

ARC News

August, 2000
Volume 4, Issue 4

for the AIDS Resource Centre - Okanagan & Region

"AIDS Awareness During an Okanagan Summer?"

AIDS Resource Centre Combating Summer AIDS Complacency with Condoms, Theatre and AIDS Walk..

Now that another Okanagan summer is here, HIV/AIDS related issues tend – as usual - to fade into the background in favor of sun, beaches, and fun. After-all, who wants to be thinking about AIDS, when there are so many fun things to do in the beautiful Okanagan summer-time? Well, this is the very kind of complacency that AIDS educators fear in trying to maintain a vigilant awareness in the public on an issue that can affect anybody, and at a time of year when high-risk behaviors particularly abound. Indeed, if there is a time of year when AIDS awareness needs to be at its peak, summer-time is it.

But, how do you get the message out when local public awareness is captivated more by tourism, getting a tan, and beach partying? Well, one very effective program that the AIDS Resource Centre, Okanagan & Region continues to employ in this regard, is the Condom Cop Program, which employs a total of 6 condom cops from Vernon to Penticton,

to distribute condoms to people at risk of contracting HIV and other STDs.

The program has been very effective to-date and definitely contributes to raising awareness of HIV/AIDS issues at a time when it is most needed. The condom cops, with their distinct white and red-

lettered t-shirts and profuse supply of latex, definitely get the message across at popular Okanagan beaches as well as night-time drinking establishments, that the dangers of unprotected sex can't be ignored. Good work Condom Cops!

HIV/AIDS is a preventable disease, especially among youth who comprise a particularly high-risk group. For this reason, any awareness-raising that can done for this segment of the population, and at this time of year, is especially important.

The AIDS Resource Centre did it's best to address this fact by kicking the summer off with its youth theatre program, "Acts of Choice," which it held in StageWorks Playhouse on June 28.

... continued on page 2

AIDS WALK 2000

okanagan
AIDS WALK 2000
Sunday, Waterfront Park, Kelowna Sept 24

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Topher Talks	3
Canadian AIDS Society AGM.....	3
Volunteer Corner	4
Support Plus	4
CATIE Sheds Light on Benefits & Risks of Alternative Medicines.....	5
HIV/AIDS & Prostitution.....	6
Where to Look for Health Information.....	6
AIDS Walk 2000.....	7
Notice Board	
Thanks go out to.....	8
Inserts -	
Volunteer Recruitment	
AIDS Walk 2000 Form.....	9

FUN IN THE OKANAGAN SUN!!

"AIDS Awareness"

... continued from page 1

It was at this time that over 30 youth participants comprising cast and crew, contributed to a high-quality theatre production raising awareness of the dangers of unprotected sex, drug and alcohol use, needle sharing, and the virtues of abstinence from these same. Tremendous awareness of these issues was raised not only among the youth participants—who both created the scripts and realized them on stage—but among an audience of 175 people who filled up (even to the amazement of StageWorks Playhouse theatre management) the entire bottom-level of the theatre. The response to the production was terrific, as there were even reports of youth who had been involved in very similar scenarios in real life as those depicted on stage, who really got the message of the plays and vowed to make some drastic behavioral changes as a result. In all, the program was very successful in raising the awareness for the summer that HIV/AIDS is here in the Okanagan, it can affect anyone, and it is preventable.

Nonetheless, even when it comes to AIDS "infotainment", it does not take long during a hot and sunny Okanagan summer for AIDS issues to quickly fade into the background of public awareness.

For this reason, the AIDS

WOMEN'S RESEARCH

from Canadian AIDS Society

As you are probably aware, there is presently very little research being done about women living with HIV/AIDS.

Indeed, there have been few initiatives involving women in setting the research agenda in Canada. One researcher who has been doing work in this area is Dr. Catherine Hankins in Montreal. She has recently received funding to continue a Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) (the virus that causes genital warts) study she has been doing for the past several years involving HIV+ women.

Resource Centre, and in particular, AIDS Walk 2000 Coordinators Gary Taylor and Lynette Oosthuizen, are already mobilizing for one of our most ambitious awareness and fund-raising events – the AIDS Walk.

This year's Fourth Annual AIDS Walk will take place, as in previous years, in front of the dolphins at the Grand Okanagan Resort at 11 AM, on Sunday, September 24, 2000, and will continue through the traditional walk route until around noon, when the Walk will come to rest at Island Stage in front of the Grand. Certainly, this year, Walk fundraisers hope to outdo their last year's achievement of \$19,000 of funds raised, in order that even more resources can be made available to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and support those affected. This is an ambitious goal, so any and all support provided is well-appreciated.

Walk participants and all interested on-lookers will be treated this year to live entertainment in the form of music and theatre. That's right, we plan on putting a new twist to this year's Walk by featuring a reproduction of one of the "Acts of Choice" plays that was shown on June 28. So, in all, a great day will be had by all who choose to participate in AIDS Walk 2000.

If these initiatives don't put a dent in Okanagan summer-time AIDS complacency, then nothing will! ◆

Dr. Hankins has expressed interest in working with women to develop a process to create a community-based process to do more research involving women. This is a very exciting opportunity for those interested in women's research but of course it will also require hard work and dedication to get the funding to do this work and to actually create such a model. You can become involved in exploring this possibility in a dialogue with other interested women across the country @ 1:30p.m. on September 6th by contacting: **Karina Poureau by telephone at (514) 528-2400 ext. 3694, by fax (514) 528-2452 or e-mail <kpoureau@santepub-mtl.qc.ca>** ◆

ARC News

Michael Hook, Editor



This newsletter is the official publication of the AIDS Resource Centre – Okanagan & Region (ARC).

formerly Kelowna and Area AIDS Resources, Education and Support Society. It is published four to six times yearly. The materials in this newsletter are meant to be consistent with ARC purposes which are:

- * to promote awareness of AIDS and related diseases
- * to develop and provide resources to combat the spread of AIDS and the HIV virus
- * to develop and provide educational resources
- * to support those living with AIDS and those diagnosed HIV+, and/or their significant others

Even so, the opinions and comments within this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official ARC policy. The newsletter does not recommend, advocate or endorse the use of any particular treatment or therapy described as information. The board, staff and volunteers of ARC do not accept the risk of, nor responsibility for any damages, costs or consequences of any kind which may arise or result from the use of information disseminated through this newsletter.

Persons using the information provided through this newsletter do so by their own decision and hold the society's Board, staff and volunteers harmless.

Submissions for publication may be sent to our offices at any time; publication deadline is two weeks prior to publication date. Submissions will be returned if a request is made in writing and an address provided. Permission to reprint and distribute this newsletter is openly encouraged.

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TOPHER TALKS..

"A Client's Viewpoint"

This year the Canadian AIDS Society Annual Meeting was held July 17th - 22nd, in Hull PQ. This is the annual meeting of some 100+ organizations from across Canada that make up the Canadian AIDS Society. We had a two-part meeting: The first part was a Forum made up of 80 people living with HIV from across Canada representing their organizations; the second part was the formal AGM.

The hot topics for discussions during open discussion were "Back to Work" and "The Criminalization of Sex without Disclosure."

I sat in on the discussion group about the changing of the laws over non-disclosure when having sex. This all stems from the final decision to the Currier Case in which an HIV+ male knowingly had unprotected sex with several women, *even after* he was told that he would be charged if he continued. He has since been charged and found guilty of endangering the lives of the women.

As it reads, "a person who

knowingly has unprotected sex without disclosing their status to their partner", *can be found guilty and charged under the law!*

It is unclear if just telling a partner about your status is good enough. Or does one have to actually take responsibility to protect your partner? Even then, what happens if your partner decides that you did not give them that information and claims that you did not disclose? A person can still be charged and held under investigation.

Where the personal responsibility lies to make sure that one takes the proper precautions while engaging in sex, is unclear.

There are many grey areas within this law that don't allow for those who knowingly take the risk of not making their partners take the proper precautions; be this a man who does not respect his partner's request for the use of a condom, or a female who does not require her partner to wear a condom every time they have sex.

Here again we run into the trouble of those who don't have the right to request protection, (abusive relationships) or those who are mentally challenged and incapable of making proper decisions. Add to this the number of people who are intravenous drug users. When a person is in need of money for their next fix, or engaging in sex while under the influence of drugs, they tend *not* to make good decisions.

Where does this all lead? Well, a person who is HIV+ needs to be very cautious. A person who is inclined to having multiple partners needs to remember that they could find themselves facing criminal charges if a partner denies being informed. It would then be up to the charged individual to prove that they did disclose and that their partner willingly engaged in sex with them.

So, those who choose to have sex, should take all the precautions that are reasonably possible. That, or be lucky enough to find a partner for your regular activities.

Remember to play safe and be cautious! ♦

CANADIAN AIDS SOCIETY - ANNUAL MEETING

July 18th to 22nd 2000

By Chris Mckenzie

During the third week of July the Canadian AIDS Society held their Annual General Meeting and Forum. I was privileged enough to be able to go as a representative for the AIDS Resource Centre. It was a gathering of over 100 agencies from across Canada, and some 200 individuals, to discuss the newest trends in HIV/AIDS.

This year's title was "Remembering the Names". During the last part of the conference they had the Canadian AIDS Memorial Quilts on display - a colourful display of some 80 panels with eight quilts on each. On these 640+ quilts were the names of some 1,000 individuals who were remembered with a quilt. Some of the quilts were very simple, others were very fancy, and others, extremely black. There was a lot of very interesting lives portrayed on each and every quilt. Some places like Casey House out of Toronto just put in a quilt with the names of those who died under their care: A simple memorial to each and every one. As many friends of mine walked the long aisles of quilts,

they would stop to cry when they found a quilt of someone they had forgotten. Taking time to remember the lives before them, they would then move on to the next set. For those of us involved in the HIV world from the beginning, we all know what it is like to have forgotten those who have died before us. Not because we wanted to, but just because so many have gone before. The quilts were unfolded in a full ceremony that has gone on since the time the quilts were first displayed.

The rest of the conference was rather uneventful after that display! The two keynote speakers were very different. The first speaker spoke about the open face of AIDS and the need to be open about HIV. The second set of speakers spoke about the Durban conference held in South Africa. Here they talked about the great need for more medications to reach the poorer countries, as well as the poverty that those suffering, live in.

At the registration day, we were offered a list of topics that would be up for

discussion. Out of these five they drew the top two. This resulted in two different groups talking about the "Back to Work issues" as well as the "Criminalization of non-disclosure during Sex". Both were very hot topics. The same answer came back from both groups - - there is no easy answer to either topic!

On top of all these discussions, we were also brought up to speed on what the Canadian AIDS Society was doing and how their budgets were going - all the typical boring stuff that goes on at AGM's. If someone wants to get a lesson in confusion and "Robert's Rules for Meetings", this is one group of people who could confuse a scholar. In spite of all the good-humored fighting over motions and friendly amendment, a lot of good work is done by this group. This is especially true considering that we are a gathering of people from across Canada with very different views on what should happen here.

Next year's conference has been set for the second week of July in Montreal. It will be combined with the skills building workshops. So it will be a heavy, long, nine days of meetings for those who attend all three events. ♦



Support Plus...

Client Support Information

The dynamic duo, Terri Ross and River Glen, continue to provide support services for HIV positive people and their relations in Kelowna and the Okanagan region.

These dedicated professionals continue to force mounds of paper work through the various government offices resulting in successfully completed advocacy. In other words, securing much needed benefits.

To maintain top form there is the occasional enrichment opportunity. River attended a workshop in Vancouver on July 11th and learned the basics of how to counsel people on disability pensions who are considering going back to work. Enhancing quality of life and living to potential are always the highest goals.

The client base continues to grow. The Vernon office is open every Friday. The South Okanagan is expanding now that the word is getting out about the success and quality of services provided. Your Client Support Workers are ready and waiting to assist. Please give us a call. ♦

FRIENDS

Everyone *hears* what you say,
Friends *listen* to what you say,
BEST FRIENDS listen to what
you *don't say!*

We all take different paths
in life,
But no matter where we go,
We take a little of each other
everywhere!

-Tim McGraw

RIVER GLEN

Client Support Worker

Phone: (250) 862-AIDS (2437)

Toll Free: 1-800-616-AIDS (2437)

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Volunteer Corner



Another month has already come and gone! Here at ARC we are just beginning to wind down the last month of Summer and are beginning to gear up towards the busy Fall.

MARDI GRAS 2000 Saturday, July 22, 2000

Mardi Gras went very well considering we had grey skies and, at times, a fairly strong wind. We managed to raise \$211.00 for the AIDS Walk 2000. A great time was had by all and all of us did get dunked!!

I would like to give special thanks to the following people: River G. for helping Daryle and I set up; Julie D. who was there all day as a great crowd motivator; Janet W., Justin W., and Willow L. for being such great dunk-sports. Thanks also

to Lynne P., Melissa H., Debbie B., Judy W., and Barbara J, for patiently sitting and collecting money. Also, a special

thanks to Drew Sherwood for donating the Dunk Tank, and the Kelowna Fire Department for filling the tank - it was greatly appreciated.

All in all, the help and support we received was great! Thanks everyone!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

At ARC we are urgently seeking volunteers. The summer months have left us with a skeleton crew of volunteers; however, Fall is a perfect time of the year to start volunteering!!

Enclosed in this Newsletter is an Insert/Application to fill out and return to me at the ARC if anyone is interested in lending us a helping hand!

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact Traci at (250) 862-2437 and I shall be most happy to assist. ♦

YOU be the change
you want to see in the world!

- Gandhi

1000's of candles can be
lit from a single candle
and the life of that candle
will not be shortened.

Happiness *never* decreases
by being shared!

- Chinese Proverb

Those who bring sunshine
into the lives of others,
*cannot keep it
from themselves!*

- Irish Blessing

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NATIONAL HIV ORGANIZATION SHEDS LIGHT ON THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES

First guide to complementary therapies responds to increasing needs of HIV community.

TORONTO, Ontario – June 28, 2000

People living with HIV/AIDS finally have a made-in-Canada reference to answer questions about their non-pharmaceutical treatment options. For years, people living with HIV and their caregivers have been asking for more and better information on complementary therapies to make key treatment decisions. *A Practical Guide to Complementary Therapies for People Living with HIV*, the latest publication from the Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE), helps to address this unmet need by providing Canadians with comprehensive and accessible information on alternative treatments.

"Information on the many different types of therapies that fall outside of the scope of Western medicine is often difficult to interpret", explains Anne Swarbrick, executive director of CATIE. "This publication makes information on complementary therapies easy for people to access and understand so they can actively participate in managing their health."

In the absence of a cure for HIV/AIDS, the optimal use of complementary therapies in addition to conventional medicine plays a critical role in coping with the significant health challenges facing individuals affected by the disease.

"Complementary therapies are becoming a big part of HIV disease management," affirms Dr. Paul Saunders, chair of Materia Medica at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine. "Without these important interventions, many people living with HIV/AIDS would have little to no relief from the physically and emotionally draining toll of some antiretroviral treatment regimens."

CATIE recognized the need for a guide to complementary therapies based on calls to its toll-free information line through feedback from the HIV community. In 1998, the HIV Ontario Observational Database also conducted a study that found that 73% of PHAs enrolled in its Database used complementary therapies. At the 1999 conference of the Canadian Association for HIV Research, BC researchers reported that recorded use of complementary therapies among PHAs in that province had effectively doubled in the previous four years.

"The benefits of so-called alternative medicines can't be fully appreciated unless you've had someone tell you that you have no other options," explains Bill Naumovich, co-chair of the CATIE Board, who was diagnosed with HIV over 15 years ago.

The guide provides an overview of many complementary therapies used by PHAs. Included are descriptions of several forms of massage, mind-body medicine and an introduction to complementary medical systems such as Ayurveda and homeopathy. The guide also offers a list of resources where people can find more information about the various therapies available in Canada.

Researching information on complementary therapies and choosing a therapist can be complex tasks. *A Practical Guide to Complementary Therapies* suggests some ways to address these issues, including questions that people can ask about a potential therapy and red flags to watch for. Every situation is unique and people living with HIV should speak to their doctor, nutritionist, dietician or naturopath about their individual needs. As more and more people living with

HIV use multiple drug combinations, commonly called highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), the issue of side effects management is becoming increasingly important. "We hope that this information will help people to use complementary and alternative therapies to manage these side effects and improve their quality of life," affirms Anne Swarbrick.

Information and recommendations included in the guide have been contributed by a number of professionals representing a broad spectrum of health disciplines. CATIE also wishes to acknowledge the funding support of the AIDS Care, Treatment and Support Program, a component of Health Canada's Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS.

A Practical Guide to Complementary Therapies for People Living with HIV is the third in a series of guides published by CATIE that are designed to provide thorough, up-to-date and practical information for people living with HIV. The other guides are *A Practical Guide for People Living with HIV* (currently being revised) and *A Practical Guide to Nutrition for People Living with HIV*. CATIE is Canada's national non-profit provider of free, confidential, and reliable HIV/AIDS information for people living with HIV/AIDS, their caregivers and community based AIDS service organizations. By providing educational materials and programs, CATIE hopes to assist people with HIV/AIDS to take an active role in decision making that will lead to healthy living and well being. More information about CATIE, nutrition, complementary and alternative treatments, drug therapy and HIV/AIDS in general, can be found on the organization's web-site at www.catie.ca or by calling their toll free number: 1-800-263-1638. ♦

Essential info about HIV/AIDS & PROSTITUTION

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Why is information about HIV/AIDS in the context of prostitution important?

Prostitutes have been considered as vectors of transmission rather than persons who, for many reasons, including legal reasons, are vulnerable to contracting HIV. Although there is a legitimate community concern with regards to solicitation, coercive measures, such as mandatory HIV testing, are discriminatory and counterproductive. In Canada, prostitution is criminalized in ways that may promote the oppression of sex workers and impede the fight against HIV/AIDS. It is essential for anyone who works on HIV/AIDS issues or studies them to access up-to-date information on the legal, ethical and human rights issues raised by prostitution, and how it is regulated.

What do the Legal Network materials contain?

The Legal Network, together with a peer review committee of experts, prepared three documents on the legal, ethical and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS in the context of prostitution. The three documents complement each other and should be used in conjunction with each other.

Where to look for health information

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors have produced over 100 Health Files. Each Health File provides specific information and resources related to a specific topic. The Health Files are categorised as:

- * General Diseases
- * Sexually Transmitted Diseases - HIV and AIDS
- * Women's and Children's Health

Top 25 Resources lists selected publications and websites that provide crucial information and/or recommendations on HIV/AIDS and prostitution.

The Literature Review is an updated version of our first literature review on HIV/AIDS and prostitution published in 1995. It examines whether

"Should prostitution be decriminalized or legalized?"

prostitution should be decriminalized or legalized to empower those in the sex trade, integrates historical approaches to prostitution, and now includes resources that address male, transgendered and younger sex workers as well as general literature on female sex workers.

Available at: www.aidslaw.ca

Our Annotated Bibliography on HIV/AIDS and prostitution now contains a hundred annotations of books, articles, reports, and other documents.

Available at www.aidslaw.ca

How can the materials be used?

The materials can assist people working in the sex trade, their advocates and counselors, health-care providers, ASOs and other service providers in understanding the legal framework within which prostitution takes place, and assist legislators and policymakers in appreciating the complexity of the issues. *The Top 25 Resources* can be used in advocacy efforts, for educational purposes, as the basis for further research, or for policy decisions, by anyone working on or interested in legal, ethical and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS in the context of prostitution.

Additional Copies of *The Top 25 Resources* are available at the Canadian HIV/AIDS Clearing House (Tel: 1-877-999-7740, Fax: (613) 725-9826, E-mail: aids/sida@cpha.ca) The Literature Review and the Annotated Bibliography can be retrieved from the Network's Website at www.aidslaw.ca

For more information on issues raised by HIV/AIDS and Prostitution contact:

Maria Nengeh Mensah at mnmensah@aidslaw.ca or Ralf Jurgens at ralfj@aidslaw.ca.

You will be asked to enter a specific four-digit identification number (located on the top corner of each health file) or choose from one of the above listed categories.

So, if you are looking for health information, there are many resources readily available to you. Stop by and pick up a copy, click onto the internet, call toll free, or speak to a Health Nurse at your local Health Centre.

By Pam McClusky

Pam is a public health nurse with the Okanagan Similkameen Health Region

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“AIDS WALK 2000”

September 24, 2000

from the AIDS Walk Desk.....

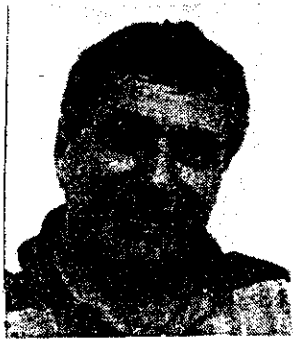
As we prepare for this year's 4th Annual Okanagan AIDS Walk, to be held Sunday, September 24, 2000, I cannot help but think of the many sponsors, participants and volunteers that have made each walk a success. Thank you again! This year we hope you will join us in a great day! If you wish to volunteer please call our office at (250) 862-2437, and/or fill out and send in the enclosed AIDS Walk 2000 Participation Form.

Mr Ron Cannan, City Councillor for Kelowna, is our 4th Annual Chair and has given the following message as set out below.

See you all at the Walk!

GARY TAYLOR

AIDS Walk Co-ordinator



Gary Taylor



Lynette Oosthuizen



Councillors' Office

1435 Water Street
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1J4
Tel: (250) 862-3338 Loc. 303
Fax: (250) 862-3396

July 25, 2000

Dear Community Supporter

As Chair for the 4th ANNUAL OKANAGAN AIDS WALK I would like to personally thank you so much for your support in previous years in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

I am sure you already know what a devastating impact AIDS has had on people around the world. However, did you know that Canada's HIV infection rate has nearly doubled since the early 1990's? The battle is far from over and we in the Okanagan are not excluded from this national trend.

Some people think that HIV/AIDS is an isolated illness and will not affect my friends, family and loved ones. I know because that is exactly how I felt before I found out that my parents were HIV positive only to both pass away a few years later from AIDS. It is not an experience I wish upon anyone.

The AIDS Resource Centre (ARC) is your local AIDS service organization at the forefront in this battle throughout the Okanagan and Region. They provide essential support services for men, women and children who are affected or infected by HIV/AIDS.

When you join the AIDS Walk in our community, the pledges you collect stay with your local AIDS service organization. **This means that every dollar you raise helps someone in your community who is living with HIV/AIDS**, and helps promote effective HIV education and prevention programs.

Thanks again for your time and any additional support you can lend towards this year's AIDS Walk would be greatly appreciated. Together we can help make a difference!

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Cannan".

RON CANNAN
City Councillor
Chair 4th Annual AIDS Walk

NOTICE BOARD

Tara Martin is available to do Whole Body Reflexology, Ear Candling, and Healing Touch work for ARC clients. Call (250) 503-0911 and allow 24 hrs for your call to be returned.

SPEAKER'S TRAINING
The AIDS Resource Centre is now taking registrations for weekly fall-session meetings to begin Monday, September 11, @ 6:30 p.m. in our Board Room. Training to follow ToastMasters format, and employ video-taping. Registrations for core-training graduates and aspiring speakers bureau members only. Call Michael @ 862-2437 to register

ARC DROP-IN HOURS
Terri Ross, our Client Support Worker, has drop-in hours on Thursdays from 09h00 - 12h00. If you wish to see her at other times, an appointment is necessary.

"AIDS WALK 2000"
Registrations: 10:00-10:45a.m.
Starting Time: 11:00a.m.
(in front of Dolphins)
September 24th, 2000
Location: Waterfront Park, Kelowna
This year will feature live music & theatre at Island Stage!
(See insert for Participation Form)
For further information call 862-2437

Volunteer Training
Sept 29 7pm-9:30pm
Sept 30 9:00am-4:00pm
at OUC's KLO Campus, Rooms H107, H115, H108.
To register, call the AIDS Resource Centre @ (250) 862-2437 before September 22

Portrait Pixl
Family portraits at a reasonable price!
We have a PWA friendly photographer available throughout the summer season.
Call ARC for more information
(250) 862-2437

OUR THANKS GO OUT TO..

StageWorks Playhouse and staff for their great co-operation and contribution of materials and expertise for the Acts of Choice production held in their facility on June 28.

All of the many participants, youth & adult, who contributed generously of their time and skills for the "Acts of Choice" June 28 production.

Kelowna Food Bank for their services.

Starbucks for donation of coffee.

Sun FM for their services.

Lynette O, Laurence A, Julie D, Judy W, and Chris M for their profusion of office volunteer work.