

ARC News

March, 2004
Volume 8, Issue 2

For the AIDS Resource Centre — Okanagan & Region

CHANGE.....

All things must change
to something new,
to something strange.

—Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow

Change is the
constant, the signal for
rebirth, the egg of the
phoenix.

—Christina Baldwin (author)

The end of a RC and the start of something bigger

By Kate Alexander, Editor

In your hand is a historic document: the last ARC News. The society formerly known as the AIDS Resource Centre, Okanagan & Region, has become the **Living Positive Resource Centre, Okanagan.**

As of April 1, 2004, we are taking on a new mandate and mission, to provide services to people with hepatitis B and C, as well as HIV/AIDS.

Interior Health's Blood Borne Pathogens Plan, in development over the last year or so, has made it clear that we must expand our mandate in this manner. It will be a much-needed service, since around 6400 people in the Okanagan are infected with hepatitis C, a serious viral infection of the liver that is not preventable by vaccine. While there is a vaccine for hepatitis B, it can also have deadly consequences for some of those infected. Hepatitis B is transmitted mainly through unsafe sex and sharing needles (like HIV), while hepatitis C is rarely sexually transmitted, but is easily passed on by sharing needles for drugs, steroids or home tattooing/piercing, sharing other drug paraphernalia, and potentially through sharing sharp self-care equipment such as toothbrushes and razors. People with hepatitis often find they are stigmatized, another similarity to HIV/AIDS.

This will be a benefit to many of our current

clients, 65% of whom are co-infected with HIV and hepatitis C. Moreover, for the many people living with hepatitis in the Okanagan, we hope to assist them to get back on their feet after a frightening diagnosis. Our client support capacity will have to evolve to fit the new clientele, and Interior Health has assured us that if we have a substantial increase in workload, increased funding will be made available.

New Mission Statement & Logo

LIVING POSITIVE RESOURCE CENTRE, OKANAGAN will work to reduce the incidence of new HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and Blood Borne Pathogens infections and improve the quality of life for those infected and affected.



Our other program areas, education, prevention and awareness, will be adapted to the new mandate. The Education Department has offered a basic Hepatitis C 101 program for over two years, but we are expecting much more demand as awareness of our new role around hepatitis B & C expands.

The identity of other "blood borne pathogens" has not been made clear by Interior Health. Daryle bought us a new mascot, a

toy Holstein, to reflect the possibility that we will have to take on prevention of Mad Cow Disease.

Continued on page 3

WHAT'S INSIDE..

Events	2
Your Privacy	3
Marry but not Bury	3
Volunteer Corner	4
Richard's Rant	4
Client Support Plus	5
OAAS News	6
Education Update	7
Notice Board	8
Membership	8

reader survey

Win a Chapters gift certificate...

...by completing our reader survey.

During this time of transition, we decided to take the opportunity to improve this newsletter—and who better to advise us than our readers? The survey is inserted in the centre-fold.



An Evening with the Divas



Saturday, May 29th, 2004

Kelowna Actors Studio – 1379 Ellis Street

Don't miss this fun & entertaining female impersonator show!

Tickets on sale April 15th (limited seating available) - Tickets \$25 advance - \$30 at the door

Call 862-2437 for details or visit our website at www.livingpositive.ca

2nd Annual AIDS Benefit Gala & Silent Auction



By Karen Alexander, Volunteer & Marketing Coordinator

The Rotary Centre for the Arts proved to be a fabulous venue for the sizzling sounds of Ellen Churchill & The Red Hot Boogie Express. Guests enjoyed delectable appetizers from Staccato's and fine wines from St. Hubertus Estate Winery, and had a great time dancing the night away and bidding on the many great auction items and packages.

Our heartfelt thanks to volunteers Duane, Tracy, Lorri, Anne, and Vicki, who along with the Kelowna Hostesses worked dili-



gently to ensure the event's success. Thanks as well to John and Warren of the Rotary Centre, and Rob & Gail

from Staccato's for their efforts and support, and to the Okanagan Rainbow Coalition for donating a portion of their dance admission fees. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to our donors, whose generosity made this event possible: A.G. Outdoor Superstore; Amici's Hair & Body Spa; Athena Custom Framing; Bernard Callebaut Chocolates; C.A. Promotional Sportswear; Creations by Mom & Me; Discover Wines; Doyle House Bed & Breakfast; Earl's On Top; Enigma; First Memorial Funeral Services; Fresco Restaurant; functional; Genesis Designs Tattooing; Grand Okanagan Lakefront Resort; Karin Bauer; Kendall Penty & Company; Lake Okanagan Resort; Lakeview Memorial; Little Creek Gardens; Lorne Glennie; Lorri Gasser; Michael Clegg, QC; N.C. Derricksan Enterprises; Nelson Montgomery; Okanagan Limousine; Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church; Peter McFadden Inc;

Picture Perfect Esthetics; Quail's Gate Estate Winery; Rutland Massage Clinic; Scott Alexander; St. Hubertus Estate Winery; Stroma Signs; Summerhill Pyramid Winery; Theatre Kelowna Society; The Big Picture; The Marina at LOR; Tigerlily Fashions; Total E-Clips Salon & Day Spa; Victoria Grant; Village Flowers; Wild Apple Grill at Manteo Resort; and Wrapzodi Gift Baskets.



By the end of the night, the auction, ticket sales and donations had revenues of more than \$6,300! We look forward to seeing everyone at this event next year!

Your privacy

By Lance Talbott, Administration Manager

On January 1st 2004 the *Personal Information Protection Act* became law in British Columbia. The Act governs the way personal information is collected, used and disclosed by organizations. The Act defines Personal Information as 'information that is about an identifiable individual'. Examples of such information are a person's age, gender, home address and SIN number. I'm sure that you will be able to think of many other examples.

The Act applies to all businesses in this Province. At the AIDS Resource Centre, we take the security of personal information, both computer and paper based, very seriously. Prior to the Act, we already had in place strict policies and processes designed to protect information we hold on others. We will review these on a regular basis to ensure that we achieve the highest standards set.

Let us assure you that we do not share per-

sonal information held by us with any other organization without first obtaining explicit and informed consent. We will continue to operate this policy. For example, we may hold details of a person's name and address on a computer database. One of the ways we use it is to generate labels when mailing out this newsletter. Some organizations sell their lists to others, we do not.

The Act requires that we appoint a Privacy Officer. Included in this person's responsibilities will be answering your questions about information we hold about you.

To discuss this matter, please contact me, Lance Talbott, on 862 2437 or 1-800-616-2437. I can also be reached by e-mail at ltalbott@arcok.com.



Kate Alexander, Editor

This newsletter is the official publication of the Living Positive Resource Centre, Okanagan. It is published four to six times a year. The materials in this newsletter are meant to be consistent with ARC purposes which are: a) to promote awareness of HIV/AIDS, b) to develop and provide educational resources, c) to support those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Even so, the opinions and comments within this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect ARC policy. The newsletter does not endorse the use of any particular treatment or therapy. 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 featured in 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 office at any time; publication deadline is three weeks prior to publication date. Submissions will be returned if a request is made in writing and an address is provided. Reprinting and distributing this newsletter is openly encouraged.

ARC's Board of Directors

Rick Golke, President
Lorri Gasser, Vice-president
Donna Hill, Secretary
Wayne Ross, Treasurer
Colleen Cardiff
Jack Lakavich
Lisa Mortell
Dr. Frank Sigurdson
Josephine Stebbings
Daryle Roberts, Executive Director

The Right to Marry but not to Bury

BC Liberals take away right of same-sex couples to control remains of loved ones

NEWSWIRE, March 23, 2004

The BC Liberals are turning back the clock on equality rights for same-sex couples by voting to deny them the right to control the remains of deceased loved ones, Opposition House Leader Joy MacPhail said today.

In the Legislature today, the government replaced the Cemetery and Funeral Services Act with a new act repealing the right of same-sex couples to control the remains of a deceased partner. That right was established in legislation by the former NDP government in 1996.

"This move to take away the rights of same-sex couples is a big step backwards for equality in BC," said MacPhail. "Under the new act brought in by Premier Campbell same-sex couples no longer have any authority to make decisions about the remains of deceased loved ones. It shows that the BC Liberals just don't care about protecting the rights of same-sex couples.

"Solicitor General Rich Coleman says that society is not prepared to allow same-sex partners the right to participate in funeral decisions for their loved ones, but this legislation has been on the books for eight years.

"It may be news to Mr. Coleman and his BC Liberal colleagues, but British Columbians don't support taking away the rights of same-sex couples," said MacPhail. "Liberal MLAs like Lorne Mayencourt who claim to stand up for the rights of gays and lesbians should have the courage to denounce this decision and call on the Premier to repeal this regressive piece of legislation."

New mandate

(Continued from page 1)

We held two general meetings over the month of March, first to come up with suitable names, then to vote on the available choices. Over 50% of those at the March 18 meeting voted for Living Positive Resource Centre, a name that we feel reflects dually the concepts of a "positive test" for infection and of hope for the future.

LPRC's office is located at:

101—266 Lawrence Ave,
Kelowna BC V1Y 6L3

Phone: (250) 862-AIDS (2437)
Toll Free 1-800-616-AIDS (2437)
Fax: (250) 868-8662
Website:

www.livingpositive.ca

Volunteer Corner



Volunteer Profile: Dave Bonel I

Dave has volunteered with ARC's Speakers' Bureau since the summer of 2003. He came with a strong background in education (as a professional First Aid instructor), and this shows in his abilities to keep his audience interested and to explain difficult concepts by relating them to everyday things. As you can tell from this interview, he has a very personal interest in the subject, and his passion shines through. We are very lucky to have such a talented and dedicated educator on our team.

Editor: Why did you choose to volunteer at ARC?

Dave: As a person infected with this disease, I strongly believe the message of prevention needs to be out there, so I can be part of the solution instead of the problem.

Editor: Tell me about yourself.

I was married for many years. From outside, my life appeared perfect, but I was unhappy inside.

I turned to drugs and alcohol, looking for peace, but instead found HIV and hepatitis C in the bottom of a rig. I spent numerous years lost in drug addiction, eventually coming to grips with my sexuality and then finally my addiction. Getting into Crossroads Treatment Centre saved my life. Today I am clean and sober, and, believe it or not, for the first time I am happy on the inside. I accept my past and look forward to the future, whatever it holds. My focus in life is to help others make better choices—I do this by volunteering here, and by doing drug talks at high schools and anywhere else that will have me.

Editor: What has been your best experience as a speaker?

I can't think of one specific time, but it is very rewarding when people come up after the presentation and tell me how grateful they are for being given the truth. They tell me they can now separate facts from fiction around these deadly diseases.

"disease infested burden to society"

I have sometimes come up against people in relative authority and have been told later that they felt intimidated. At 118 lbs, 120-CD-4's, with Hep B, Hep C and Asthma, I had to tell this person (a health professional) that in dealing with people with terminal diseases and emotional problems, if they couldn't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.



To view a copy of the magazine article that Richard refers to, look up www.bcpwa.org

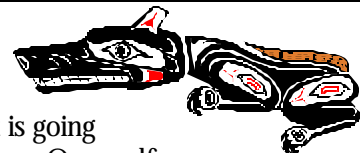
Richard's Rant

By Richard Babcock

Whether coloured, Native, HIV-positive, or addicted, we all suffer social labelling which leaves us with a heavy pit in our stomachs. It's hard not to be depressed, angry, sad and confused. I bring your attention to the BCPWA's Living Positive magazine, Feb 04 issue: cover story, "Coming Undone—HIV and Mental Illness". This is exactly how stigmatization works. First the label, then it's "them and they" (meaning me and us), then comes dehumanization—like the time I was described in the *Capital News* as a

First Nations Wisdom

Two wolves



A Cherokee elder was teaching his grandchildren about life. He said to them, "A fight is going on inside me... it is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One wolf represents fear, anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other stands for joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, friendship, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going on inside you, and inside every other person, too." They thought about it for a minute and then one child asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?" The old Cherokee simply replied..."The one you feed."



By DeborahJoy Bolton

Well, it seems like just last week the first snowflakes were falling and now the colours of Spring are bursting forth. I like this time of year—anything to get rid of the boots and coat. Just as the seasons are changing, so are many things here at the AIDS Resource Centre. As of April 1st we will also be providing services for people affected by Blood Borne Pathogens. What that specifically means is that people infected with **Hepatitis B and C** will be able to access support and services as well. I don't expect there to be much change right away, as we are doing some of that support right now, but I do see in the future there being more of a demand for the services and support that is provided by the client support workers.



Another thing to think about at this time of year: **taxes**. Well, I know no one tries to think about this, but if you need help preparing your taxes you can call **SHARE at 763-8117**, to arrange a time.

Another huge change in the client support department has been the departure of **Terri Ross**. Terri, who is expecting her second child, only this summer,

is taking some time for herself before the baby arrives, and then plans to stay home to fully experience motherhood. She will be greatly missed—but I can't think of luckier children.

Since January, we have been blessed with a 4th year OUC Social Work practicum student,



Rosamond Graham. It has been a delight to work with her: this is truly work that she is called to do and she comes

at it with the confidence and dedication of someone who has been working in this field for years. She says she is really enjoying her time here and will be sad when she says goodbye on April 28 to move back to Victoria to be with her family. Rosamond is in the office Monday through Thursday, so be sure to come and say hi.

As some of you know, **Toshie**



will be in the office every Tuesday to our clients, to

help with physical and spiritual healing. More recently, **Dr. Derek Ginter, Chiropractor**, started serving clients on Thursday mornings. Now, we are pleased to announce that **Dr. Janice Potter, Naturopathic Physician**, will be offering her services every other Wednesday, from 10 to 3. If you are interested in exploring what these practitioners have to offer please call 862-2437 to make an appointment.



Please note that as of April 1, **outreach client support for the North Okanagan** will be provided by **Jan Shumay** of North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society. You can reach her at 545-3262. I will continue to see clients in the South Okanagan, but on an as-needed basis. So if you feel that you want some extra support, please call me, DeborahJoy, at 1-800-616-2437 to make an appointment.

Spiritual Workshop

May 21—24, 2004, at the Bethlehem Retreat Centre on Vancouver Island

Non-denominational, supportive, unique and fun!

Designed and facilitated by United Church Ministers Tim Stevenson and Gary Paterson

To register, call BCPWA for an interview: 1-800 994-2437.

Deadline is late April, so call soon.



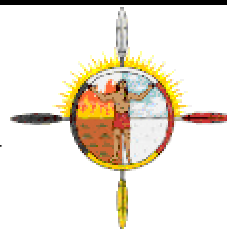
Round Lake Treatment Centre

By Brian Mairs

As an educator, some of the most fun I have had over the last year has been the opportunity to present information on HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C (HCV) to the participants at Round Lake Treatment Centre, which is located between Vernon and Falkland. While public speaking to many is a fear that supersedes death, the participants at the centre have always been eager to listen, learn and participate in the day. Julie and I have presented many times together, using a tag-team approach to the material. Although it always manages to

turn out smoothly, nothing is rehearsed, the presentations are always a little different each time we go there, and more than once we have been mistaken for husband and wife, simply due to the ease in which we are both able to work with each other to provide the information. From time to time, participant will try to 'shock' us with seemingly risqué information or questions, but considering the nature of our work, neither of us has the luxury of being embarrassed when providing straight answers to tough questions. Most of the questions we get are with respect to the

spread of either virus, with the majority of them about HCV. Considering the infection rates of HCV are considerably higher than HIV in Aboriginal communities, and both are proportionally higher than in the non-Aboriginal community, the information we bring to Round Lake is appreciated by the participants and the Drug & Alcohol Counsellors who will often listen in to the presentations to increase their own knowledge base.



(250) 862-2481

www.aaas.ca

Don't leave me alone... with HIV

All these years you were by my side,
And now you're afraid to hold my hand.
Through the rough times you gave me pride,
And made me believe you were my #1 fan.

Always laughing and grinning at my stupid
jokes, You bragged about me to your friends and
your folks. Together we were
inseparable. We were one.

And today, I am alone... I am shunned,
By my friends and my best companion, you.
Who I thought would be there for everyone... me
too.

Now, you avoid me
As if I were different.

But, I'm not! You see that
The situation has changed, Yes.
But I am still the same person,
Inside and out,

And nothing could change that,
Not even a shout.

A shout to the world that I have HIV,
You know, that doesn't affect the inner me.

My mind is numb, disgusted at the thought,
That I have HIV... I am caught;
Someplace I do not want to be
between my friends, my family, and me.

I am still the same person,
You can still be my friend,
We can still play and laugh
And be pals 'til the end.

This will not affect you physically
You can still hug me

And certainly still love me.

I know people will look at me differently,
But you can help me cope.
The way I am won't change,

I just want you to know
This is a tragedy, but we can help each other.
I know what this disease does,
I already lost my mother.

It wasn't my fault,
Dad did not protect us.
He risked a life, no... two,
He didn't have a clue.

My friend, I must wait my turn to say 'bye'
But when I leave please don't cry.
Remember I will always be there for you,
As your friend and your guardian angel too.



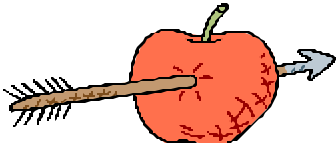
By Killa Mitchell-Atencio, 13 years old,
Alaqsite'w Gitpu School, Listuguj Micmac community
Winner of the "Let's talk about HIV/AIDS contest", second
edition, run by the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
Health and Social Services Commission

OPEN
HOUSE
Ooki-
nakiné
Friend-
ship
Centre

April 6,
2004;
9 am - 4 pm

The SOUNDS
Friendship
Centre has a
new name, as
well as a bright
and welcome
new location.
Check out the
open house on
April 6, at 101-324
Westminster
Ave, Penticton,
Phone (250)
490-3504
soundsfc@sha
w.ca

Core Training



By Sven Black, ARC Volunteer

ARC Educator Kate Alexander hosted a fun weekend (if that's possible when dealing with a world wide pandemic). This presentation gave a comprehensive look at HIV/AIDS & hepatitis C, a lot more than your basic street level information. Just when you thought you knew it all, here we are with a more complete understanding of how it works.

The two and a half days gave people the opportunity to network and connect with peers, which was quite inspirational. Listening to panels of people directly affected by these diseases lets you know that you are not alone. It gives hope and dispels myths about the reality that infects or affects those we love, like friends and families. We also gained useful information on how to care for these individuals.

This issue is not going to go away anytime soon, making it relevant to all ages, races, sexes and lifestyles. The information provided is helpful in setting up healthy boundaries within which to live a fulfilled life. It's not the end, but rather a time for change; of perspective, and lifestyle.

Note: Core Training was held on the weekend of March 5 to 7, 2004. If you are interested in attending the next session, to be offered this fall, please contact Kate Alexander at 862-2437 or educator@arcok.com We also offer shorter "mini-core" sessions on an as needed basis for your volunteers.

Condom education The continuing saga...

By Kate Alexander, Educator

OUC Nursing Community Project

For part of their third year as nursing program, Cheri Oakland, Emily Hedmann, Natalie Lowe and Tara Schmalz elected to work with ARC and Options for Sexual Health (a.k.a. Planned Parenthood) to bring improved sex education to Mt. Boucherie Senior Secondary School in Westbank. On April 1, we will meet with students and teachers at the school to gather ideas about how to best reach kids so that they make safe choices in their lives. This might take the form of an AIDS Awareness Week, similar to that held in Princess Margaret Secondary in Penticton, but there are many other ways it could happen. The trainee nurses agree that the high school kids themselves must take a lead role. Parent representatives (the PAC) have been consulted, and parents will have the option to remove their kids from any program.

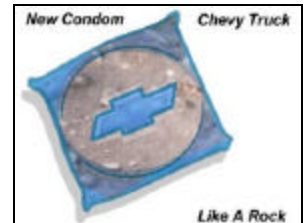
Comprehensive Condom Education, SD23

The nursing students' work runs parallel to our campaign to bring comprehensive condom education to School District 23, Central Okanagan. Kelowna and to some extent Penticton are alone in their conservative approach—apparently Vernon, Salmon Arm, Kamloops, Oliver, and Vancouver school children all see condom demonstrations, and some programs even permit distribution.

On January 28, ARC gave a presentation to the Trustees, in support of changing the Family Life curriculum to allow for condom demonstrations in the classroom. We believe increased rates of sexually transmitted infections and teen pregnancy are a result of the minimal and rather one-sided (abstinence-based) nature of the current sex education curriculum. Surprisingly, the only audience members to show up were in support (those nursing students again), and so the trustees passed a resolution to reappoint a committee to review the Family Life curriculum, as we had hoped.

We've had a lot of media interest about this issue, with CHBC filming Daryle and me. Our condom demonstration even made it onto BCTV. We have been interviewed on two radio stations and have seen a flurry of Letters to the Editor of the *Kelowna Capital News*, several written by those ever-enthusiastic nursing students! Despite the attention—or because of it—this campaign has seen very little negative public feedback.

It appears our communities are becoming more supportive of comprehensive sex education as an important form of Harm Reduction.



NOTICE BOARD

DIVA NIGHT

Saturday, May 29th, 2004
Kelowna Actors Studio



Don't miss this fun & entertaining female impersonator show!

(see page 2 for details)

NEW! Naturopathic Health Care



Dr. Janice Potter, a Naturopathic Physician, will be offering her services every other Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Client Support

Kelowna

Drop-in hours are Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon. At other times, an appointment is necessary. **Call 862-2437.**

South Okanagan & Similkameen:

call **1-800-616-2437** to book an appointment, which will be between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on a Tuesday. Sorry, no drop-ins.

Vernon & North

Okanagan: Call Jan Shumay of North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society at **545-3262.**

ARC's Hours

Our client service hours are **9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Chiropractic Care



Dr. Derek Ginter visits ARC on Thursday mornings. Call 862-2437 to arrange for your free session.

Speakers' Bureau

We provide free, interactive HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C presentations that are geared to your group's needs. Call Kate to book a presentation: 862-2437



Reiki & Healing Touch

Clients: enjoy the relaxing and balancing benefits of a quiet hour with Toshie. Call 862-2437 to book your free Tuesday session.

Free Coffee

Starbucks provides FREE coffee for our clients. Please ask at the reception desk.



Living Positive Membership

For a small fee, you can support Living Positive Resource Centre, Okanagan by becoming a member. For those who are already members, it's time to renew. Membership entitles you to vote on issues that affect the agency, and the fee helps cover the cost of this newsletter.

The fees for membership are: **\$Free - clients**
\$12/year - individuals; \$25/year - agency; \$100 - lifetime
Please take the time to fill out this membership application and drop it off at our office or mail it to:
LPRC, 101-266 Lawrence Ave, Kelowna, BC V1Y 6L3



LPRC Membership application

Members must agree to uphold the aims of the Society and maintain confidentiality.

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Postal code: _____

E-mail address: _____

(Check here ? to receive ARC News by e-mail only)
Fee paid: ? \$12 (individual); ? \$25 (organization);
? \$100 (lifetime).

Make cheques payable to **Living Positive Resource Centre**