

ARC News

The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.

—Buddha

for the AIDS Resource Centre – Okanagan & Region “The Sept. 11th Terrorist Attack on the U.S ” and the War on AIDS

We were all shocked at the sudden, violent attack on strategic American financial, political and military centres. We were mentally unprepared to accept the notion of vulnerability and the fact that so many could die so quickly and undeservedly.

Here at the ARC office the atmosphere was one of stunned silence, almost disbelief and certainly of disquiet and fear. We were supposed to be gearing up for the AIDS Walk but no one could concentrate, our minds turning again and again to the

unthinkable.

Yet why were we so dumbfounded? We know about the multiple tolls that poverty, abuse, fear, discrimination and disease visit upon our society and the global village every day. Is it because these are insidious, slow moving and undiscerning assailants while the terrorist attack was swift and directed?

One thing has become abundantly clear: Our ideas of security and freedom from fear have been changed in ways we are only beginning to understand.

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Daryle Roberts
Sharon Shepherd



Top Team "Chocolate Chips"
Bernard Callebault

"Terrorist Attack on the US"

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A pattern is beginning to emerge as a result of the drive to replenish the reserve of blood products. Many people are donating blood for the first time. They are to be applauded. An unfortunate outcome of this is, that because of the intensive screening process, many people who had not previously considered themselves at risk for HIV or other blood-borne pathogens are now being notified that they are infected with HIV, HepC, and other diseases. This confirms that the prevalence of these infections is greater in the general population than hard statistics had previously indicated.

Another outcome of recent events is that resources, which would otherwise have gone to a variety of initiatives, including the war on AIDS, are now being deployed toward disaster relief. And with the uncertainty in global economic markets it is impossible to say when or how much of these resources will be available for life-saving initiatives in the future.

In the context of global strife, loss and injustice; the events of September 11 pale in comparison to the continuing assault on all people and nations by AIDS and the poverty

He's Baaaaack!

Our last newsletter contained an item welcoming me back to the Centre as returning Client Support Worker. This may have been a trifle premature. My back to work program was peppered with more than a few hiccups and bumps. Suffice it to say that despite the 'comedy of errors' that ensued I am indeed back to work... in my *former*, *former* capacity as Educator/ Speaker's Bureau Coordinator.

I am very happy to be back to work and more than a little bit enthusiastic about working in the Education Department. Although

and iniquity that fuels its spread. Consider these numbers:

- 80% of Rwandan Women are HIV infected
- 250,000 Ethiopian children under the age of 5 are HIV infected
- Globally there were 3.0 million deaths due to AIDS in 2000
- Globally there have been a total of 28.1 million deaths since AIDS began
- Globally there are 13 million AIDS orphans
- Globally there are 16,000 new infections every day
- Globally there are 12,000 deaths due to AIDS every day.

In the wake of September 11, with uncertainty looming around all things national, international, military, financial, social and political: one thing remains certain. HIV is oblivious of world events and will continue to rage, during war or peace, and wreak havoc on men, women, and children in communities around the world.

We should and do mourn for the many, many lives lost that day and for the thousands of survivors whose lives are irrevocably changed, all the while remembering the 12,000 dying every day due to AIDS and their survivors - many in conditions that we, as North Americans, cannot begin to imagine. And let us continue in our resolve to educate, prevent and support.

Ron van der Meer, Editor

I will not be providing support services I look forward to seeing the clients I knew in the past and meeting people newly come to access the AIDS Resource Centre.

Now with summer well and truly gone it is time to reenergize the Speaker's Bureau. I will be calling upon past and present volunteers and hope to interest some new participants. Next time you are in the office please pop in and say "hi".

Ron van der Meer
Educator/Speaker's Bureau
Coordinator

ARC News

Ron van der Meer, 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"

FACT OR FICTION

Fact or fiction?

Two persons whom are both HIV positive do not have to practice safer sex.

Fact or fiction?

There are meds now to treat HIV so it is not serious any more.

Fact or fiction?

HIV is not a problem here in the Okanagan Valley.

Fact or fiction?

The AIDS Walk in Kelowna this year had 50% more walkers.

Fact or fiction

If you ask your partner if they are clean and they say "yes", then it is safe to not use a condom.

Fact or fiction?

An HIV vaccine will be available shortly.

Fact or fiction?

Persons whom are HIV positive can lead normal lives, travel, work and will not be refused employment and life insurance.

Fact or fiction?

A person who is HIV positive with an undetectable viral load is Okay to have unprotected sex with, because he/she will not transmit the virus.

Fact or fiction?

My new partner of one month just got tested and is negative, so it is okay for us to have unprotected sex.

Fact or fiction?

Persons who are HIV positive are not dying any more.

If you answered "fact" to any of these statements you are DEAD WRONG.

People make uneducated assumptions about things they hear in the media, or from friends who may be just trying to justify their own actions.

HIV is still a killing disease! Two Positive people should practice safer sex as they may

**HIV
is still a
killing
disease!**

still be carrying a different mutation of the virus—one possibly being worse than the other. Large numbers of people with HIV have exhausted their Medication usefulness, and have to sit back and wait for more to come down the pipeline.

This year's AIDS Walk was a great fundraiser -- two teams raised a large percentage of the funds. If others took on the challenge and attempted to canvas for more funds they could help to increase the monies brought in at next year's

walk. Remember that the monies raised here stay here.

If you ask someone if they are clean or HIV negative they may not know or may not share that information with you. Also just because a person presents a clean bill of health from his doctor, that only says he was negative 6 months ago. It does not give a clear record of what happened yesterday or two months ago.

Persons with HIV are leading more active lives due to all the new medications. But being positive they can be denied access to the United States, as well as many other countries in the world. When you are buying a house and are looking for life or mortgage insurance, be sure to clarify the restrictions re: HIV/AIDS related illnesses. *(Editorial Note: Make sure you understand the difference between mortgage insurance and mortgage/life insurance, they are very different products)*

Finally even if a person has an undetectable Viral Load, they can still be capable of transmitting the Virus. So treat all persons as possibly HIV positive and take all the precautions you can. If you are bored with condom use, try to find ways to spice things up when getting sexually active and always make sure you use a condom every time, all the time. Get the real facts, contact the AIDS Resource Centre in Kelowna @:

Tel: 250-863-2437
Chris MacKenzie



O.A.A.S Okanagan Aboriginal AIDS Society

We are having our Annual General Meeting to be held in Oliver, BC in Nov 2001. New members are always welcome also volunteers to help out at the office.

I will be attending meetings and a two-day HIV/AIDS workshop to be held at the Adams Lake Indian Band.

I have just returned from attending the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network Annual General Meeting and workshops in Vancouver. ♦

Thank you for your support.
Julie Desautels - Outreach Worker

Our Condom Cops Have Left The Building!

Our Condom Cop Program sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada has wrapped up and **has been approved for summer of 2002**. This year our condom cops were responsible for assembling condom packages with an instruction sheet, condom and water-soluble lube. This added to the duties of the condom cops and to the expense of the program. Some female condoms were also distributed. An accounting of condom distribution during the days (beaches/businesses) and evenings (clubs) had been recommended. Condom Cops observed that more education was done at parks and beaches, as the public was more comfortable, approaching with questions, in this quieter venue.

Jai Field's Report

Being one of the few persons lucky enough to have been given the position of Condom Cop this summer, I have many great things to say about this program. It has surpassed my expectations as a fun and informative occupation. Meeting new people and having the chance to educate them on things that can affect a generation and a culture is a joy to experience.

Passing on knowledge on STDs, including HIV and Hep C, is rewarding in itself; knowing that you are making a difference in your community. Although letting the youth of my city and surrounding area know that "abstinence is the only SAFE sex" has proven to be a challenge. I feel that the number of people that were able to talk to us, and the educational material I distributed was beneficial for the community. I think that the full-time status of the position is important in order to reach a lot of the tourists and visitors that this city has a reputation for welcoming.

I received a lot of positive feedback from the transient and homeless population of the city and I believe that the response in itself shows a need for a program of this sort in place to keep the streets safe from transmission that could've been prevented.

The wide range of ages, races and social standings that I dealt with has led me to believe that this program is one that has no boundaries. Barring religious beliefs everyone that I encountered was very open and receptive once the program was explained and I had a chance to talk to them.

Talking to people that were

going through some tough times regarding themselves or loved ones gave me an opportunity to work on my listening and counselling skills.

I found out a great deal more about the world around me and the people that inhabit it in the three months that I was in this program than I had in any other job in the past. I had previously had some assumptions about HIV/AIDS, including transmission, symptoms and treatment.

This gave me a chance to learn things that I otherwise wouldn't have known, or that I might have taken for granted. Although I thought myself to be a fairly organized individual, but having to work without supervision, managing my own hours and maintaining a degree of efficiency showed me just how well I perform while paying attention to detail as well as focusing on time management.

Working in this position was a dream come true. To think that I have made a positive impact on my city and my community, if even for a short period of time, is astounding and rewarding beyond anything I could've conceived in advance of experiencing it for myself. ♦

Jai Field

Volunteer Corner



The AIDS Resource Centre offers numerous volunteer opportunities with varying time commitments including:

VOLUNTEER POSITION "Youth Theatre Director" for ACTS of CHOICE Youth Peer Education Program

This is a plum position for an enthusiastic, theatre-oriented individual. It offers variety, creativity and challenge. The successful candidate will have opportunities to work on script development, directing, lighting, costume and props and more. With such a broad range of activities this position will be a great addition to your resume.

ACTS of CHOICE is a youth driven, youth focused theatre program to educate about HIV/AIDS, HepC and informed choices. Duties include developing interactive theatre presentations together with interested youth and ARC's education department and maintaining related records. Most development and rehearsal will be in Kelowna, and there may be some performances out of town.

Skills/Attributes

Acting/directing experience, good communication, some office skills, organizing, team-work, ability to motivate and encourage, sensitive to diversity/cultural issues, ability to work during school hours (occasionally), 16-25 years of age.

Time commitment

Approximately 5 hr./wk. (depending on organizing requirements and production schedule).

Please address enquiries and applications to Melissa Hill at the ARC office. ♦

Reception

This is an ongoing need, ½ day shifts are requested for answering and directing calls, taking messages and greeting visitors to the centre.

Events and Functions

These come up throughout the year, some require as little as two hour shifts, at various locations, staffing information and awareness booths; others like the AIDS Walk require many volunteers over a longer time.

Speakers Bureau

Upon completion of Speakers Bureau Presenter's training these volunteers carry the message about HIV/AIDS and/or Hepatitis C to groups in the Okanagan

Data Input

Databases need tending, adjustments and updates

Piecework

There are envelopes to be stuffed, newsletters to be collated and addressed, red ribbons to be cut and pinned, condoms to be packaged and more.

Volunteerism provides opportunities to learn new skills, share ideas, contribute to your community and add to your resume.

All AIDS Resource Centre volunteers undergo an intensive "Core Training" in order that they have a good understanding of HIV/AIDS, HepC and the impact these have on the individual and the community.

CORE TRAINING for Volunteers

We are currently revising our Core Training materials to include new information. ♦

Once that task is complete we will set a time and place for the next Core Training Session and call everyone who has expressed interest.

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in participating please call Ron or Jean at the office with your names and contact information. ♦

Canadian AIDS Society Annual Meeting - the highlights..

July 2nd to 5th 2001

By Chris MacKenzie

On the 2nd of July, the Canadian AIDS Society held its Annual Meeting and PHA forum in Montreal. This is a gathering of local AIDS organizations from across the country. We had meetings ranging from new strategies for getting information out, to major meetings over funding cuts.

The biggest news out of this conference was the fact that the federal government decided to cut over \$900,000 per year from the CAS annual budget, stating that this money was being sent to four of the other national AIDS groups (CAAN, CTAC, CATIE, plus one more). So, the CAS AGM organizers arranged a press conference and a protest rally.

Hours before the protest was to be held, the Minister of Health managed to find (as if by magic) 'transitional' money equal to the amount of the budget cut this year. As we had been cautioned that the police would not look kindly on our blocking streets, we decided to stick to the sidewalks during the move to Minister Rock's office. Approximately 125 of the close to 150 people at the conference joined the march to Allen Rock's office!

This was the big news and action taken from this set of meetings!

On a note of interest, this was the first year that Nunavut hosted AIDS walks. We welcome them on board and hope they were successful in their respective walks. Remember that walking and raising money for the AIDS Walk, both increases public awareness and helps the AIDS Resource Centre provide support and funds to clients in need. ♦



Support Plus...

Client Support Information

Changes!

There have been some comings and goings in the Support department at the AIDS Resource Centre and as always your health and well-being are our first priority. The ever efficient, creative and dependable Terri Ross has begun her year's maternity leave and she will be greatly missed. River Glen is working the full-time position and when she is out of the Kelowna office Brian Mairs will be covering support work. Many of you know Brian for his excellent advocacy work serving as nominee at Tribunals.

More Changes!

On October 3, 2001 the Government of British Columbia announced a long awaited program to provide monthly health allowances for recipients of disability benefits. The new program will replace the lengthy Schedule C process. Many people have been up to 21/2 years on waitlists before being able to begin the process. The maximum allowance will be \$225.00. All decisions that have previously been made either at the Tribunal or Appeal level will be grand-fathered (no change to entitlement). The new forms to apply will be available at the Ministry offices next week. Please contact your support worker if you have need of additional information.

And More Changes!

Allow us to introduce Brian Mairs, the latest addition to our team. Brian and his family have been living in the Okanagan Valley since 1980, acquiring most of his post secondary education at OUC. Prior to moving to the valley, he lived in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey. He is currently assisting River Glen as the second client support worker when she is attending our offices in Penticton,

Vernon and Princeton. Brian has served on numerous tribunals and as an advocate for ARC clients for the last four years. Previous employment positions include; Regional Counsellor with the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, Employment and Education Counsellor at the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society and running a web site dedicated to helping people who are looking for work in Canada.

Housing Subsidy Applications...

Many of you responded to our mail-out informing you of the application process for our 10 available subsidies granted by the BC Housing Rent Supplement Program. By the time you read this Newsletter the applications will have been reviewed by the Housing Advisory Committee and the subsidies will be ready for disbursement prior to November 1, 2001. For those of you who missed applying or are not selected this time your need is still recognized and we will continue to advocate for additional subsidies.

Support Continues.....

River is in Vernon every Friday at the People Place and every second week in Penticton at the Health Unit and the Desert Rose Society. If you are in other areas of the greater Okanagan Region, River will come to your community for your appointment. ♦

RIVER GLEN

Client Support Worker

Phone: (250) 862-AIDS (2437)

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

e-mail: rglen@silk.net

See
"The Flu and You"
for important
information!

HIPPO update.....



This is just a short note to say "Hi again, everyone, it is good to be back in the saddle". At the same time, a big vote of thanks to Barbara-J for having looked after the HIPPO project during my absence.

Just to allude to more recent events, a talk was given to the clients of the Canadian Mental Health Services on September 28 and there were over 30 people in attendance. Ron, our educator was present at this event and he and I are currently making adjustments to the presentation for this particular group.

Some of the places at which talks on Hepatitis were given are as follows:

- *Crossroads Treatment Centre – men's & women's group every second month*
- *Elizabeth Fry*
- *Kelowna Mental Health Workers*
- *Marvel School of Esthetics*
- *Penticton Transition House*
- *Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security*
- *Kelowna Mental Health Clients*

Hepatitis C continues to be an ongoing, silent epidemic and the work of dissemination of information of the topic continues to be one of the aims and objectives of the HIPPO project.

Merv McLeod
HIPPO Coordinator ♦

AIDS WALK 2001 - The Last Word.....

With the peal of the air horn, they were off! Kelowna's Lady of the Lake and her Princess were holding the red start ribbon, and under the banner the crowd all went. With an exquisite September day, and the prominent red balloons flying high, a great turnout of enthusiastic walkers, volunteers (and 24 dogs) the great day had begun.

After months of planning, work and organization, we had another chance to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in the Okanagan. Our sponsors were once again just wonderful in their support and generosity. Our Presenting Sponsor this year was INTERIOR SAVINGS. The walk was promoted by television advertising, radio interviews and many media ads over the past few months.

A highlight of this year was that Sharon Shepherd, Kelowna City Councillor, was our Chairperson. With her pharmaceutical background and presence in City Council, she showed

great support and motivation in this year's walk. The Kelowna Hostesses were also a great help and we thank them for their involvement.

A first this year, was our partnering with the "Peak-to-Pyramid Road Run", organized by the Kelowna Running Club, who made the generous offer of donating any proceeds to ARC (AIDS Resource Centre).

Teams got together, raised pledges and did their "bit" in spreading the message that HIV/AIDS is a preventable disease. Our top team was the "Chocolate Chips" - a team from Bernard Callebaut Chocolates here in Kelowna. They raised the staggering amount of over \$5 000.00. Our second team was Starbucks with a total of \$916.00. Our top individual pledge raiser was Tracy Hansen of Bernard Callebaut with an amount of \$3618.00. Coming in, as second highest individual, was Chris Von Schoening

with a total of \$2403.00. A big thank you also goes to our many sponsors whose steadfast support made the day a great success.

The afternoon's entertainment started at 1:00 pm with many prizes and great draws, which were donated by generous sponsors. Good food, and music by the "Vocal Point Trio" allowed us all to relax away the afternoon in the sunshine. A silent auction was also held, and a substantial amount was raised from this.

The walk organizers: Gary Taylor, Felicity Ching, Daryle Roberts, Chris MacKenzie and Jean Shirritt wish to thank all those involved for their efforts, contributions and enthusiasm in the 2001 AIDS Walk. The last word?"PREVENTION IS THE ONLY CURE!"

All proceeds from this exciting annual event remain in the Okanagan, to assist clients of the AIDS Resource Centre.

Submitted by Felicity Ching

THE FLU and YOU

Flu season is fast approaching and once again its time to think about getting your flu vaccine. The flu shot is recommended for a variety of risk groups including people with **mild to moderate HIV disease and/or chronic Hepatitis (non A)**. It is also recommended for people living and working with people in identified risk groups. However if **CD4 counts are too low** the flu shot doesn't provide effective protection.

Immunization is not recommended for anyone with allergies to eggs, because egg products comprise part of the vaccine and may cause a reaction.

You should also not get your flu vaccine if you are sick with an active infection, like a cold.

Adverse effects may include mild soreness or swelling at the site

of the injection (<1/3 of all people), headache or low-grade fever (<1/10th of people). These usually last about 1 day.

A severe bout of the flu can knock you off your feet for 2 – 3 weeks.

Complications from the flu can be severe – ear and sinus infections, respiratory infections (bronchitis/pneumonia) and death.

Every year there is discussion about the pros and cons of getting a shot. There may be a brief elevation in viral load and a slight downturn in CD4 cells after the vaccination. With effective HIV medication this may not occur at all. If it does happen it is very temporary. These affects are likely greater and longer in duration

with a bout of flu.

The optimum time (for best protection) for high-risk individuals to get immunized is mid October to the end of November.

When you go for your free flu shot you will be asked why you are there – senior, healthcare professional, chronic illness, pregnancy etc. Simply answer that you have a chronic illness. They don't need to know what the condition is and shouldn't ask. As far as anyone knows you could have asthma.

If you are unable to attend one of the community flu clinics call your local health unit, you may be able to arrange an appointment for another date.

For your convenience we have included an insert listing flu clinics in the North and South Okanagan.

No appointment is required unless noted on the schedule.

Ron van der Meer

NOTICE BOARD

● ARC DROP-IN HOURS

River Glen, 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.

Aboriginal AIDS Society

For more information call Julie @ 250-862-2481



National AIDS Awareness Week 2001
November 25 – December 1, 2001
The Focus for 2001 is Men and HIV/AIDS

World AIDS Day
December 1, 2001

ARC Hours of Service

The AIDS Resource Centre will be open effective September 4, 2001 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM.

Reiki is Amazing...Have you tried it? Tuesday's from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm in the Centre's Boardroom. Please call the Centre to book an appointment. 862-2437

"Speaking To Youth Workshop"

Nov 6 & 7th from 5:00 to 8:00p.m. in the ARC Boardroom
Call Melissa at 862-2437

OUR THANKS GO OUT TO.....

Our very special Mothers Phyllis Frew and Gail Scheelar who took part in our candlelight ceremony—representing individuals affected by HIV/AIDS.

Kelowna Hostesses for all their work with registration and the exit questionnaires.

Dave Lubbers, Darcy and their helpers for set-up and take down at the AIDS Walk 2001.

Tricia Fenton, Lady of the Lake and her Princess, Michelle Mandryk, for helping both at the start of the race and with draws held on the stage.

Joseph Morgan from Courtplex, for his energizing warm-up at the walk.

Kevin Hill's band *Rusty Parts* for entertaining us at the AIDS Walk Volunteer appreciation event.

St John Ambulance attendants Trudy Stolz and Alana Hicik

Kevin Witzke for all his hard work organizing the raffle of a framed, hand-signed poster of the opening of the building for the Toronto Stock Exchange in 1983, by General Idea.

The draw took place September 10th at the Centre, and the winner of the print was:

GRANT WISE of Summerland!
Congratulations Grant...