

# Volunteer Update

AUGUST 1989

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 7

## Introducing Our New Executive Director...

AIDS Vancouver Island has a new Executive Director. **Toni Graeme** has been appointed by the Board of Directors, after being recommended to the Board by the Selection Committee. She officially begins work on **August 1**.

Toni was most recently the Executive Director of the **Women's Secretariat** and the **Advisory Council on the Status of Women** in the Northwest Territories. She has lived in the N.W.T. for a total of nine years. In the 1970's, Toni was involved in community development work in Vancouver.

Toni brings to A.V.I. a strong background in community-based health/education and social service delivery agencies. She has for many years made poverty, housing and feminist issues a major focus of her life and work, and she feels privileged to be working for AIDS Vancouver Island.

A mother of seven daughters and grandmother of eight granddaughters and two grandsons, Toni has been in Victoria for 18 months. Even before she received notice of her appointment at A.V.I., she had her PLWA Walk For AIDS pledge form all filled up! She says she enjoys gardening, sunshine, **short meetings** and much more.

We wish Toni success and enjoyment in her new job, and look forward to hearing more from her in future issues of the **Volunteer Update!** Welcome aboard!

Toni, I forgot to ask you how you like our climate...

## And Nairn takes a well-deserved break...

Nairn will be returning to her original duties as Education Programmes Coordinator, but not before she takes some time off to unwind! She deserves a **huge round of applause** for the excellent job she did as Acting Executive Director. Nairn took on an enormous responsibility on very short notice, and helped guide A.V.I. through a difficult, traumatic period. Her cool head and careful judgment have set a great example. Thanks so much Nairn, and take things real easy!

## ...And Our New Street Outreach Worker

**Jane Mullally** has been appointed Street Outreach Worker after a very careful selection process (My and the street people had the final say!). Jane brings with her a great deal of experience in alcohol and drug programmes, corrections and street youth projects. She's very enthusiastic about A.V.I.'s street outreach and needle exchange programmes and is looking forward to continuing our leadership in this area. Apparently the street folk are enthusiastic about her, too. Welcome, Jane!

## Alan Hears the Call of Higher Education

For the past two and a half years **Alan Baiss** has given us hours of dedicated effort as facilitator, buddy, friend and colleague. Our support programmes owe much to his hard work and his caring concern. Alan's interest in people and his regard for their well-being is now leading him to pursue a Masters' degree in counselling psychology. Unhappily this means Alan will be leaving Victoria and we will be losing a valued volunteer and friend. You will be missed, Alan, but we say good-bye with many thanks and with our hopes and wishes for your success and spiritual fulfillment.

— Nairn

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*The Volunteer Update is published monthly by the Vancouver Island AIDS Society. K.G. (Kat) Cruickshank, Editor.*  
*Submissions are very welcome and should be typewritten or word-processed. Deadline for written material is the third Wednesday of each month. Call Kat (384-1511) for more details.*

EDITORIAL

## Aftermath of the Quilt

*A first-timer meets the faces behind the Names*

The Quilt has come and gone from Vancouver and has left in its wake much dialogue, a vast range of emotions, many changed minds and hearts, and a host of exhilarated, exhausted volunteers. Despite the intensive orientation sessions, none of the Quilt workers in Vancouver that week could have been adequately prepared for the staggering emotional effects of seeing it face-to-face. Knowing that only a small portion was on display added force to the blow. Could any of us newcomers honestly say we were not changed by it?

I, for one, doubt that even those who have worked with the Names Project since its beginnings could say they have become desensitized. It is one thing to be surrounded by thousands of stones in a graveyard; it is quite another thing altogether to find yourself in a mobile monument where the "tombstones" talk. Each quilt panel seems to pull you into a little room where the dead and the living both speak with equal clarity about life, love, and loss.

Instead of looking at cold inscriptions in stone you are given little objects, buttons, old family photographs, favorite passages from poems, musical pieces, love letters, and allowed to hold them in your hands, examine them as closely as you like, even keep them. Inevitably you strike up conversations, find common interests, form friendships. And then you weep, because it seems like you have known these people forever.

Some take you dancing through nightclubs that never sleep; some introduce you to their cats and dogs; some brag about their kids and parents; some show you their favourite shirts; some sit you down at the kitchen table and drag out the old school yearbooks; some yell at you and ask you when you are ever going to understand. Sometimes all you are given is a name, sometimes only initials, a silence that screams.

Anger is everywhere. Hate is conspicuously absent. And love goes without saying.

- K.G. Cruickshank

*"When an earthquake is above 8.5, it is said to liquefy the earth."*

• Paul Monette, *Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir*

## In Memoriam

Robert Boisvenue, who died June 29 at Hospice, will be fondly remembered by those who knew him as a volunteer and in the Support Programme. Robert's fight for survival and kindness to others remain as an inspiration to all survivors of the AIDS epidemic. Our prayers are with you, Robert.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Co-operation is Paramount

*and the Government AIDS Video Must Not Die*

The following is excerpted from Larry's first address to the Board as President.

"I am proud of the role that AIDS Vancouver Island plays in reducing the spread of AIDS on Vancouver Island and of the work that we do to support persons affected by the disease. For over three years we have struggled to provide the education and support that is outlined in our mission statement. Sometimes we have done an exceptional job; other times we have recognized that we could do better.

"The Street Outreach Programme is a success and we will be challenged in the coming year to maintain the credibility that has been gained because of the contributions of **My Lipton** and **David Swan**... We should be very proud of our success in this area. We were the first and only community-based group in Canada to operate a needle exchange programme. We were able to build the cooperative relationships with the Capital Regional District, the police department and others in order to respond to a need that we had recognised.

"The future of AIDS Vancouver Island is tied to this very principle. The principle of networking and building bridges to the community that we serve and to other people in our community that are players in combatting AIDS. There may at times be a tendency to become territorial when we see more and more players attempting to play a part in our fight against AIDS. We must resist such limiting desires; we exist to fight AIDS and in my opinion we exist to help as many people to help us do this as we can. Together we can be effective; apart, we will end up in squabbles and fights over "turf" while the people we wish to serve will be the losers. We must quickly decide that we are going to build Coalitions, we are going to network, and we will build bridges in order to be effective in fighting AIDS.

"We have many exciting challenges facing us in the coming year. We will have to become more sophisticated in our dealings with all levels of government. Issues of accountability and quality of programmes and services are of concern to all people involved with AIDS Vancouver Island. My goal for the coming year is to ensure that we all take responsibility for making sure that our focus continues to be the person affected by AIDS, and that we always remember that we as a society are providing quality services which are accountable to the community. We all have a role to play in ensuring that we are proud of our society and we should also take it as our personal goal to continually focus on community need as our driving force."

Larry has also written a letter to the editor of the Times-Colonist, about the recent Socred decision to abandon the government AIDS video that had been produced for showing in movie theatres. **Members and volunteers are urged to write letters of their own to their MLA's, MP's, Mr. Vander Zalm, and newspapers.** Larry's letter appears below.

June 28, 1989

Mr. Don Vipond  
Editorial Page Editor  
Times-Colonist  
2621 Douglas Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 2N4

Dear Mr. Vipond:

In his Tuesday, June 27th, edition of the Times-Colonist Jim Hume in his Talk Politics column demonstrated the clear-thinking, pragmatic attitude that is necessary to fight AIDS.

As a recent delegate to the Fifth International Conference on AIDS I clearly understand that education and condom use are the most effective tools we have to reduce the spread of AIDS.

It is tragically sad that young people may have to lose their lives because the Premier of British Columbia will not let the educational video on AIDS be shown in the theatres. Not only is the Vancouver Island AIDS Society not being helped by the provincial government with our educational efforts, but in fact we are being hindered by such actions!

Yours,  
Lawrence M. Frost  
President

## And Now, the News...

### *Quilt Volunteers are Asked to Write*

Persons who volunteered on the Quilt in Vancouver are urged to record their impressions, memories, and opinions for posterity. A large blue hard-bound book has been provided for this purpose, and during the Quilt display it was kept in the A.V.I. suite in the Y. I was grateful to have it there when I came off my first monitoring shift; it served to help me order my thoughts and deal with some very confusing emotions. If you are interested in writing down your own experiences, you will find the Quilt Impressions Book in the main office. Don has also asked that Quilt volunteers sign a copy of the poster, which will then be framed and hung in the A.V.I. office. The autographed poster is on the wall directly above the blue book.

### *Preparations for World AIDS Day*

On World AIDS Day, December 1, it is important that A.V.I. presents a very high profile in the community to make people aware of the issues of AIDS and to bring attention to our services and resources. Planning for this important occasion is just getting underway, headed up by a committee consisting of Don Mathewson, Daryl Jensen and Peter Mitchell. These are the people to talk to if you have any ideas concerning possible events, fundraising, speaking engagements, etc. Let's make a "splash" in Victoria this year!

### *"It's About Time"*

Rita Deverell hosts this weekly human affairs magazine on Vision-TV (Rogers Cable 28, Shaw 25). On the "Neighbours" segment of her show, Friday, August 25 at 7:00 and 10:00 PM, she interviews two men who are working with persons with AIDS. One, a theologian from Halifax, ministers to PWA's and advocates on their behalf. The other, a social worker from Vancouver, is doing a study of societal attitude towards PWA's that will hopefully result in some positive changes. It is an eloquent call for justice and respect for PWA's. IT'S ABOUT TIME is repeated on Saturdays at 6:00 PM and 9:00 PM.

### *Island Gay Society Dance*

The Island Gay Society is holding a Gala Dance on September 23 (a Saturday night. Phone 370-1144 in the evenings, 7:30 to 9:30, for more information.

Also, the IGS now meets at the James Bay Community Centre from 7:30 to 9:30 every Thursday.

MORE NEWS

### ***AIDS Groups Summit Meeting***

Representatives from AIDS Vancouver, AIDS Vancouver Island, the Vancouver People With AIDS Coalition and the Vancouver Island People Living With AIDS Coalition are getting together here in Victoria on **August 11** to discuss mutual concerns and how we may benefit and support each other as organizations. The meeting is being organized by the VIPLWAC and the Vancouver reps have been invited to make a weekend of it and catch the Walk-a-Thon as well.

### ***Have You Filled Up Your Pledge Sheet?***

Approximately 150 to 200 walkers have signed up for the VIPLWAC Walk For AIDS which is being held on **Sunday, August 13 at 10:00 am**. We encourage people to walk even if they don't collect pledges, as a strong show of support.

Volunteers, who also may be walkers, are desperately needed! People who wish to be volunteers must attend one of the Walk-a-Thon orientation meetings at A.V.I. on **August 9 and 10 at 6:45 pm**.

#### **Volunteers Needed:**

- 10 Walk Marshals
- 4 at Start of Walk to take in Walk pledge forms and give out Walker Numbers
- 8 people — 4 at each refreshment stand
- 2 to hand out rainbow ribbons for finishing walk.

### ***Free Massage!!!***

Seamas Manly, a local masseur, has generously donated a free Massage to A.V.I. A draw will be held on **August 15** to choose the lucky person. If you are interested, please submit your name to Li before the deadline.

### ***Support Training Begins***

We are planning training for new Support volunteers — it will be held on **August 26 and 27**. Stay tuned for further information.

## **Thank You, Thank You...**

### ***Quilt Volunteers***

Heartfelt thanks go to each and every one of you who gave of their time and energy representing A.V.I. at the Quilt in Vancouver. But we must not forget that experiencing the Quilt in person is not for everybody. For many, it is enough simply to know that it exists. To those people who chose not to see the Quilt at all and those who have chosen

never to see it again, we must extend our thanks as well, for reminding us that grief is still a very private thing.

Though thanking everyone by name is impossible, extra special thanks must go to **Suzanne Sutton**, who worked her butt off organizing A.V.I.'s participation in the Vancouver exhibit (and accommodating all our last-minute scheduling changes!). Suzanne also booked the A.V.I. suite at the YWCA, which was greatly appreciated as a "crash pad" by all of us who made use of it. Another person who worked far above and beyond the call was **Lou Zornes**, who almost literally "camped out" at the main entrance to the exhibit for the entire weekend, and who kept count of all the visitors to the display (well over 14,000 all told!!!). Well done, Lou!

And lastly, we thank our Vancouver hosts, monitor captains, coordinators and Names Project staff for putting on such a well-orchestrated mass volunteer action and making us feel welcome and useful while keeping confusion to a minimum.

### ***And Will Power***

Many thanks to **Brian Smith** for an extremely informative workshop on Wills and Estates. Sorry for the slight mix-up about the date in the last Update, Brian...though I'm told the workshop was well-attended.

*...and now, it's time for...*

## ***Technical Difficulties***

*(those Crazy Komputerheads and their Mischievous Machines)*

The Technical Support Programme would like to extend very big thank-yous to **Lorna and Nairn**, who allowed us to borrow the downstairs computers for the Word Perfect classes. In this day and age, giving up your workday computer is a pretty big sacrifice! The classes went really well, especially considering that I had never taught a class before in my life. I have to personally thank all the staff and volunteers who participated for expressing such an interest and for providing me with lots of constructive feedback. One student suggestion was for the classes to get together again in about 3 months to discuss how far they have progressed, bring up problems and learn some more advanced functions. This sounds like an excellent idea. Having a weekend "computer immersion" is another possibility. Please bring us your ideas!

And as far as actual technical difficulties are concerned, let's just say I'm glad this week is finally over. Apologies for getting the Update out a little late...

- Kat.

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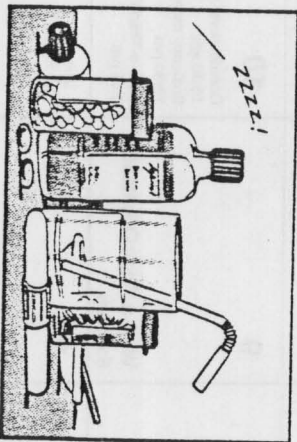
		1	2	3	4	5
				Business meeting 12:30 pm		
6	7 B.C. Day Office closed	8	9 Walk-a-Thon Orientation 6:45 pm	10 Coordinators' meeting 10:30 am Business meeting 12:30 pm Walk-a-Thon Orientation 6:45 pm	11 AVI - AIDS Vancouver & PLWA Coalitions Meeting 1:00 pm	12
13 VIPLWAC Walk for AIDS 10:00 am Ship's Point Pier	14 Support meeting 6:45 pm	15 Board meeting 7:30 pm Begbie Hall, Royal Jubilee Hospital	16	17 Business meeting 12:30 pm	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Coordinators' meeting 10:30 am Business meeting 12:30 pm	25	26 Support training (time TBA)
27 Support training (time TBA)	28 Support meeting 6:45 pm	29	31			

Thought for the month: It is easier to get a camel through the eye of a needle, than to meet a deadline with grace.

— K.G.

# Doonesbury

G.B. TRUDEAU



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