

VANCOUVER
PWA
COALITION

Newsletter

"One Starry Night"

The stars will be out for "One Starry Night" a gala benefit for the Persons With AIDS Coalition, at the Mainstage of the Arts Club Theatre on Granville Island, Sunday, November 9th, at 8:00 p.m.

Many of Vancouver's finest talent will be on hand to provide an evening of music, comedy, and dance. Among the celebrities are: Jane Mortifee, Simon Webb, Kate Hammett Vaughan, Ferron, Billy Gene, and the ever-popular cast of Ain't Misbehavin' and Sex Tips for Modern Girls. Once again the fabulous, entertaining and wonderful Bill Monroe will be our host for this gallant occasion.

We will also be having a raffle of some top quality art work, beauty make-overs (don't you love it!!), dinners for two, and lots more.

Tickets are now on sale for \$15.00 at Little Sisters, Doll & Penny's, The Arts Club Theatre (for reservations call 687-1644), and the Vancouver Persons With AIDS Coalition office at 1170 Bute Street, and at the Castle Pub.

Your presence that evening will help to ensure the benefit's success. See you there.

Government Halts Hospice Plan

On Wednesday morning, Oct 15/86 the Provincial Government effectively destroyed months and months of hard work by the AIDS Vancouver hospice committee to create a hospice, for AIDS patients in Vancouver.

In the 'eleventh hour' of negotiations the Ministry of Health, without any prior indication, refused to except the proposal to develop an AIDS hospice program in Vancouver. No adequate explanations were given from Victoria.

We feel that the Hospice Committee was effectively 'led down the garden path' by the provincial government. In all levels of planning for the hospice officials from the Provincial Health Ministry were present. They helped us to write up the proposal and gave us every encouragement that the government was supportive of the hospice concept. The Hospice Committee had gone so far as to pick out the facility, located in the south Granville area, place a deposit to purchase the property, start looking for a skilled executive director and had even started looking at applications from AIDS patients who needed this facility. This callous act of the government in rejecting a Vancouver AIDS Hospice shows the lack of understanding that the government has of our needs. It also shows a lack of respect and compassion for us as AIDS patients. We have the right to live and die with dignity - the hospice would have helped with that right.

If you are unhappy with the government's action then please phone them and demand answers.

Joyce McKay, Executive Director of
Continuing Care, Victoria.
1 387-2285

Stan Dubas, Deputy Minister of Health
Victoria.
1 387-5394 or 387-3166

Ian Smith, Public Relations, Ministry of
Health
1 - 387-2169

Hospice in Switzerland

A man who travels frequently between Vancouver and Switzerland has offered his home and his care to someone with AIDS. He is a nurse experienced in hospice care, although he has not cared for an AIDS patient before. He came twice to our office to talk about this offer. He is a man in his 40s, and seems sincere. His home is in a town near Zurich and Bern. He will pay your transportation to Switzerland, and probably a visit back here once a year. There is no cost to you for his care. This is a very generous offer. If you want more information, please contact the Coalition for his address, so you can correspond with him yourself.

Margo's Workshop

Visualization for AIDS and ARC was the topic Friday evening. Eight people attended the workshop to hear Margo Adair teach her technique. I was there hoping to hear some new ideas to spice up the meditating I do already, or to hear Margo confirm the merit of techniques I had been taught by other meditation practitioners.

During the three hour workshop we meditated twice. The rest of the time was talk. I found Margo's explanation of how to visualize too vague. She gave no examples of the kinds of pictures one might hold in mind when visualizing.

Since half the participants had not meditated before there should have been some discussion of the goals and benefits of the practice.

There was nothing I heard that I would call specialized for AIDS or ARC. I was disappointed. Too much talk. Too little practical instruction. But don't take my word for all this. There were two people at the workshop who were excited by what they were hearing. You can borrow her tapes and handbook from our library and decide for yourself.

AZT Update

We are still hoping the AZT (Azidothymidine) will soon be available for clinical trials in Vancouver. Dr. Alistair McLeod will be in charge of the trials in our city. Dr. McLeod says that the drug has been released for study in Canada by the Burroughs and Wellcome Co. They are waiting for 'distribution' problems to be worked out before starting up the trials. Maybe another month of waiting but there does seem to be light at the end of the tunnel.

We have made contact with the AZT testing program being conducted at the Harbour View Medical Center in Seattle, Washington. The medical director of the AZT program, Dr. Anne Collier, did not think there would be much of a problem getting Canadians accepted on the AZT trials. She did say that there were several things to be considered though.

- 1) The AIDS AZT testing program will only accept patients who have had only one case of PCP (pneumocystis carinii pneumonia) Anyone with more than one case or any other opportunistic disease do not qualify.
- 2) You would have to check in once a week for the first 8 weeks for blood work and to pick up your medication, then report in every 2 weeks for the next 3 months and once a month after that.
- 3) You are not allowed to take any other medication while on AZT.
- 4) Side effects may include a drop in the white blood cell count and anemia. (some patients have been reported to have needed blood transfusions)
- 5) Their program will pay for
 - the cost of the drug
 - laboratory costs
 - doctor fees (seems to good to be true)

If you are interested and fit the criteria, (one case of PCP) the contact person at Harbour View Medical Center is Jennifer Jenkins, study co-ordinator, 1 - 206 - 223-3590 or Dr. Anne Collier, Medical Director of AZT Trials, 1 - 206 223-4760

AZT continued.....

For those that do not fit the study type, there may be another option in the U.S.A.

American doctors can apply to the U.S. government for the release of the AZT drug on compassionate grounds for use by their patients. Doctors should call a toll free number in the U.S. 800 - 843-9388 for more information. You may try to get a U.S. doctor and go this route!

BHT as an anti-viral?

An article in the San Francisco Sentinel reports that some people with AIDS/ARC are using BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene), a food preservative in common commercial use, as a possible anti-viral treatment. Though no medical uses for BHT have been officially approved; it has been used by many people for controlling herpes, (check "Life Extension" by Pearson and Shaw). In laboratory studies it has been found effective against many lipid coated viruses, including herpes, CMV, and Newcastle Disease virus; this gives rise to speculation as to its possible effect on HIV, which is also a lipid coated virus.

Among BHT's advantages are its ready availability, low cost, and few side effects. It comes in crystal form which can either be dissolved in vegetable oil or be placed into gelatine capsules. Most people take no more than 1 gram daily, having progressed to that point in gradually increasing doses.

Like any course of treatment, it is **not** to be taken lightly; there are contraindications such as hepatitis or liver damage, among others; and some people do have side effects, although usually of a minor nature. However as an easy, cheap, and relatively low risk possible course of treatment, it bears looking into. For access to the original article and other information, contact the office.

Neuropsychological Study of AIDS/ARC

Ongoing Events

Sunday nights: Healing Circle. Open to P.W.A.s, friends and supporters. An hour of relaxation, visualization, and sharing of healing energy. It's from 7:30 to 8:30, at the VGLCC, 1170 Bute St. For details: call the Coalition.

Tuesday nights: P.W.A.s' meetings. Every other meeting is closed to P.W.A.s. Other meetings are open, and feature guests with backgrounds in alternative therapies.

Schedule for coming weeks:

- Nov. 4th.: open. Dr. Chatwin, chiropractor.
- Nov. 11th.: closed to P.W.A.s.
- Nov. 18th.: open. Guest to be announced.
- Nov. 25th.: closed to P.W.A.s.

Tuesday night meetings take place at St. Paul's Hospital, Comox Building, Room LM-5 (basement). It's from 7:30 to 8:30pm.

Wednesday and Friday nights: Tai-Chi classes. Learn the ancient chinese "meditation in motion". You may join the class at any time. Open to all. From 7:30 to 9:30, at the VGLCC, 1170 Bute St. Call the Coalition for details.

N.B.: admission is free to all ongoing events.

Services

Legal services: free consultations available to P.W.A.s and P.W.A.R.C.s. Call the Coalition for details.

Alternative therapies: you want to see a practitioner, attend a workshop or follow a treatment that you think might help you to stay or get well? The Coalition will help you, up to a maximum of \$200.

Resources: the Coalition has a certain amount of audio tapes, video tapes and documents that might help you to cope with your situation, or might provide you with the information you're looking for, about treatments, drugs, diet, alternative therapies, etc... Feel free to ask us.

It's no secret that some of us have trouble with our thought process; concentration, memory and learning, among others, may be impaired to some degree or other. This could be from any number of factors from emotional stress, to side effects of drugs, to direct involvement of HIV in the brain.

Research in this vital area is still in the beginning stages; and one of the people involved in it is Francine Sarazin, M.Ps. from the University of Victoria.

Persons with AIDS/ARC are needed to take part in the study, which consists of, among other things, interviews, memory tests, motor co-ordination tests, etc. Practical benefits of taking part in the study can range from identifying any problem areas and their causative factors, to contributing to research which may benefit others.

For more information, call Ms. Sarazin at 381-0472 (Victoria), collect calls accepted. Or leave a message at Dr. Jaime Smith's office 687-7924, or call the Coalition office.

On the Lighter Side

You've heard of girl groups, like the "Flanelettes" and the "Bovines"? Well, we heard that a P.W.A. wants to start a new group: the "Pneumocysters"...

Baba Taavi's Spiritual Corner

On the great spiritual path of life, you will finally discover your true self, and when that takes place you will also discover what your friends have had to put up with all this time.