

ARC News

February 2002
Volume 6, Issue 1

for the AIDS Resource Centre – Okanagan & Region

**All is flux,
nothing stays still.**

Heraclitus c. 540 -c. 480 B.C.

**The more things change,
the more they remain the
same**

Alphonse Karr 1808 - 1890

**And so on ...
and so on...
and so on...**

Alberto V05

(and now word from our sponsors)

WHAT'S INSIDE

Comings and Goings.....	2
Topher Talks A Client's viewpoint.....	3
O.A.A.S.....	4
Volunteer Corner.....	5
Support Plus.....	6
The HIPPO Report.....	7
Notice Board/Thanks.....	8
Treatment IssuesINSERT Memorial & Awards.....INSERT	

Kelowna man "Top Walker" for BC/Yukon

Kelowna's Tracy Hansen earns recognition as Top Walker for raising the highest dollar amount in Canadian AIDS Society's BC and Yukon region. Hansen, who also participated in the Okanagan AIDS Walk 2000, is co-owner of Bernard Callebaut Chocolates in Kelowna. He says he was motivated by a desire, not only to raise money and awareness for AIDS in our community, but also to set an example to other business owners to take up the baton for this and other charities. By his commitment and tenacity Tracy was able to bring in \$3518 in walk sponsorships.



Top Walker Tracy Hansen

The company, Bernard Callebaut Chocolates, was a corporate sponsor for this year's walk and assembled an AIDS Walk team, which went forth under the appealing name "The Chocolate Chips".

Congratulations and thanks to Tracy, Bernard Callebaut and the Chocolate Chips for their contribution and their example.

Local Woman Named to BCPWA Board

Local resident, Janet Wilson, was recruited and elected to the board of directors of the British Columbia Persons With AIDS Society. This position requires strong commitment and a good deal of travel. She is serving on the Individual Advocacy Committee as well as the Collective Advocacy Committee, so she has her work cut out for her. We wish her the best and are pleased that there is a presence from our region on the board. Janet is the only woman presently serving on the BCPWA board.

Congratulations Janet!

Comings and Goings

The Doctor is in

After having been vacant since the departure of Dr. Andrew Patullo in February of 2000, the position of Infectious Disease specialist has been filled with the advent of Dr. Dwight Ferris. The doctor will be responsible for infection control and consultation at various facilities throughout the region in addition to providing case management through the Infectious Disease Clinic at Kelowna General Hospital. However, while it is an infectious disease, hepatitis will continue to be managed through the Hepatitis Clinic under the guidance of the G.I. specialists who have been attending to the needs of individuals living with hepatitis.



Dr. Dwight Ferris, FRCP(C)
Infectious Diseases

Originally from Thunder Bay, Dr. Ferris studied at Queens University School of Medicine in Kingston. He then relocated to Vancouver where he studied and practiced Internal Medicine, specializing in infectious diseases at St. Paul's and Vancouver General Hospitals for a period of 5 years. For some of that time he worked under the guidance of Dr. Pattullo and is experienced in management of HIV disease.

The arrival of Dr. Ferris will mean fewer trips to Vancouver for many people living with HIV in the valley, although he will refer patients to the team of specialists at St. Paul's when it is indicated. The doctor is still in the process of meeting new patients and because he is

responsible for infectious disease management throughout the huge Interior Health Region it may be a while before he has had a chance to meet everyone. **Appointments should be made through your regular doctor. Please do not call the clinic directly.**

Part Time Support Position Nixed

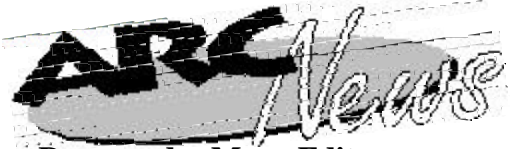
Brian Mairs, who held the position of part-time Client Support Worker, was able to access a variety of services and resources for the clients he served; with great facility and savvy. Although the part-time position has been eliminated due to the general uncertainty of Healthcare funding. Brian will continue to provide services on an on-call basis, when River is away; as workload demands.

As a director of the Okanagan Aboriginal AIDS Society, Brian will be in the office for OAAS business from time to time.



Chris Jenner joins us as a Support worker until mid April. She is in her third year of the Bachelor of Social Work program at OUC, and has come to us as a practicum student. Chris has been living in the Okanagan since 1998. When not in school or at the office she is 'mother' to a three year old Border Collie named Simon and foster 'mom' to a five year old Maine Coon cat who probably doesn't answer to his name, Alex.

She is very excited to be working at ARC and looks forward to learning as much as she can in the process of serving clients. To that end she has completed our recent Core Training and is up to speed on many of the issues. If you're in the office take a moment to say hello. **Welcome Chris**



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.

**The ARC office is located at:
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1-800-616-AIDS (2437)
FAX: (250) 868-8662
Website: arc@silk.net
Internet: www.silk.net/arc/**

TOPHER TALKS..

A Client's Viewpoint

"All you have to do, is decide what to do with the time given to you"

- Gandalf to Frodo in
"Lord Of The Rings" -

As humans we are put on this earth for only a short period of time. No one knows when your time is up. But those of us living with HIV know our time is very dear to us. So what do we do with that time is important.

Part of being human, is the need to be busy and productive. After working for many years, to suddenly be sidelined by disease, both debilitates you and controls your life as much as HIV can. We need to find ways to take back control over our own lives.

First and foremost, we need to understand our limitations and to look at our needs and likes. Then we need to seek out opportunities to help fill those needs and constructive ways to fill our time. When we have identified what we want to do, we should look at how to achieve it without jeopardizing our health or compromising our disability status.

Those who identify a need to become more physically active should check out Parkinson Recreation Centre. They have a great program that gives people on disability a drastically reduced membership. The membership allows full access to the weight room and pool. It is a great facility with very few pretentious people (no one is expecting muscle dudes and gym bunnies).

The circuit room and aerobic room are filled with normal people who are out to help improve their health and maintain a better lifestyle.

Exercising for 30 minutes, 2-3 times a week helps to improve how you feel and how you look at yourself. We all know, when we feel good - we look good.

Talk with your doctor before starting a serious program. The first few workouts can be hell on your body, until you get used to the exercises, and level of intensity. If you do not feel up to the gym trip, then walk more. This winter has been great for sunny days. I know I have to get out of the house at least once a day. Just one of the joys of having a dog, (yes I recently lost one of my dogs) is that I am required to take my little guy out for a walk at least once a day. But when the sun is shining I like to get out, and feel the sun on my face. Coming out of Northern Ontario, where sunny winter days are flipp'n cold, I would still find time to seek out a sunny, sheltered space to soak up some of the sun's rays. Remember that exercise helps boost the immune system, increase appetite and promotes good sleep.

For mental stimulation, consider volunteering. If there was ever anything that you always dreamed of doing, you might be able to get a feel for it through volunteering. But remember to look for an agency that understands your needs and limitations. Volunteering with the AIDS Resource Centre, can be a good fit if you are HIV positive. They understand when diarrhea kicks in and you make mad dashes to the washroom. They understand bad days when you can't get out of bed, and they can work around your schedule. If you are a morning person, there are things to do in the morning and they can accommodate late risers too.

Volunteering is a good way to learn new skills, get out and be with people. It is a good motivator to put routine back into your life.

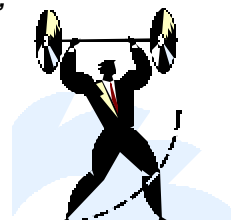
Regular sleep, regular meals and some place to go where you feel welcome and appreciated are all beneficial to good health.

At the Resource Centre, one can volunteer to do little projects (like putting together red ribbons for campaigns). We are always looking for people on reception and for contributions to the newsletter. Also we could use people willing to help out with talks throughout our community. The Speakers Bureau is always in need of new speakers. We picked up the Hep C project last year, so now we have been asked for talks on Hepatitis C, and need people willing to train to give presentations on that as well.

For those that feel like they might want to take on a bigger project, we are looking for a committee to help organize the AIDS Walk for this year. The more people we have involved the more the work is shared. The nice thing with this project is that one can feel the pride of completion and a job well done when the Walk is over.

2001 was The Year of The Volunteer. Without volunteers many organizations and some businesses could not function. Even if you are not interested in volunteering at ARC, there are dozens of worthy organizations like the SPCA, Hospitals, Food Banks, Church groups and more. So get out there and get more active mentally, physically and socially.

Remember: ***"All you have to do is decide what to do with the time given to you"***



◆ Christopher MacKenzie



O.A.A.S Okanagan Aboriginal AIDS Society

Julienne Desautels is the outreach worker for the OAAS

OAAS Notes By Brian Mairs, Director, OAAS

Despite rumours to the contrary, Okanagan Aboriginal AIDS Society (OAAS) is still operational. We have received funding in principle for two projects that will be announced once the final papers have been signed. Both of these projects will be very beneficial to both on and off reserve, status and non-status First Nations people in the Okanagan Valley.

Our Outreach Worker, Julie, attended the quarterly meeting for Red Road, was elected to the Council and appointed to the position of Treasurer.

Congratulations to Julie on this four-year appointment.

For those interested in getting in-depth information on HIV/AIDS as it relates to the First Nations population, Healing our Spirit is putting on a conference in Kamloops, March 3-6, 2002. Cost to attend the conference is \$75 per day. For more information, call Healing our Spirit 1.800.336.9726 or email michelle@healingourspirit.org

We would like to thank all of the Chiefs from the Okanagan bands for their support of our organization in educating the MLAs in our area. With a concerted effort it is hoped that we can convince the government to re-think their health funding priorities. Ms. Pauline Terbasket from the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) has been particularly helpful in coordinating the information with the Chiefs.

If you are of Aboriginal descent and need assistance in dealing with HIV/AIDS or HepC in your family or community, be sure to give our office a call (250) 862-2481.

Remember to Stay Safe!

Use clean needles and injection drug equipment EVERY TIME YOU USE! Needle exchange programs are available in some cities, but if this is not an option for you, clean your equipment with bleach and water by rinsing *twice* with bleach, then rinse very well *twice* with water (leftover bleach causes nasty sores).

Use condoms EVERY TIME YOU HAVE SEX. In the Aboriginal communities, heterosexual sex is spreading the disease twice as fast as gay sex. Understand that women are not immune to HIV, as almost half of the new cases of HIV infection reported were by women in our communities

Special Certificate of Merit in AIDS Education

Mary Desautels is the youngest person associated with the AIDS Resource Centre to deliver an AIDS Awareness presentation. Mary has been involved with ARC for over 6 years. We were honoured to present Mary with a Special Certificate of Merit for her AIDS talk, in French, to her elementary school class. We are all very proud of Mary for her courage and conviction. The certificate was presented at the "A Time to Remember" release evening where it reinforced the need for young people to take initiative in understanding and taking responsibility to reduce the spread of AIDS in their lifetime.

Congratulations Mary!

Volunteer Corner



WANTED A Few Good People

The AIDS Resource Centre is looking for 6-8 enthusiastic individuals to be part of the AIDS WALK 2002 Steering Committee.

In an effort to make the AIDS WALK 2002 even bigger and better than previous years we will be forming a committee to help organize and promote the AIDS WALK.



We are looking for hard working community and business people to help with: organizing; sponsors; team development; donations, and increased participation.

You must be willing to volunteer your time from mid March to mid October. Individuals throughout the valley who want to help organize teams and walkers within their communities are welcome. Previous event organization skills not required - just a willingness to work hard.

Contact Rhona Beck
Phone: 250-862-2437
Toll free: 800-616-2437
E-Mail: rbeck@silk.net

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, 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 & 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.

Volunteer Core Training

We finally held our long overdue Core Training for volunteers over the weekend of January 18 -20. There were twenty participants, all of whom completed the entire workshop.

If you were unable to attend the last session and are interested in becoming a volunteer please call the office and let us know. As soon as we have enough people to make up a group we will plan the next volunteer training. The next one will likely be done over the course of 3 or 4 weekly evenings to accommodate those who can't do the weekend marathon.

With the cuts to health and social programs our need for volunteers is greater than ever.

Welcome New Volunteers

We are pleased to welcome some new volunteers, fresh from Core Training, to the ARC office.

Carolyn and Shiree are working in reception. Deb and Suzanne have offered to help with the AIDS Walk.

Eve and Ling have already been helping with the Red Ribbon Campaign and other awareness events and may now delve into other areas.

Also, Barbara J. is back and doing a variety of jobs. Toshie, having completed Core Training, continues to provide Reiki treatments to clients and staff.

And Thank You!



Support Plus... Client Support Information

Client Support

And yet more changes:

The effects of the recent government budget cuts have reached our office. Due to the uncertainty of funding the permanent part time position in client support has been eliminated. Effective immediately, every second Wednesday, every Friday and on the occasional Mondays, there will be nobody available in our support department in Kelowna. Before you drop in to the office to see River, please phone ahead to make sure that she going to be in the office and has available time to see you. Penticton and Vernon will continue to receive services as usual.

Tax time is here again and this is your gentle reminder that if you received any money from any source in 2001, you need to file your income tax return. Forms are available at all postal outlets for your convenience. If for some reason you have not filed an income tax return for previous years, you are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. For those of you with significant physical or mental impairments you may be able to apply for disability status for tax purposes.

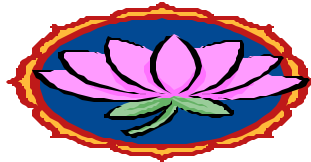
The impairment must cause you to be markedly restricted in any of the basic activities of

Reiki and Healing Touch for clients

Enjoy the relaxing and balancing benefits of a quiet hour with

Toshie
call 862-2437

to book your free Tuesday session



daily living, and the impairment must be for a continuous period of at least 12 months.

The basic activities of daily living include: Walking, speaking, perceiving, thinking, and remembering, hearing, feeding and dressing, eliminating bodily waste. Also if you are blind all or almost all the time, even with the use of corrective lenses or medication, and the impairment is prolonged, you are encouraged to have your doctor complete the Disability Tax Credit Certificate (Form # T2201) so you can qualify for the additional tax credits. Your doctor may have a fee to complete this form, so check with them before you proceed as to the costs and a possible payment plan. **Check your T5700 slip from MHR and make sure Sched C benefits are not included.**

A reminder to clients outside the Kelowna area: River is in Vernon every Friday and in Penticton every second Wednesday (except statutory holidays). Call ahead for an appointment time if you need to see her about your needs.

River Glen - Client Support

Community Tax Clinics...

provide income tax preparation services free of charge .

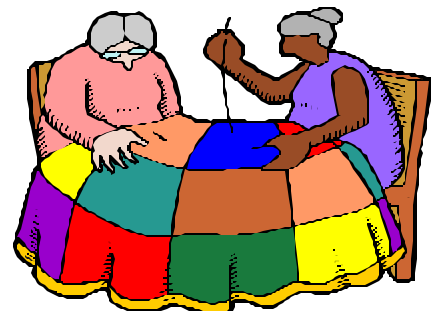
Vernon: Vernon Disability Resources call 545-9292 *after March 1st.* for an appointment

Kelowna: SHARE Social Services - call 763-8117 and bring your income tax package (available at Canada Post outlets)

Penticton: Salvation Army - call 492-4788 *after March 1st.* for an appointment.

Do you know anyone who needs a blanket?
Our Lady of Lourdes had generously donated some beautiful handmade afghans for ARC Clients

If you need an afghan or know a client who does please contact the ARC office



HIPPO
update.....



It is winter and bears have the best approach to this season. They usually hibernate and wake up in spring to smell the snowdrops and the crocuses. The HIPPO, on the other hand, has far too much to do over this period of time to have the luxury of a hibernal nap. There are many varied and time-consuming activities keeping project HIPPO on the go. Readers, you probably have already heard about the physician's survey with its response rate of about 31%. Some of the physicians in answering this survey agreed to distribute the Needs Assessment survey, which is for individuals infected with hepatitis C. Lisa Mortell was very good in volunteering her time to take these to those doctors in Kelowna and Winfield who were kind enough to agree to this. *A vote of thanks goes out to you Lisa.*

At the same time it must be mentioned that Wendy Turnbull, the nurse at the Hepatitis-C clinic at Kelowna General is doing a very good job in distributing the needs assessment surveys sent there, because most of the surveys returned have been distributed from there. A number is used to track the source of the survey, but the individual who fills it out can remain anonymous. *Thank you so much, Wendy.*

Current Activities

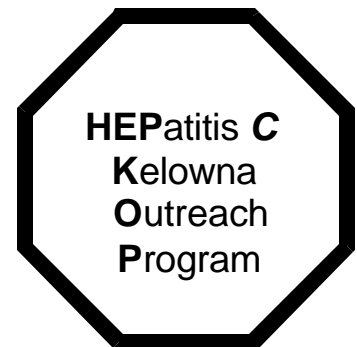
Surveys, which are currently being worked on, are those identifying which not-for-profit organizations have advocates who will help people with Hepatitis-C fill out their disability application forms. Also surveys, which identify the locations of Ministry of Economic Security and Social Development Offices and which forms they currently have available to clients are also being distributed.

Experience Shared

Finally, this short article is being written as I just returned from the HEP C Collaborative Circle Conference held the 1st 2nd and 3rd of February in Nanaimo. There were people from Hepatitis C Support Groups, and Hepatitis C projects funded by Health Canada. Additionally there were experts on nutrition, a naturopathic doctor and the coordinator of a similar central Hepatitis-C circle of support groups in Washington State. As well as offering great opportunities for networking with people from other territories in British Columbia, the conference made us use our brains bigtime. We had to agree on the qualities and a job description for regional representatives in each of the 5 hospital districts in the province. The job description was carved out, the number of reps was agreed upon and the reps were elected by 1:30 pm Sunday, February 4, 2002.

I am now looking forward to contacting many of the people in other areas via email and exchanging information about what has worked here and what has not and benefiting from the experiments of my colleagues and those people from Hepatitis-C support groups in all health regions of the province.

Merv McLeod
Hippo Coordinator



The Hepatis C Support Group, HEPKOP has been meeting in the Rose Avenue Education Room at Kelowna General Hospital from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on the last Saturday of each Month since September of last year. This is a safe space to share experience, discuss health management, diet, vitamins supplements, treatment options and coping strategies

Anyone living with HCV infection is welcome to attend with an understanding that identities and issues discussed are confidential.

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



The AIDS Resource Center and Tripod Film & Video Productions Presented

"A Time to Remember"

a video about difficult choices in difficult times

This 30 minute production is the result of the dedication and hard work of a group of young people from our community.

The Premier on February 14 at The Performance Centre, 1379 Ellis Street, was well attended. Guests included Mayor Gray, Councillor Smiley Nelson, Werner Schmidt MP and interested community partners.

Copies of the video are available from the ARC office for \$20.00

OUR THANKS GO OUT TO...

Everyone who helped with Core Training: Facilitators Crystal, Melissa, Martin and Jean. The panelists (unnamed but greatly appreciated). Daryle, Merv, Deb and Rhona and all of the other volunteers who helped with organizing, carrying and cleaning up.

Our Lady of Lourdes - AIDS Outreach Program for the donation of two beautiful afghans which were on display at the Release event.

(There are still spaces available for the drawing. To view the afghans or to purchase a raffle square please contact the office. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go to the support of clients in the valley.)

The many people who made "A Time to Remember" and its release a success. This project was made possible by the dedicated efforts of the writer, cast, crew, production company and volunteers.

This video was almost entirely the result of work done by young people in our community with some assistance from ARC personnel.

The Spallumcheen Indian Band for their hospitality and for the generous honorarium which they presented to the Education Department and which, with their kind permission, was added to the client support fund.

Corrections: The photo of Tracy Hansen appears with the article 'TOP WALKER' in this issue.

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