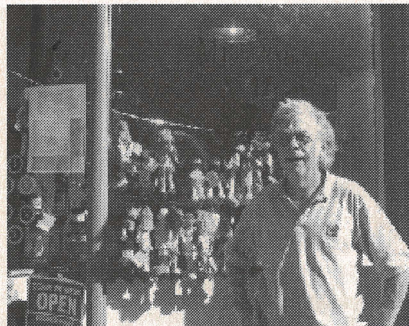
city.

The GLOS have received considerable support in the community. Of course Scott was not too worried. When he first moved here, he noted, "I noticed three stores with rainbow symbols so I wasn't worried."

If you are interested in coming into London Old South is a great place because there is a pre-established gay and lesbian community. In addition, you do not have to live in Old South to be a member of GLOS. What the group has turned into is a perfect friendly alternative to the downtown bar scene.

Brad Lumley, co-owner of "Presents" said, "it has a wonderful small town feeling to it." He actually moved to the area from Toronto with his partner. "This neighbourhood just felt the best."

Well, if you are not convinced yet that Old South and Wortley Village are the places to be, listen to Aaron Wouters, local real-estate agent with Royal Lepage. "*En Route magazine* described the Old South neighbourhood as featuring gorgeous old homes as well as every kind of merchant and shop run as independent





businesses. Residents don't even need a car" That, for Wouters, sums it up as to why it is so popular.

Still not convinced yet? How about this - Wouters added, "It is very popular for the Gay & Lesbian community because of the village feeling you get from being there. It seems everyone knows everyone else, like back in days gone by. With buildings over 100 years old, over 80 small businesses and establishments, and with an abundance of inviting parks, Old South is the only region in London which offers an enticing blend of history, shopping and nature in a few square kilometers."

Diane Gordon, of London Living Reality, calls the neighbourhood, "diversely- filled with young, old and every blend of socio-economic



background. There's an essence of life, a spark." Gays and Lesbians are attracted to this area because it's not like other suburbs where it's Mom, Dad and their two kids. This area is very eclectic and there is

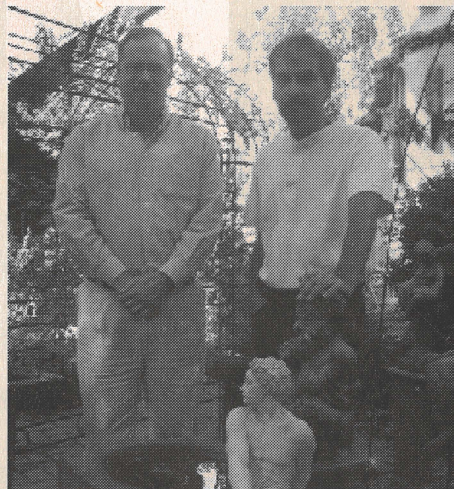
difference. There is so much freedom of expression.

For Doug Huskison, Co-owner of Village Harvest Bakery, the reality of difference really drives home why Old South is so special to him. "We're the only part of London that's open to difference, whether that be cultural differences or gender differences. Neighbours take responsibility for other neighbours."

That is Old South, London. Neighbours looking after neighbours no matter what the difference. There is more than just a sense of

home there, is a strong sense of connectedness and community.

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Brad Lister is a St Thomas/London based writer who can be reached at [redacted]@sympatico.ca. Voice Exclusive Photos by Brad Lister.



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Miss Drew Performs



Annie Drogeny



Miss Drew & her Mom



Ivanna

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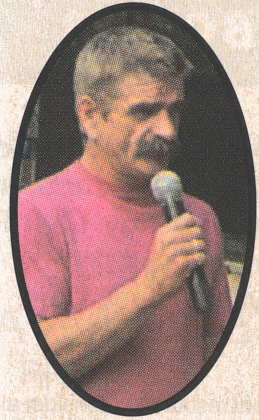
## Kitchener-Waterloo AIDS Walk 2002



**Victoria entertains**



**ACCKWA Executive Director (right) thanks Miss Drew for all her hard work and support for AIDS.**



**Pat Rooth, living with AIDS, shared his experience with those in attendance.**



**The Walk Begins**



**Miss Drew struts her stuff**



**Ribbon cutting to begin the AIDS Walk**



**Muffy & Drew all set to walk for The Voice & Club Ren in tops from Waterloo's "Gloss"**



**Muffy dances up a storm**



**Victoria & Ivanna all set to walk for The Voice & Club Ren in tops from Waterloo's "Gloss"**

**Exclusive Voice Photos  
by A.J. Mahari**

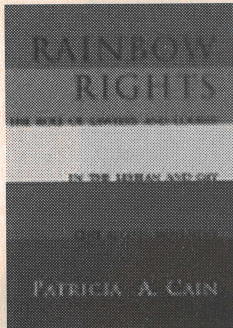


## BOOKS

### Rainbow Rights: The Role of Lawyers and Courts in the Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights Movement

by Patricia A. Cain

An excellent resource to consider alongside the recent political histories of the gay rights movement (such as John Malone's 21st Century Gay and John d'Emilio, William Turner, and Urvashi Vaid's Creating Change), this a uthoritative history and critique offers a detailed examination of the legal advances made in gay civil rights in America over the past 70 years, the strategies used in court, and the alliances and shifts in public policy and opinion that have strengthened these



advances. Cain tracks the meanings of the rainbow as a gay symbol, referring to Judy Grahn's research and of course to the Judy Garland song, but also quoting Gilbert Baker, the San Francisco creator of the rainbow flag, who admired the diversity of the gay community. The book is essential reading for law students, gay rights litigators, and activists.

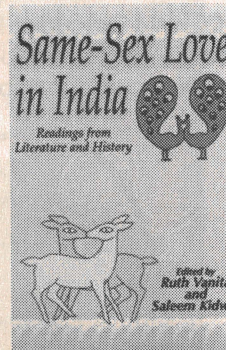
### Same-Sex Love In India: Readings from Literature and History

by Ruth Vanita (Editor), Saleem Kidwai (Editor)

*Same-Sex Love in India* presents a stunning array of writings on same-sex love from over 2000 years of Indian literature.

Translated from more than a dozen different languages it is drawn from Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, and modern fictional traditions.

These writings testify to the long-standing presence of same-sex love in various forms since ancient times, without overt persecution.



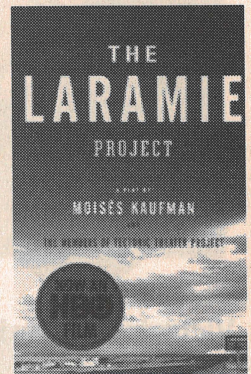
This collection defies both stereotypes of Indian culture and Foucault's definition of homosexuality as a 19th-century invention. Uncovering instead complex discourses of Indian homosexuality, rich with metaphorical traditions to represent it, and the use of names and terms as early as medieval times to distinguish same-sex from cross-sex love.

Selections range from religious books, legal and erotic treatises, story cycles, medieval histories and bio-graphies, along with modern novels, short stories, letters, memoirs, plays and poems.

### The Laramie Project

by Moises Kaufman

Moises Kaufman and his Tectonic Theater Project have written a play documenting the aftermath of the savage killing of Matthew Shepard, including the perspectives of both friends and strangers: The Laramie Project. This innovative theatrical composition, structured not in scenes, but in "moments," addresses the various issues relating to the tragedy of Shepard, a young gay man whose murder has since become a symbol for America's struggle against intolerance. The play promises to move the reader with its authentic portrayal of a small town facing a terrifying event.



### Death of an Angel: The Inside Story of How Justice Prevailed in the San Francisco Dog-Mauling Case

by Joseph Harrington

On January 26, 2001, Diane Whipple was mauled to death by two huge dogs.

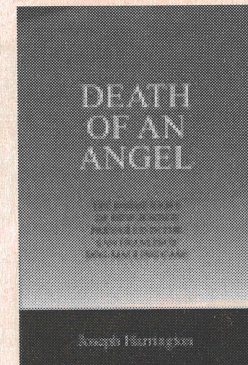
The case fractured into other agendas. Instead of remorse or sympathy by the dog owners, there was arrogance, confrontation, even accusations. Instead of the simple idea of recompense to the life-partner of the victim, there was monolithic silence of civil laws that ignored same-sex relationships.

Media around the world latched onto the story, calling it:

"the dog mauling case"

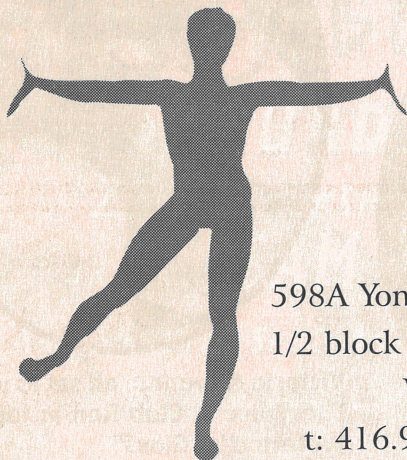
The seriousness of the case was soon apparent. For innumerable talk shows, it posed issues of public safety and the responsibilities of animal lovers. Network television brought the issue of the rights of same-sex partners into national prominence.

As a result of the events related in this book, California Law itself has changed.



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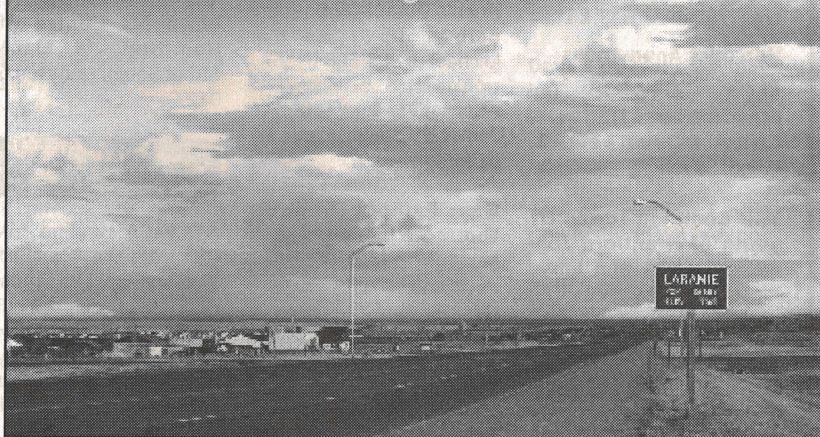
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672-8800

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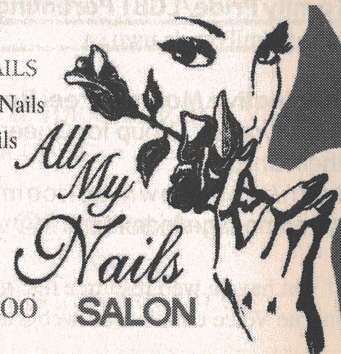
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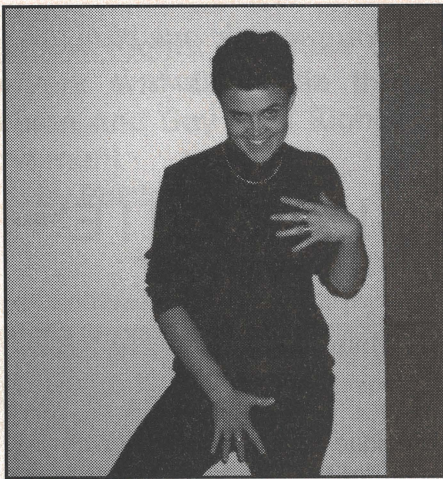
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# VOICE GRILL



**Jean Bastian**

**Occupation:** Work at Club Ren

**Hobbies:** Sports, good times, music

**Sign:** Taurus

**Goals:** Personal success, inner peace and serenity

**Residence:** Originally, Toronto now living in Kitchener

**Fav Quote:** "The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love, and be loved in return" (from "Moulin Rouge")

## Family Internet Resources



**Family Pride/LGBT Parenting Network**  
<http://familypride.uwo.ca>

**Alternative Moms In Peel Region**  
 An Advocacy Group for Queer Moms and their Children.  
<http://hometown.aol.com/reneerchll/myhomepage/index.html>

If you have a web resource that you'd like to list in The Voice email us at: [web@thevoice.on.ca](mailto:web@thevoice.on.ca)

# ONTARIO COMMUNITY LISTINGS

## BRANTFORD(519)

**A Rainbow of Hope** - Brant County HIV/AIDS 753-4937 ext.261

**GBLTAduitsocial/sup- port group of Brantford** and area. Call 752-5132 ext.34

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

**Narcotics Anonymous** -759-2558

**Pine tree Native Centre Of Brant - PFLAG** 752-5132 ext.34.

**The Coalition for GLBT youth of Brantford** 753-4937 ext.261 and leave message.

## CAMBRIDGE(519)

**PFlag** - Sue 650-████

**Sexual Assault Center:** Cambridge..... 658-0551

## GUELPH(519)

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

**GAY FATHERS' SUPPORT GROUP** of Waterloo-Wellington meets the 3rd Monday of every month. Call Jon at 823-████ or Dave at 821-████

**GUELPH QUEER EQ- UALITY** University of Guelph - gqe@uoguelph.ca

**HOWL:** Hanging Out With Lesbians - social group for women (lbt) 25+ Women may contact HOWL through Outline (519) 836-4550 or [howlgroup@hotmail.com](mailto:howlgroup@hotmail.com).

**OUTline:** the University of Guelph. Call 836-4550.outline@uoguelph.ca

**Rainbow Chorus:** Choir and hosts LGBT dances.

Bob Miller at 584-████ or Colleen at 836-████

**Women For Sobriety** - drug & alcohol addiction support group Marilyn at 823-████

## HAMILTON(905)

**Alcoholics Anonymous--** (905) 522-8399.

**Alice's Dinner Club** - Joan/ Barb at 905-318-████ or Michael at 905-528-████

**Alternatives for Youth-** 126 James St. South, Hamilton - 527-████

**Gay Fathers Support Group-**3rd Tuesday of each month. Call 522-████

**Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association** (905) 526-████

**GLBT Centre at McMaster** -(905) 525-9140, Ext. 27397 e-mail:[gibt@mso.mcmaster.ca](mailto:gibt@mso.mcmaster.ca)

**Hamilton Aids Network** 135 Rebecca Street 528-0854

**Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group** 905-526-1074, toll-free 1-888-338-8278  
[info@gomorrahhs.com](mailto:info@gomorrahhs.com)

**Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF)** - 528-0207 ext.43, or e-mail: [htspsg@gto.net](mailto:htspsg@gto.net)

**Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police--General Assistance:** 546-4925 Jane Mulkewich, GLBT Task Force 546-4910

**Kindred Spirits** - lesbians and bi-sexual women 541-████

**LGBT Youth Social Group** 905-528-0207 ext. 66

**Narcotics Anonymous** (905) 522-0332

**PFLAG** -- 662-████

**Sexual Assault Center:** Hamilton.....525-4162

**Sexual Health Infor- mation** - 905-528-5894

**Street Health Centre** Wesley Centre 777-7852

**The Golden Horseshoe Leather Association** - Men interested in the Leather/ Denim lifestyle. 549-████

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

## KITCHENER(519)

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

**Anselma House:** A crisis shelter for 24 hour crisis line: 742-5894

**BMC (Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian & Gay Concerns):** Colleen at 836-████

**Gay Men's Group:** social group for men of all ages and orientations. Gordon 747-████

**K-W Distress Line** - 745-1166

**KWFriends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling** call Paul at 579-████

**PFlag** - Evie at 742-████

**Sexual Assault Center:** KW.....741-8633

**The Rainbow Par- enting Network** - A forum for GLBT parents, parents-to-be, 743-████

**Tri-Youth Pride** - Gail - 743-████

**YouthDiscussion Group:** ages 16-25, 570-3687



# ONTARIO COMMUNITY LISTINGS

## LONDON(519)

**AIDS Committee of London**  
- 388 Dundas St. Unit 120  
434-1601

**Forest City Bears** -Check  
out our website for  
membership info and  
events.  
[www.gaycanada.com/  
fcbears/](http://www.gaycanada.com/fcbears/)

**Gay and Lesbian Alumni of  
The University of Western  
Ont** - 432-████

**GLB Student Affairs - U of  
Western Ontario**  
661-████

**GLOS - Gays and Lesbians  
of Old South.**  
[www.complus.net/glos](http://www.complus.net/glos)

**HIV Care Program:**646-  
6207

**Homophile Association of  
London (HALO)**  
388 Dundas St. 433-████

**London Pride Committee -**  
388 Dundas St. Suite 210  
433-3551 ext 3

**MCC- 645-████**

## NIAGARA(905)

**LGB Youth Line**  
1-888 679-6884

## ST. CATHARINES(905)

**AIDS Niagara - 111 Church  
St.** 984-8684

**Friends of Dorothy Dance  
Committee - 988-████**

**Gay & Lesbian Alliance**  
984-████

**Narcotics Anonymous**  
(905) 685-0075

## STRATFORD(519)

**AIDS Action Committe of  
Perth County - 86 John St.  
S.** 272-2437

**Down The Street - 30 On-  
tario St.** 273-████

## TORONTO(416)

**Affirm United - 466-████**

**Aids Committee Toronto  
Hotline - 340-8844**

**Amnesty International  
Members for LGBT Con-  
cerns - 469-2100 ext. 264**

**Equality For Gays and  
Lesbians Everywhere**  
(EGALE) - Laurie Aaron,  
532-████

**Canadian Gay and Lesbian  
Archives - 777-2755**

**Central Toronto Youth  
Services - 924-2100**

**Coalition of the Support of  
Lesbian and Gay Rights in  
Ontario - Box 822, Stn. A.  
Toronto, Ont., M5W 1G3,  
405-8253**

**CounterPoint Community  
Orchestra - 658-████**

**Gay Fathers of Toronto -**  
410-████

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

**Gay Partner Abuse Project**  
876-████

**Hassle Free Health Clinic**  
922-0603

**Metropolitan Commu-  
nity Church - 406-6228**

**Ontario Gay and Lesbian  
Chamber of Commerce**  
410-1174

**Out! Spoken Advocacy**  
927-████

**Pride Information**  
927-7433

**Rainbow Ballroom Dance  
Club - 363-████ or 534-  
████**

**Rainbow Voices of To-  
ronto - 944-████**

**The 519 Church St.  
Community Centre -392-  
6874.** Community informa-  
tion, support groups, anti-  
violence programme, the  
AIDS Memorial.

[www.the519.org](http://www.the519.org)

## WATERLOO(519)

**First Unitarian Congrega-  
tion of Waterloo**  
96 Dunbar Road South  
742-0432

**Gays & Lesbians of Water-  
loo - (GLOW) University of  
Waterloo - Peer support &  
info line & Coming Out  
Discussion groups 884-4569**

**Global: . Wilfrid Laurier  
University LGBT support.  
Laurier Peer Help Line 884-  
PEER.  
00global@mach1.wlu.ca**

**Westminster United  
Church (an affirming congre-  
gation): 543 Beachwood Dr.**

## WINDSOR(519)

**ACW Youthline - 973-7671**

**Aids Committee of Wind-  
sor - 973-0222**

**GLBT Book Club**  
973-████

**Lesbian and Gay Council -**  
973-████

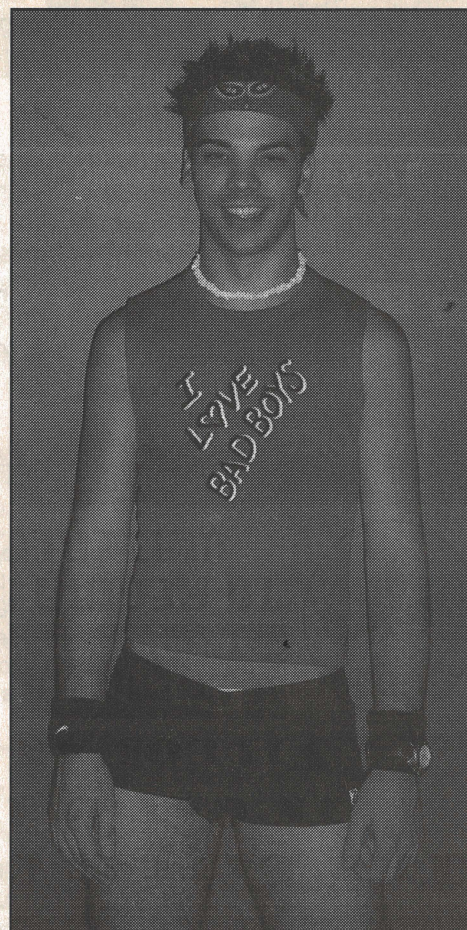
**MCC - 977-████**

**Organization of LG Stu-  
dents University of Wind-  
sor - 253-████**

**PFlag - 973-████**



# VOICE BOY



**Dennis Gomes**

**Age: 23**

**Residence: Kitchener**

**Goals: Management**

**Sign: Leo**

**Hobbies: working out, friends,  
dancing at Club Ren**

**Future Plans: To find that someone  
special**

Want to be a Voice Boy or a Voice  
Grrll? Email us at:

[vboy@thevoice.on.ca](mailto:vboy@thevoice.on.ca)

or

[vgrll@thevoice.on.ca](mailto:vgrll@thevoice.on.ca)



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# THE VOICE

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**Waterloo North Mazda** - 115 Northfield Dr. Waterloo, 519-746-1666

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598A Yonge St. Toronto, 416-961-4161

### Words Worth Books

100 Kings St. S., Uptown Waterloo, 884-2665. "Independent minds support independent book stores"

## Counselling

**DeMers, Norm MASC. (Psychology)**, Individual and couple, depression, self-esteem, grief, inner critic, etc; LGBT positive, 35 years experience. 115 Norfolk, Guelph. (519)823-████

**Susan Cox, MASC. (psychology)** - Individual and couple counselling, LGBT positive - anger management, 279 Weber St. N., Waterloo, 519-747-████

## Entertainment

**Generation X Alternative Video and Media**, 10 Regina St. N., Waterloo, 888-GENX

**Club Renaissance** - 24 Charles St. W., Kitchener, 570-2406. Toll free 1-877-635-2352

## Legal

**Jean-Paul Pilon**, Barrister and Solicitor, Notary Public, 245 Frederick Street, Kitchener. 519-885-████

## Real Estate

**Paul D. Curzon**, Associate Broker/RRS/CRS Re/max Twin City Realty Inc. 842 Victoria St. N., Kitchener. 519-579-████ (Off/Pgr)

**Alan Goetz**, Sales Rep., Re/max Twin City Realty Inc. 519-885-████, toll free - 1-877-450-████ kwhomes4sale.com

## Restaurants/Cafes

**Muses Cafe**, 10 King St. E., Kitchener. 519-742-3087. "Because Vegetarians taste better!"

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## PERSONALS

**54 year old lesbian** needs out-going group of women to enjoy movies, dining and theatre with. I'm just looking for social company.

Reply to ad L-1

**45 year old single white lesbian** looking for a soul-mate 35-55 years of age with substance, physically, spiritually and intellectually. I like movies, dining, reading, the simple things, quiet times, animals and fun. I am a proud fat dyke. Hoping to find that someone special to have a long-term relationship with.

Reply to Ad L-2

**72 year old single white lesbian** seeks companion 65-75 preferably in London, Ont., I am retired, not into the bar scene, looking for company in conversation, over coffee, walking, on day trips, etc. I am hoping for a warm hand and a compatible soul with a dash of whimsy, a sense of humour, and a taste for some mild adventure.

Reply to ad L-3

**22 year old bi woman** looking for other bi women to party with. New to the area. Love to dine, drink and dance!

Reply to ad BW-1

## PERSONALS

**Fun guy, 24**, looking for, well, fun! New around here so I sure could use a tour. If you'd like to meet to talk or whatever please write.

Reply to Ad G-1

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Reply to Ad G-2

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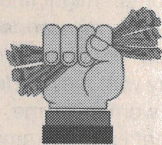
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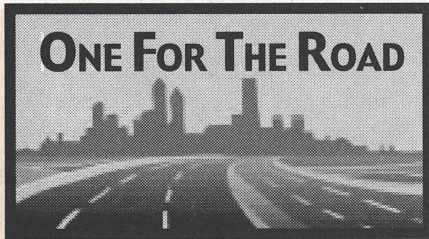
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**“In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” - Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)**

Shouldn't transsexuals, male-to-female, female-to-male, or even transgender for that matter be allowed to be who they know they are?

Do they have the right to be who they know they are?

*Are we talking Transphobia? Are its roots even deeper than Homophobia?* There are those who ask, 'How can people claim to be women when they have male parts?' There are those who say, 'If you aren't born and raised a woman, you have no idea what it's really like to be a woman in this world.' It is postulated, 'A woman is a woman', and, 'a man is a man, and, 'a lesbian is a lesbian', and 'a lesbian is not someone with a penis'. (Dyke Rant, September 2002)

As the male-to-female, post-hormone, pre-operative, transsexual featured in The Voice's August 2002 'Lesbian Lives: A Transsexual Lesbian's Story', I would like to endeavour to respond to some of these questions and GLB (and heterosexual, one of the few areas they all seem to share in common) viewpoints on transsexual self-determination.

How deeply is our felt/known gender linked with our biological sex or psychological intellectual functioning?

The author, Hilary Albertson, says she is a "born and raised woman with the right plumbing."

'If you aren't born and raised a woman, you have no idea what it's really like to be a woman in this world.' This statement, on its own, is perfectly true. I did not have the good fortune to be born and raised a woman thus to have those experiences.

'How can people claim to be women when they have male parts?' Again a statement rightly true on its own merit. I had not been born blessed with the virtue of the distinct feminine sexual form.

*How then can I claim to be a woman?* In my own extended family, an aunt had the misfortune of needing total mastectomies and a total hysterectomy. She lived for almost ten years afterwards, but never felt any less a woman, saying it was what was inside her head that was where everything important about being a woman came from.

There is no doubt that being raised, seen and accepted as female gives unquestioned undoubted sociological certainty of being female. But how much of that conviction resides within the brain. I knew a woman who was born the only girl of six siblings without a mother but only her father, she was raised, dressed, treated, played, worked and nicknamed no differently from her brothers. But she never doubted that she was a woman.

In stories of hermaphrodites (bi-gendered, intersexed), born with both male and

knew that I was a boy by genitalia and societies perception of me, but, I also knew, without a doubt, that I was female, and that I should have been a girl.

Medical studies have attested that male and female brains react differently from each other. Medical studies have also confirmed that the brains of transsexuals function like the opposite sex of their bodies.

'A lesbian is not someone with a penis'. I cannot deny the biology of my physical birth sex, but my brain does. I may have a penis but not from the want of it. I may have a penis but I don't use it for its sexual purpose. I may be 'tits with a penis in the middle' (a quote I've heard in reference to me), and while even the Garden of Eden had its snake, this Eve will never bite the apple, and will some day shed the snake of its skin.

Of those 'few' who are either too afraid, or too perverse to reveal their true pre-op transsexual selves at the start of a possible relationship, I can only say they should be despised at worst, or pitied at best. I apologize for them; they shame the rest of us.

Myself, I have always revealed the truth of my physical past before the start of any possible relationship. And I had believed for a long time that no lesbian would ever want to have anything to do with me, that at best all I could hope for was that a bisexual woman might find me appealing.

My life-mate, my partner, the woman who proclaimed her love for me in a Union Ceremony with me, my lesbian love, found only the woman in me, and felt only the lesbian that I am. My small circle of friends also know and respect me for the lesbian woman that I am. I a woman in their eyes. I a woman in my eyes.

There are femme lesbians, lipstick lesbians, butch lesbians, stone lesbians and more lesbian synonyms and sub-cultures than I ever once realized.

I, and we transsexual lesbians, are a part of all that. We have no want, desire or need to deny, steal, or cheat any part of your 'lesbian-ness', culture, or place from you. We only wish to live the reality of our lesbian identification with whomever is willing to know, share, accept, and partake of it with us.

-- Roberta Robinson, Kitchener

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female genital organs, those whose male doctors made the arbitrary decision to medically operate and make them male, despite being raised as males many later had corrective surgery to give them back their true female sexual gender.

Transsexuals, both MTF and FTM know psychologically that they are in truth the opposite gender, than their physical sex. I



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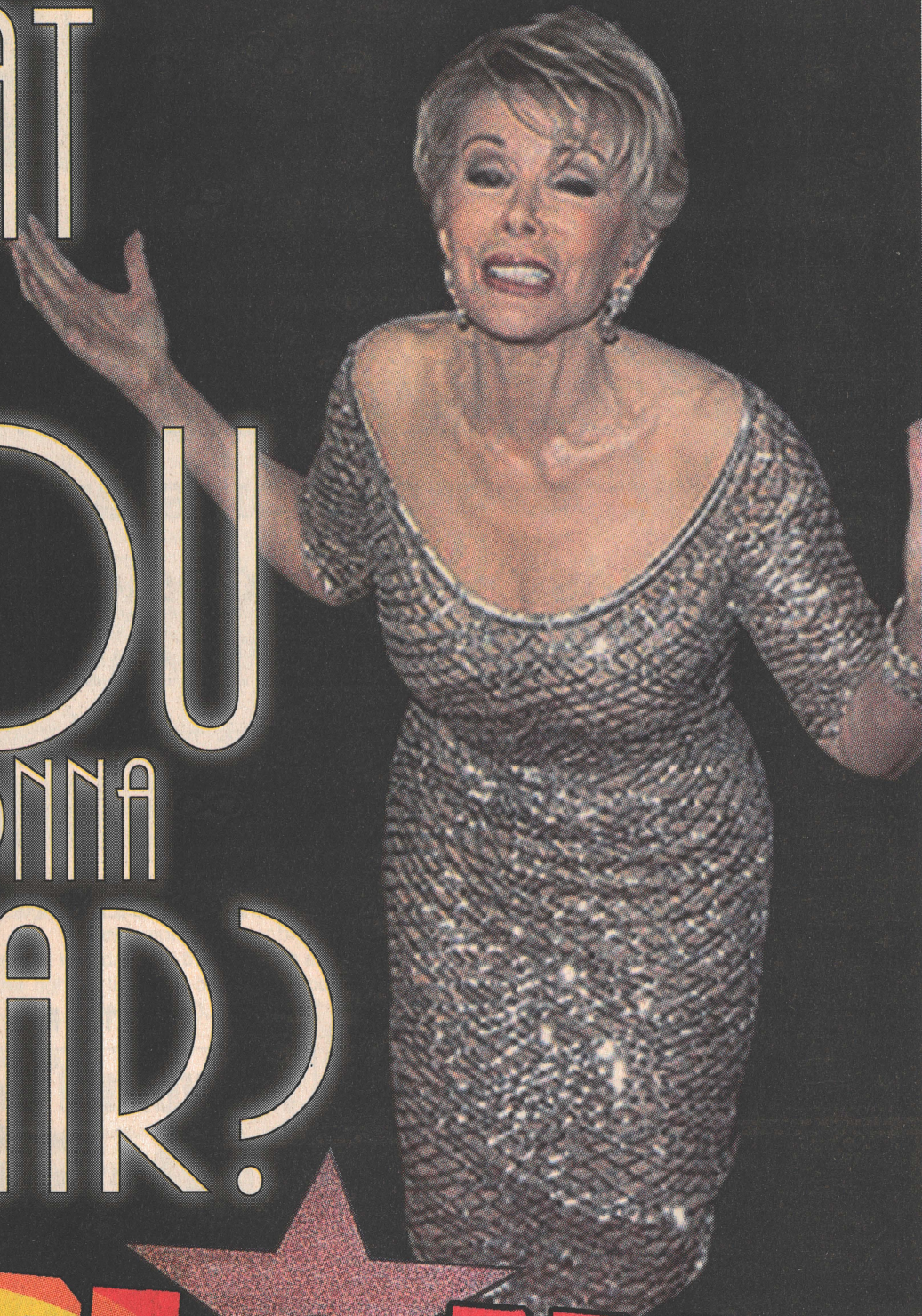
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