

Our NEW Building!

In the fall of 2005, AIDS Vancouver Island and Victoria Cool Aid Society jointly bought a building for AVI and Cool Aid's Community Health Centre.



Victoria Cool Aid Society, founded in 1968, has been providing holistic shelter, housing and community health services to marginalized adults in the Victoria region since 1968. Cool Aid operates a community health centre, two emergency shelters and manages over 245 innovative housing units for the hard-to-house.

This building will allow a coordinated and integrated response to the complex and marginalized populations we both serve. Our guiding principle for this project is that when agencies increase client's accessibility to services, there is a range

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Dining Out For Life - March 23

Fill a plate to fight AIDS



This year we are excited to announce that Dining Out For Life, Vancouver Island will be joining the many cities and regions in North America who honour the work of HIV/AIDS service organizations and to raise funds in support of their ongoing work in the community.

DINING OUT FOR LIFE Dining Out For Life is a unique partnership between AIDS Vancouver Island and more than 50 restaurants across the Island. On Thursday 23rd March restaurants from Tofino to Sooke, including Courtenay, Campbell River and Nanaimo will be donating 25% of their food reve-

nue for the day to AIDS Vancouver Island. This money will help AVI to maintain our excellence in HIV/AIDS programming, and will give us the opportunity to develop new approaches to combating the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS in our communities.

Please support this exciting initiative - all you need to do is enjoy a meal at one of the participating restaurants on March 23rd - what could be easier? Better still - take along a friend or two (or 20!) and make it a social event.

For a list of restaurants and other details, go to: www.diningoutforlife.com

If you are interested in being more directly involved, call James Boxshall at AVI at 384-2366 or email at james.boxshall@avi.org

Queer Youth Community Development Project

Our Queer Youth Community Development Project has brought together a diverse youth group that is called Outspeak.

Outspeak is a group of six queer youth who have been trained to deliver peer education, in the community, regarding sexual health and harm reduction. We have also done workshops on homophobia, heterosexism and transphobia.

Outspeak has youth who are interested and committed to education on these issues. Heidi, our Manager of Health Promotion and Community Development, trained the group on delivering education on sexually transmitted infections.

There was also training in forum theatre by River Chandler. Forum theatre is a type of theatre that encourages direct audience participation. This



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AVI has offices in Nanaimo, Courtenay and Campbell River, and mobile needle exchanges serving the Cowichan Valley and the Port Hardy/Port MacNeil areas. Contact info can be found at www.avi.org

Editor and layout: Kealey Pringle, Communications & Research Officer

gives audience members an opportunity for problem solving and role-playing in situations involving issues of safer sex and safer substance use.

The workshops have taken place mostly in school classrooms and with youth groups at agencies serving youth.



We Molly Patton, our new Queer Youth Community Development Worker

have hired a new Queer Youth Worker, Molly Patton, who has experience with the Red Cross and the SEXY youth group at the Y.

Visit Outspeak's website at: www.Outspeak.ca

We invite you to take advantage of the wide range of resources available for youth and educators by navigating our website.

Some of the site features are:

- Articles written by youth that discuss today's youth issues
- Sexual tips to stay safe and have some fun!
- Community message board for our members

The future priorities are to expand up-island with workshops and outreach and connecting with queer youth.

There are continuing workshops in the south island area with high schools and conferences. Recent workshops were given at the School

Gay Men's Community Development Program

South Island: Coffee Night, every Tuesday night 6–8 pm, at Serious coffee at Blanshard and Fisgard, right beside AVI's Victoria office.

Mid-Island: Gay Men's Discussion Group held monthly at the Nanaimo Resource Centre, 7-9 pm.

North Island: Two recent events were:
Queer Eye for the Service Provider: Providing culturally sensitive services for gay, bi and transgendered men. Thirty-three professionals came from as far away as Port Alberni, Port Hardy and Quadra to meet up in Courtenay.

Another workshop in Courtenay was *Private Parts*. Fifty people came for a social Friday night, one day of workshops and a dance Saturday night. Workshops included topics on being queer and parenting, dating dilemmas, cross dressing, shin shin toitsu, and living rurally.



Building, continued

of positive impacts on client's lives. The result will be more efficient, synchronized delivery of health and education services.

The opportunity to purchase and renovate a building, in partnership with Victoria Cool Aid Society, will ensure long-term stability for AVI and the opportunity to work more closely with Cool Aid's health clinic, a frequently-accessed service for many of AVI's clients.

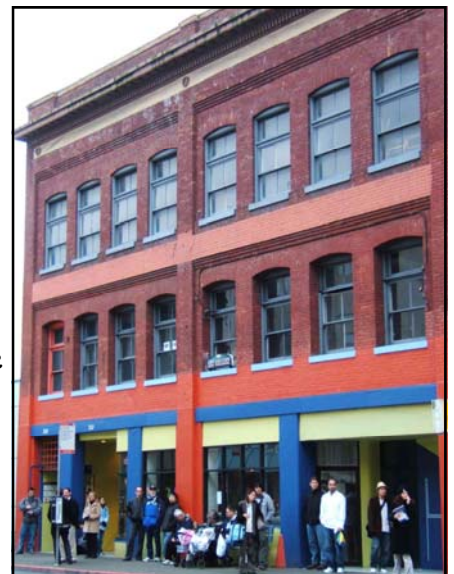
In turn, many of Cool Aid's shelter, housing and health clinic clients are HIV and hepatitis C positive and would benefit from AVI's nutrition programs, advocacy, support and referral. To provide complementary health services from a single location will improve access and facilitate a more holistic approach to our clients' health needs.

This opportunity will also provide office space at below-market rental rates, for other non-profit agencies with an overlapping client-base. Organizations interested in renting space in this building are Vancouver Island Persons Living with

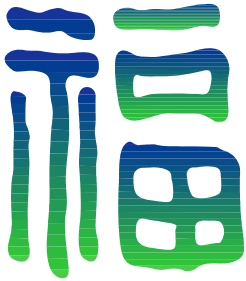
HIV/AIDS Society, Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS) and Prostitutes' Empowerment, Education and Resource Society (PEERS).

The main floor of the building has been leased for twelve months, as a temporary home for Our Place, a drop-in street ministry for the combined Open Door Society and the Upper Room Society, which serves up to 400 homeless people a day with sandwiches, coffee, used clothes and advocacy. This temporary home allows them to build a new facility, while we raise the funds necessary to renovate our building.

Staff and board members from both AVI and Cool Aid serve on a fundraising committee, and work has begun on a Capital Campaign to raise the necessary funds for the renovations and move.



HIV Positive Health and Wellness Program



AIDS Vancouver Island and the Victoria Native Friendship Centre are continuing to collaborate on developing and implementing an educational and skill development program addressing the needs of both

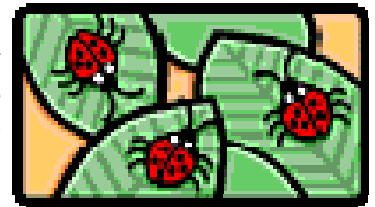
Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal HIV positive women and men.

There are currently both a women's and a men's group being offered. Participants have ten sessions and a retreat. The sessions are planned by the participants and have had guest speakers from organizations ranging from: Together Against Poverty Society to doctors from the

Cool Aid Clinic. Topics have included self-care, sexuality, disability, legal rights, native spirituality, HIV/hepatitis C co-infection, drugs and alcohol. The retreats have included a nature walk, a dinner and a movie night.

Some of the 'graduates' from the program participated as Peer Educators in subsequent sessions and organized a public education event called *Viral Monologues* at Camosun College and the University of Victoria, last fall. In the style of the popular *Vagina Monologues*, this theatrical form of expressing personal stories was received very well.

This event was part of AIDS Awareness Week and World AIDS Day.



MEMBERSHIP

YES! I would like to become a member of Vancouver Island AIDS Society (AVI).

- \$15 individual membership/renewal
 \$1.00 membership/renewal for persons living with HIV/AIDS or AVI volunteers who have contributed 50 hours of service or more in the past year

VOLUNTEERING YES! I am interested in volunteering with AIDS Vancouver Island.
 Please send me an application form with information about volunteer opportunities.

DONATION YES! I would like to make a donation to AIDS Vancouver Island.
 Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$ _____.

Date: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

Email _____

Amount Enclosed _____ Card # _____ Cheque VISA/Mastercard

Credit card expiry date _____ Signature _____

Please make cheque or money order payable to : Vancouver Island AIDS Society; 1601 Blanshard Street; Victoria BC V8W 2J5