



Newsletter

FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

An encouraging group of about 35 members gathered at Gordon House on Saturday afternoon, January 16th for the First Annual general meeting of the P.W.A. Coalition.

After opening the meeting, Kevin Brown explained the functions and new structure of the Coalition. Then the four committee chairpersons (Finance, Program, Personnel and Advocacy) explained what their committee does and intends to do.

The next part of the meeting was the election of the Board of Directors. Eleven persons were nominated for the nine positions of the Board. The following people were elected: Robin Bernard, Andrew Brown, Kevin Brown, Nicholas Gray, Fausto Iocchelli, Warren Jensen, Benoit Lanthier, Dave Morgan and Steve Scribailo.

Together, the new Board will be working on a new structure to meet the present and expanding needs of the Coalition.

Any assistance and ideas will be appreciated, especially within the four new committees, since most of the work and decisions will be made at the committee level.

For more information about the new structure, please contact any Board member at the office.

Fausto Iocchelli, for the Board of Directors.

* NEW PROCEDURES FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - SEE PAGE 3 *

FINANCE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Our year end is Jan. 31st and we are busy preparing our financial summaries. We are consulting with a C.A. to improve our accounting system for next year.

We met with Vancouver health department officials to discuss programs and financial support from the city. Our 1988 proposal for federal funds was presented in December to the Health Promotion Branch.

We are beginning to contact other funding organizations in B.C. and elsewhere. If anyone reading this has experience in this area or has a friend who could assist us, please contact the Finance Committee at 683-3301.

Warren Jensen

TAX TIME AND PWAS

If you are a Person With AIDS you may be eligible for a disability deduction of \$ 2890.00. A disabled person is defined as one who "is markedly restricted in his or her activities of daily living and the impairment has lasted or can reasonably be expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months." The form is easy to complete. Your doctor must fill in and sign one section. Call Revenue Canada and request form T2201 or pick one up from us at the office.

Warren Jensen

SPIRITUAL CORNER

When we walk to the edge of the light we have
And take that step into the darkness of the unknown-
We must believe one of two things will happen.
Either there will be something solid for us to stand on,
or we will learn how to fly.

- Teller

PROGRAM COMMITTEE UPDATE

Following is a brief list of projects and decisions having to do with the Program committee over the last few weeks:

- support group meetings will now be held every week (Tues. nights) instead of every other week (see "ongoing events" on last page)
- "healing circle" has returned and is drawing more people every Sunday night
- AL-721 is still provided to over 30 PWA/PWARCs in the Vancouver area
- health-related financial request procedures have been reviewed to make it easier for members to apply for funds (see details in this newsletter)
- a meeting has taken place with the head nurse at I.D.C. (Infectious Disease Clinic) of St. Paul's Hospital to find out what contributions the Coalition could make to the clinic. The Coalition will soon provide some artwork, green plants and cassette tapes for the clinic.
- a complete library list is nearing completion
- plans are being made for a three-night retreat from March 28 - 31/88.
- a "survival course" for newly diagnosed people is being planned and will hopefully start this spring.

As you see, there is a lot of work to be done. The committee welcomes new people and ideas. Get in touch with me at the office.

Benoit Lanthier, for the Program Committee

NEW PROCEDURES FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A new system is now in place to process financial assistance requests. Those requests were previously handled by the weekly Monday morning business meeting.

Under the new structure, that Monday meeting will now be held only once a month, the first Monday of each month, and under a new format. Therefore, the program committee, which meets weekly, will supervise the financial assistance program.

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People who apply for funds will be able to receive their cheque the same day, if they meet the following conditions

- the request must be for health-related expenses not covered by existing government or private agencies and programs
- the amount requested must correspond with the cost of product or service purchased or to be purchased (no substitutes)
- official receipts from previous requests must have been turned in before a new request is considered
- the applicant must be a full member of the Coalition (person with AIDS or ARC whose membership application has been approved by the Board of Directors; there is no membership fee)

The project coordinator (Sharon) will be able to issue cheques the same day if the product or service requested falls within established guidelines (e.g. vitamins, herbs, supplements, massage therapy, shiatsu, naturopath's services, health-related workshops, etc.)

If the request falls within a grey zone, it will be brought up at the next program committee meeting (every Tuesday) for discussion.

Confidentiality of the applicant will be protected through the whole process. Requests will be handled by only one person (project coordinator).

Health-related financial assistance is limited to \$200 per calendar month, to a maximum of \$1000 per year. Requests in excess of that amount will be considered case by case. Feel free to call the office (683-3381) to ask any question you want about this new system.

Benoit Lanthier for the Program committee

LIBRARY LIST

A complete list of the books included in our library is now available. It is being mailed out with this newsletter to full members (PWA/PWARCs). Other individuals and groups interested in receiving it will get it on request. Our library contains books and a number of brochures, magazines, etc. A complete list of audio and video tapes is being prepared. People can borrow two items at a time from the library, for no longer than 2 weeks.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

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We are working to evaluate the first year of our project AIDS: A Self-Help, Self-Care approach. We are developing a training program for volunteers, guidelines for committee membership and job descriptions for our paid staff for the next year. We would welcome your input.

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Advocacy Committee has a number of areas of responsibility in working towards an extension and improvement of life for P.W.A./P.W.A.R.C.'s. These are: Developing and maintaining a good public image, developing media contacts, granting interviews and preparing press releases. We are also working on a speakers bureau. In addition we have lobbied government officials and networked with other organizations.

A sampling of recent activities include a letter to the B.C. M.L.A.'s requesting an amendment to the Human Rights Bill to include Medical Disability and Sexual Orientation after the passing of Bill 34, the controversial amendments to the Health Act. Letters have also been sent to St. Paul's Hospital requesting putting up condom posters in the Infectious Disease Clinic and getting telephones installed in rooms used by AIDS Patients. Drug companies and the Federal Health Protection Branch have both been contacted to find out the status of getting Aerosol Pentamidine made available for Prophylaxis and treatment. A letter to Jake Epp requests that a P.W.A. sit on the National Advisory Committee on AIDS. Some committee members also met with the N.D.P. Health Critic Margaret Mitchell, who was interested in learning about the slow progress of getting therapeutic drugs for AIDS researched, tested and released.

Finally, we are requesting funding from the Federal Centre For AIDS to send two P.W.A.'s to the fourth International Conference on AIDS in Stockholm this June. The Coalition would finance a third person.

If you are interested in the committee, which is currently meeting each Thursday, phone the office for time and place.

VIDEO SERVICES AVAILABLE

I would like to offer my time and equipment to any person with AIDS who would like to make a record of their thoughts and personal history. The resulting tape would remain the property of the P.W.A. involved. Please call the office and leave a message for Warren if you would like to discuss this.

ONGOING EVENTS

MONDAY BUSINESS MEETINGS will now be held only once a month, and will be called "membership meetings". This is the place where general membership will be informed of the Coalition's activities and need for volunteers. Also, the Board and the Committee chairpersons can seek input from general membership on specific issues. Those "membership meetings" will be held the first Monday of each month at 11:30 a.m. at the office.

TUESDAY SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS are now held every week. Those meetings are open to PWA/PWARCs only. Discussion surrounds concerns held by the group at the time of the meeting. There is no specific topic, just a chance to talk. Support group meetings are held every Tuesday night from 7:30 to 8:30 in Room 127, Main floor of the Comox Building, 1056 Comox St. at St. Paul's Hospital.

HEALING CIRCLE: The Sunday evening Healing Circle has returned. Start time is 7:30 p.m. in Room 113 of the Comox Building, St. Paul's Hospital.

RETREAT UPDATE: The program committee has decided to postpone the three-night outing by a month. It's now scheduled for March 28 - 31st/80. More information will be coming in the March Newsletter.

PERSONAL NOTES:

Wanted: Apartment to share: Am looking for gay white male who would be willing to find & share a one or two bedroom. I have AIDS; willing to share with understanding person or another PWA. Let's talk it over. Phone me-David 669-1607.

Seeking roommate for extra large one bedroom furnished apt. on Beach Ave. Pool, sauna, underground parking available. Call Dave (PWARC) 662-3026. Available 2/1. Reasonable rent.

MEDITATION CLASS - "LIVING IN THE MOMENT": A meditation class for people with AIDS/ARC and those who have tested positive, friends and supporters. Insight meditation teaches us to be mindful and present in every circumstance in our lives and helps us to develop equanimity and calm. This class includes instructions in sitting, as well as exploring the basic buddhist principles which form the foundation of the practice. Time is spent at the beginning of each class exploring issues particular to AIDS. Class meets every tuesday from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. For further information please contact Kristen at 872-0431.