

# The AVI UPDATE

Summer 2005

## Artists for AIDS

On March 22, 2005, thirty-seven of our finest local artists came together in support of AVI. The event, Artists for AIDS, was jointly organized by our current board, especially Denise Skipp and Patrick Corrigan with the help of David Devan and Michelle McKenzie and artist Gary Merkel, who worked tirelessly to solicit the participation of the many generous artists. It was a tremendous success, a festive wine



AVI Executive Director, Miki Hansen, right, with partner, Daphne.

and hors d'oeuvre soiree, with both silent and live auction components. There was live piano music and a beautiful performance of two arias by Carey Newmann. The MacPherson Theatre looked like Victoria's newest art gallery! Mr. Eric Charman generously donated his

time and delightful skills as an auctioneer for six of

the works of art. The food was beautifully prepared and presented by Cooks Day Off and stunning floral arrangements were donated by Flowers on Top and Executive House Hotel. Thanks also to the Royal & McPherson Theatre Society and the Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria. A very special "Thank you!" goes to the AVI staff who volunteered their time to help out that evening. The feedback is unanimous — a great time was had by all!

At the end of the evening, thirty-five works of art were bid on, and \$14,750 had been raised for AVI. Unbelievable!

Look for next year's Artists for AIDS event in the spring of 2006.



## AVI AGM

AIDS Vancouver Island will be holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Monday, July 18, 7:00 p.m. at St. John the Divine Church, 1611 Quadra St.

## AVI Staff Changes

Change is constant and AIDS Vancouver Island is no different in this respect. Here are our recent staff changes:

Katrina Jensen is the Director of Programs and Heidi Exner is the Health Promotion and Community Development Manager.

Kristen Kvakic is the Manager of the Positive Wellness Program and Dan Cowan is the Manager of Street Outreach Services (SOS).

After four years of service to the clients in SOS, Kim Toombs is off to Ontario to pursue a Masters in Adult Education and Community Development. We will all miss her.

James Boxhall (highlighted on Pg.4) replaces Bridget MacKenzie as Manager of Volunteer Services. Bridget is now working at Victoria Hospice. They are lucky indeed.

For a complete list of our staff, go to our web site at [www.avi.org](http://www.avi.org)



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## Queer Youth Community Development Worker

We are very excited to have secured funding from Health Canada for a Queer Youth Community Development Worker. Rayne Hartshorn comes to us from a recent internship with the federal government. He has extensive experience with the SEXY Queer Youth Group and is a member of the City of Victoria Youth Advisory Committee. Rayne will be working for the next two years with Gay Straight Alliances in the high schools and youth groups in town.

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## North Island

AVI has offices in Nanaimo, Courtenay, and Campbell River and mobile needle exchanges serving the Cowichan Valley and the Port Hardy/Port MacNeil areas.

## Hello from Nanaimo

Our AVI office, located at 201-55 Victoria Street, is situated in the historic downtown area and boasts scenic views of the Nanaimo Harbour and Gabriola Island making our drop in space inviting and comfortable. We are as proud of the gorgeous views and fabulous location as we are of the work we do and would love to share that with you. Our office is open Monday to Thursday and our Positive Wellness Drop In is open from 9:00 am-1:00 pm with coffee and muffins available.

Our friendly staff includes Dana, our Executive Assistant, Claire, our Education Worker, Anita, our Positive Wellness Counsellor and Sara, our Hepatitis C Worker.

Numerous dedicated volunteers provide the backbone of our office. We would be delighted to share our space with you, if you happen to be in our neighbourhood.

## Greetings from Courtenay!

Here in Courtenay, we are proud to be part of the AVI Team, providing an island-wide continuity of service for those infected and affected by HIV and Hepatitis C. Staffing includes one full time social worker, one client support worker/educator (one day per week), and a host of strong dedicated volunteers – receptionists, peer support workers, and speakers!

Open Mondays through Thursdays, 9 am to 4 pm, we are centrally located, near other services/resources. From our offices at 355 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street, we offer a wide variety of services including counselling, peer support, advocacy, daily drop in, bi-weekly massage therapy, acupuncture, and a full harm reduction program.

Our most recent program, a Tuesday nutrition drop in, has been initiated thanks to the efforts of Rebecca Swan, nursing practicum student and volunteer! Clients are able to make themselves lunches on Tuesday when our soup kitchen is closed.

Thanks also goes to Dean Ryane who has generously donated a freezer to keep our breads, buns, and muffins fresh!

If you're in the beautiful Comox Valley, please drop in and say hello!

## Thrifty Foods Smile Card

A card has been included in this mailout for your use. These cards have been programmed by Thrifty's for AVI to receive 5% of all purchases done with this card. This is an easy way to support AVI and when many people use it, the dollars really add up. Here's how to use the card:

You need to "load your card" with either the teller or at customer service by using your debit card, credit card, cash or, if you have a Thrifty Foods cheque-cashing card, you can write a cheque.

Let the teller know, before your groceries are put through, that you will be using your Smile Card.

You are not required to put a name or signature on the card. If your card is lost or stolen, call Customer

Service at 544-1234 to have the card deactivated. You need to keep a record of the numbers on the back of your card (19 digits on the left and 6 digits on the right).

You can check on the amount of credit you have left on your card by going online to



[www.thriftyfoods.com](http://www.thriftyfoods.com), but you are usually informed after your purchase of the balance.

If you wish a new or additional card, contact Kealey or Brian at AVI at 384-2366.

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## Men's Wellness Program

The new coordinator for the Men's Wellness Program is Captain Snowdon.

For the last eight years Captain has run the Street Outreach Program at the YM-YWCA Youth Outreach Services.

Captain has been involved in many community

development projects over the years including founding the *Out of the Rain* Youth Shelter, which provides a warm safe space for homeless youth during the coldest months of the year. Captain has spent three years on the Victoria Pride Board and helped organize *Check Your Booty*, a holistic health conference for queer youth.

Captain is familiar with AVI through past employment with the needle exchange and volunteering with the AIDS Walk.

The **Private Parts** Conference in March was the first

multi-day event, in conference format, bringing men together and centering on their health and wellness held in Victoria. There were 45 men, ranging from 24-65 years of age, from Victoria, Vancouver,

Kamloops, Courtenay, Saskatoon, Nelson, and Comox. The event kicked off with a film screening of *Drawing Out The Demons*, a film about the artist Attila Richard Lukacs. We were pleased to have the filmmaker, David Vaisbord, in attendance who facilitated many questions about making the film, working with the artist and crystal meth.

The second day began with a panel entitled "*Is Sex Safe in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*". The panel began an exciting debate on many issues including condom fatigue, service provision

for rural men who have sex with men, the importance of broadening our approach to prevention work to a holistic one and the need for dialogue between different generations of queer men.

Workshops were offered on yoga, sexual self-esteem, positive prevention, working with healthcare providers, crystal meth, pairing food and wine, sexual harm reduction and queering the health and social service sector. We received great feedback about the workshops; folks enjoyed the interactive







## A Note from James Boxhall

Manager of Volunteer Services

Hi there,  
The last few months have been a real adventure for me – learning about AVI, meeting and getting to know our staff and clients, and getting to grips with all the tasks of managing our volunteer program.

James, at the Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.

I have been a volunteer myself in many different places and in many different roles and I have been really impressed by the energy and passion the volunteers at AVI bring to the organization. I am really looking forward to working with everyone and finding creative and innovative ways to support our volunteers.

My background has been in the international sector where I have been involved in various approaches to combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic. I have worked in London, Malawi, South Africa and China managing HIV/AIDS and Education focused programs. I hope to bring this experience to the challenges facing HIV positive people on Vancouver Island and to support everyone who volunteers their time and skills to AVI.

- James

**PAN (Pacific AIDS Network)**  
has a new web site at:  
**[www.pan.ca](http://www.pan.ca)**

PAN, of which AVI is a member, is the provincial organizing body for AIDS services in B.C.

PAN is a member-driven network of more than 50 community-based AIDS organizations from across British Columbia. PAN is a consensus-based forum for communication, mutual support and collective action for HIV issues across the region.

## Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers in Victoria!



Cody, cooking up some grits at the Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.

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|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Aubrey B    | Dane S      | Fred H      | June W     | Rob T      |
| August T    | Daphne A.   | Gabrielle S | Kavaleen R | Rob T      |
| Austin W    | Darcy SC    | George T    | Kecin L    | Robert C   |
| Barb D      | Dave H      | Georgina S  | Lesley D   | Ron H      |
| Barbara F   | David D     | Gerald B    | Lindsay H  | Ross       |
| Bert H      | David D     | Gerard R    | Lisa D     | Sally C    |
| Bob E       | David G     | Gordon M    | Lorraine P | Scott W    |
| Bonnie D    | David H     | Gordon MK   | Mariya S   | Shelley L  |
| Brent S     | David M     | Heather C   | Mark S     | Shirley SD |
| Brian H     | Debi B      | Hope Y      | Matthew L  | Steph H    |
| Brunet N    | Denise S    | Jack R      | Michael M  | Steven D   |
| Cait D      | Don B       | James F     | Michael S  | Susan M    |
| Calla R     | Don B       | James K     | Michelle C | Teddy A    |
| Cassie M    | Donna VA    | Jamie H     | Mike A     | Teddy S    |
| Catherine S | Dorothy     | Jamie R     | Mike H     | Terry B    |
| Cathy P     | Dorothy VA  | Jason P     | Minneh K   | Tina C     |
| Charlene A  | Dustin H    | Jason W     | Nicole B   | Tracy A    |
| Charlotte K | Dusty F     | Jax K       | Pat D      | Tracy B    |
| Chris R     | Earl E      | Jennifer G  | Patrick B  | Vincent K  |
| Chris S     | Ed S        | Jessica MN  | Patrick C  | Wayne M    |
| Chris VL    | Elizabeth D | Joe         | Randy B    | Wil W      |
| Adam H      | Elizabeth S | John F      | Ray C      |            |
| Aline P     | Erin McK    | John S      | Rene H     |            |
| Andrew J    | Eugene S    | Josh G      | Rick H     |            |
| Ann G       | Frank C     | Joslyn L    | Rick W     |            |
| Claude H    |             |             |            |            |
| Claudette C |             |             |            |            |
| Clint L     |             |             |            |            |
| Connie H    |             |             |            |            |