



ISSUE # 16 JANUARY 1988

# Newsletter

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE UPDATE

### Group plans spring retreat

The Program Committee has been meeting on a weekly basis over the last couple of months. New members have joined the Committee, which is an expansion of what we used to call the 'Holistic Committee'. Some activities are being planned; the healing circle resumes January 10th and a 3 day out of town retreat will be held around the end of February.

Our library is being revamped. We now have a complete list of books, audio and video tapes, with new purchases being made. (suggestions welcome!) Tuesday night meetings will continue in 1988. Meetings are still held at St. Paul's but in a different room...see schedule, last page.

Another recent task has been to make a list of all programs covered by the Committee. The list includes: support meetings, retreats, workshops, peer counselling, drop-in centre, library, newsletter, group activities, preparation of a manual for newly diagnosed people and more.

The Committee is open to all suggestions of projects, workshops, one day trips, out of town trips, etc..The Committee is open to people who want to join. You may want to be involved with a specific program, or at the committee level. Any help is much appreciated.

Any person seeking for information about the Committee and our programs may get in touch with me at the office (683-3381).

Benoit Lanthier, for the Program Committee

NEW POLICIES FOR MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Due to the continued growth of the PWA Coalition, we are in the process of formalizing our membership policy. At its meeting of Dec. 3/87, the Coalitions Board of Directors adopted a three tiered membership policy, presented as follows:

## 1) Member:

- open to persons with AIDS or ARC who are B.C. residents
- full voting privileges at general meetings
- eligible for financial assistance
- access to resource information
- no membership fees
- receives monthly Newsletter by mail

## 2) Associate Member:

- open to anyone interested in supporting the work of the Coalition
- open to persons with AIDS or ARC who are not B.C. residents
- receives Newsletter by mail
- access to resource information
- no membership fee
- no voting privileges

## 3) Group Member:

- ideal for organizations wishing to support the Coalition
- access to resource information
- receives Newsletter by mail
- no membership fee
- no voting privileges

This new membership policy will be explained and discussed at the next annual general meeting of the Coalition to be held January 16th, 1988. Though our membership is now open to groups and to people who don't have AIDS or ARC, only persons with AIDS or ARC will retain voting privileges. However, this change leads to a new policy for financial assistance.

From now on, persons with AIDS/ARC will be asked to become members of the Coalition in order to receive funds for holistic health/alternate therapies. Beyond that the financial assistance policy remains the same until review:

- a PWA/PWARC who is a member of the Coalition is entitled to get up to one thousand (\$1,000.00) dollars a year for health related activities not covered by government or private agencies. This total can be received in amounts of not more than \$200 a month.

To be a full member of the Coalition and have access to financial assistance, you only have to be a person with AIDS/ARC. There is no mandatory involvement in the Coalition's activities and programs. However, we encourage all PWA/PWARC's to become actively involved in the Coalition. Our experience tells us that being active can improve the quality of life. One last point: The Coalition's Board of Directors recently adopted motions to further protect the confidentiality of members, and actions are being taken to protect confidential material to the best of our abilities. Membership forms have been mailed to PWA/PWARC's. Call 683-3381 if you do not receive one.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

The Vancouver Persons With AIDS Coalition would like to address you on the recent passing of Bill 34, the controversial Amendments to the Health Act.

As people with AIDS, we have watched, with growing concern and apprehension, as Bill 34 was presented to the Legislative Assembly. We are more than aware of the rhetoric, both for and against, that has surrounded this issue. As much as is possible, for people in our situation, we have tried to be objective and realistic in our approach to this legislation. But the Amendments are now an established fact. The Social Credit government, with its majority in the House, can basically do what it wishes, regardless of the possible ramifications to HIV infected people in this province. We, in the Coalition, may be realists, but as people with AIDS we are far from happy with this legislation!

People with AIDS live in an uncertain world - to wake up each morning is a marvel and to make it through the day an achievement. A world that was once safe and secure now seems obsessed by fear and misunderstanding. To accept your legislation demands from us an act of faith - can we trust you? A simple word but one that has great significance to people with AIDS.

As elected members of the Legislative Assembly, we are certain that this legislation was motivated by your desire to safeguard the general public from the 'terror' of AIDS, real or only imagined. May we remind you that civic responsibility works both ways. Just because persons with AIDS have a disease does not mean that they have forfeited their rights as citizens of this province. We now charge you, as our elected members, with the moral responsibility to remember us, to remember that we too have rights, all too easy to overlook in the rush for public safety.

If you scoff at our alarm of possible abuse of this legislation or think us foolish to fear senseless quarantine in B.C. then take a moment to question the survivors of the Nazi concentration camps, or better yet and closer to home, ask Japanese-Canadians if in their wildest dreams they could have conceived of the bleak holding camps in the Rockies during the 1940's, then maybe our fears are not so groundless after all.

History has the annoying habit of repeating itself. The Vancouver Persons With AIDS Coalition will try to ensure that it does not repeat itself in British Columbia.

The public has indulged itself long enough in Stephen King-like nightmares about the possible horrors of AIDS. But the facts about AIDS simply don't fit the imagined nightmare. The disease is harder to catch than most people think and there are no recorded cases of casual contact. Enough information about the disease exists that people who educate themselves need never worry about catching it. As for people with AIDS, we are your sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters - we are just like you and we struggle valiantly for survival in a world that stacks the odds against us. Our only crime is to be ill!

The time has come for society to replace its fear and ignorance with a little compassion and understanding. As members of the Legislative Assembly it may now be time to balance the Amendments to the Health Act with amendments to the Provincial Human Rights Code.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

The P.W.A. Coalition is extremely pleased for Brian Peel, who has just recently been appointed Executive Director of AIDS Vancouver.

Brian has always led a very important role with P.W.A.'s, and has certainly been of great asset to the Coalition.

We look forward to working with Brian in his new position and wish him every success.

## McLAREN HOUSE OFFERS ALTERNATIVE

McLaren House is low-cost independent housing for PWA's and PWArc's. The house is a five bedroom home in the Shaughnessy neighbourhood with privacy and beautiful grounds. The house has two kitchens and two living spaces which makes for a non-crowded feeling. Common areas are fully furnished and individual bedrooms could be furnished if needed. So if you are a PWA or PWArc and are spending too much of your income on rent and feel that you can live in a group environment, please call Michael Welsh at A.I.D.S. Vancouver, 687-2437. As of this printing there is room available at the House.

## SOME QUALIFY FOR DEDUCTION

It is approaching that time of year once again when we must all deal with Revenue Canada, Taxation. There is an allowable deduction for all qualified individuals who are disabled in accordance with the Income Tax Act (paragraph 110 (1)(e)). Please note that if you are in receipt of the disability pension from either Canada Pension or Provincial Social Services and Housing you are not necessarily qualified. The form is filled out by both the individual involved and their physician. It is a one time application only. The form involved (T2201) is available to be picked up at the Coalition office.

Finance Committee

HOLISTIC ENERGY GROUP:

Dr. Richard Stern has invited men or women (these would be separate groups) interested in energy balancing to form a mini-group (4-7 people). The intent of the energy work is to bring people into an awareness of the subtle energy fields and the fact that we really do extend beyond our physical boundaries. This experimental workshop is based on the work of Dr. Brugh Joy (author of "Joy's Way") with whom Richard and Linda Stern have done extensive training. Richard uses music to facilitate a warm atmosphere in which to do this energy work. The energy-balancing affects your endocrine system and an increase sense of aliveness and more harmonious physical feeling is experienced immediately. Please call the office at 683-3381, or Dr. Richard Stern 731-6552. These sessions would be covered by our medical plans so no charge to us would be involved. They commence in January, 1988.

Frankh

SPIRITUAL CORNER

.....Radiating love and caring, again expanding those feelings of warmth and kindness further and further outward to include all the beings in this building, in the neighbourhood, all beings in the city. Radiating lovingkindness to all beings near and far, beings who are suffering, who are being born, who are dying, beings who are ill. Radiating the sense of lovingkindness to each person, not dependant on our relationship to them.....

May you be happy

May you be peaceful

May your heart open

May you be free from suffering

.....Feel the energy of that lovingkindness radiate to all beings. Continually expanding the circle of loving energy until it includes all beings without exclusion. All beings everywhere.

A Vipassana Meditation

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**REIKI:** Is a gentle yet powerful healing art, useful in the management of any state of dis-ease, that is currently being offered to Coalition members. For more information or to set up treatment, contact Greig or Sharon at 683-3381.

## ONGOING EVENTS

### MONDAY : BUSINESS MEETING: 11:30 a.m.

Open to all PWA/PWARC's. This is the best way to share responsibilities and decisions of the Coalition. Meetings are held in the Coalition office at 1170 Bute.

### TUESDAY: SELF-SUPPORT GROUP: 7:30 - 8:30 pm. on alternate tuesdays.

Open to PWA/PWARC's only. Discussion surrounds concerns held by the group at the time of the meeting. There is no specific topic, just a chance to talk.

### TUESDAY : HOLISTIC THERAPY : 7:30 - 8:30 pm. on alternate Tuesdays.

All tuesday night meetings are currently held in Room LM-6, Comox Building, St. Paul's Hospital. Beginning Tuesday, January 5th all support group meetings will be held in Room 127, Main Floor of the Comox Building, at St. Paul's Hospital.

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### HEALING CIRCLE RETURNS:

The Sunday evening Healing Circle will return as of January 10th, 1988, in Room 113 of the Comox Building, at St. Paul's Hospital. Starting time is 7:30 p.m.

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### WORLDWIDE PRAYER:

Each day at 7pm. a world wide moment of prayer and meditation is being held for PWA/PWARC's . All over the world (7 pm in each time zone) people are joining together in one spirit and one mind to end the AIDS crisis, each in their own way. We ask people of faith, to pray, and those that practice meditation or visualization to meditate and visualize. We ask all people to take this moment to be of one spirit and of one humanity. These moments are co-sponsored by the Metaphysical Alliance and the AIDS Interfaith Network. Let in the light.

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### PERSONAL NOTES:

Apartment to share: Friendly Dutch Canadian Gay White Male has a comfortable one bedroom suite to share. I have ARC, and would like to share with same. Pool, Sauna, central location, reasonable rent. Please call 682-6943.