

Stay Tuned:

for the

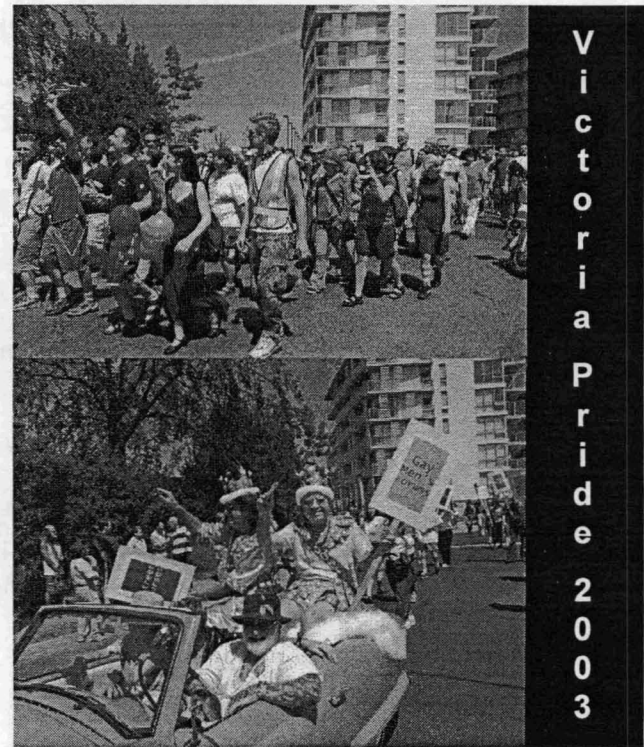
SEX CABARET

a Men's Wellness Forum

COMING...

October 30th

MIEN'S *briefs!*



gay marriage...malebox...about town...crystal



Summer, 2003
 AIDS Vancouver Island

MEN'S briefs!

The Newsletter of the Men's Wellness Program

Men's Briefs is published quarterly by the Men's Wellness Program (MWP) at AIDS Vancouver Island.

Our mandate is to provide a regular resource of up-to-date and topical information on men's wellness issues and community events important to the lives of gay and bisexual guys in Victoria and on Vancouver Island, including those living with HIV/AIDS.

Editor: Craig Barron
Designed by: Jim Oliver
Pride Photos by: Alan Mallett
Contributors: Jim Oliver

The Men's Wellness Program is AIDS Vancouver Island's health promotion initiative aimed at reducing the rate of HIV infection among gay and bisexual guys. The program involves outreach and prevention education and support to gay and bisexual men focusing on encouraging safer-sex practices, increasing awareness and reducing the risk of contracting HIV. MWP provides material and human resources that support healthy living for HIV-negative and HIV-positive men.

Your input is valued and encouraged, whether opinion writing, prose, artwork, suggestions and criticism, or feedback. Send your submissions by email, snail-mail, or drop 'em by the office. Please include your name and phone or email address with your submission.

AIDS Vancouver Island
The Men's Wellness Program
1601 Blanshard St. Victoria BC

250-384-2366
1-800-665-2437
men@avi.org
www.avi.org/men



Production of this resource has been made possible through a financial contribution from the AIDS Community Action Program, Health Canada.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the official policies of Health Canada.

Victoria AIDS WALK

Why WALK?

Because prevention remains our only cure!

Sunday, September 21, 2003

Fisherman's Wharf Park

Registration: 9 am WALK Start: 10 am

The Walk takes about an hour to complete.

The WALK leaves Fisherman's Wharf Park, does a giant circle and returns back to the Park. Join fellow walkers after the WALK for speeches, prizes, food refreshments and FUN!!

You must pre-register to receive pledge forms. You can do so by faxing or mailing a registration form, calling, or visiting the AIDS Vancouver Island Offices

1601 Blanshard Street
or phone: 384.2366
fax: 380.9411

What's up at MWP?

Gay Men's Discussion Group

The discussion group resumes in September and will continue to meet every second Monday evening (7-9pm) at AVI, 1601 Blanshard St.

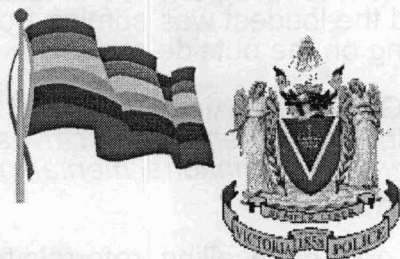
September dates: 8th and 22nd;

October dates: 6th and 20th

Call Craig at 384-2366 for more info or email men@avi.org.

Gay Men Read Books

If you love to read gay literature, join Gordon and the gang in the book club! First meeting of the season will be September 10 (or possibly the 17th). We will be discussing "At Swim, Two Boys." Contact Gordon at gdfulton@uvic.ca, or call 721-9377 for details.



Gay Community - Police Liaison

An ongoing MWP effort. Seeks to broaden understanding of GLBT issues within the Victoria Police and improve reporting of anti-gay incidents. Contact Constable Terry Albrecht at 995-7654 or Sgt. Derek Chow (Diversity Manager) at 995-7379.



editorial

The Men's Wellness Program is in transition. Jim Oliver is replacing AIDS Vancouver Island's Education Manager while she is on maternity leave for a year. I, along with others, will be involved in the program's activities: Men's Briefs, brochures, our web site, community forums, and outreach.

With this issue of Men's Briefs I see myself as an editor in the traditional sense, a collector of good information. I hope a variety of perspectives from different members of the community will appear in future issues of the magazine.

We're in a time that seems to be full of good news: the legalization of gay marriage in Canada, a host of new legal challenges across the USA. Meanwhile in Mexico, a transgendered woman is running for a seat in Congress. Here on the Island, gay men can access gay web sites around the world, and gay youth can perhaps catch Queer as Folk via the family satellite.

But how are we doing really? A recent survey from Seattle's Gay City asked the question: what are the most important issues the LGBT community should address? Marriage was 15th on the list and at the top, self-esteem, self-acceptance of others, and ageism. The main health concern remains HIV/AIDS.

Studies show that we have knowledge of HIV/AIDS; but what we know does not mean we are always safe, and infections continue to occur. The Men's Wellness Program is about nurturing our identities; exploring ideas together and developing community connections.

Volunteer participation is key to the success of the program. To become involved or for more information, call: 384.2366, or e-mail: men@avi.org.

Craig Barron

August 2003

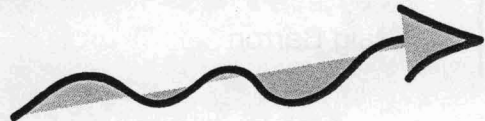
Reader Response:

I received a letter of concern about the contents of our Spring, 2003 issue. The letter was sent anonymously and I could not respond directly, so I'd like to respond here to the concerns raised (I have excerpted the main points contained in the letter, and they are indicated in italics):

I am writing this letter to express my concern about the contents of the Spring 2003, Men's Briefs. According to this booklet the Men's Wellness Program, "...involves outreach and prevention education... focusing on encouraging safer-sex practics." By no stretch of the imagination can some of the contents of this booklet be considered safe-sex practices and/or appropriate health care. In the Mail Box a man writes in for advice on a problem with hemorrhoids, and difficulty in getting fucked. The answer, "Hemorrhoids should almost never interfere with getting fucked. While being fucked can aggravate existing 'roids, it does not cause hemorrhoids". Solution, "Practice with larger dildos..." After 15 years of problems with hemorrhoids, this man needs to see a physician and get the appropriate care, not be told to dilate his anus and further irritate his hemorrhoids.

There were two questions involved in this letter; the first had to do with hemorrhoids, the second to do with pain when getting fucked. The advice given for treating hemorrhoids was not "to dilate his anus", but to (1) visit the doctor if the hemorrhoids continue for more than a week or so, and (2) to try increasing fibre intake and try using hemorrhoid creams. Secondly, we addressed the issue of experiencing pain while being fucked. The writer clearly wanted to get fucked comfortably and without pain; this is a separate issue from hemorrhoids. I stand by the advice given; to try relaxation techniques including Kegel exercises, practice for comfort with dildos, be in control of the fucking by being on top (squatting) and using a lot of lubricant. A gay man who desires to be fucked should not be denied help in achieving this end because he happens to have hemorrhoids, or denied help in easing the pain associated with fucking:

In the Health Focus section it states, "And many guys are into fisting, whether they're giving it, getting it, or both. Still more guys are turned on by the idea, have experimented, or plan to." How were these statistics arrived at? It has been my experience that this is not true. There is only a small section of the gay community who are involved in this practice, and in fact I would venture to say that most gays are turned-off by this practice. I would also suggest that this comment says more about the life-style of the author than the gay community at large. The emphasis should be on, "If you are into fisting then these are the health issues and risks." I am objecting to my tax dollars being spent on a booklet which teaches gay men how to fist-fuck.



Our Men's Wellness Program's companion organization in Vancouver has moved onto the streets. On August 1st AIDS Vancouver opened it's storefront Gay Men's Health Resource Centre on the edge of Davie Village. The first of its kind in Canada, the storefront will focus on Gay men's health issues including HIV prevention.

The politicos were all there: MP Hedy Fry; Joy MacPhail, BC Leader of the Opposition; Colin Hansen, BC Minister of Health Services; City Councillor, Rev. Tim Stevenson; and Vancouver Burrard MLA Lorne Mayencourt. But the biggest applause was for program coordinator Phillip Banks, and the loudest was coming from his team of volunteers sitting on the outside planter.

According to the Gayway mission statement: *healthy living addresses the whole person and strives for balance - balance between one's emotional mental, physical, sexual and spiritual aspects.*

Gayway will offer peer counselling, referrals to health care professionals, education and outreach, workshops, discussion groups, information about community events and organizations, and social marketing campaigns.

So if you're in the big city, Gayway is located at 913 Davie Street, the corner of Hornby. Or visit their website: www.gayway.ca

men@peers

The men@peers project provides services relevant to male sex trade workers and sexually exploited male youth in the Victoria area. The project has a special focus on Aboriginal Youth. We respect those involved in prostitution and work to improve their working conditions. We assist guys who desire to leave the sex trade and strive to increase public understanding. If you have any questions or comments please call or drop in!

men@peers provides:



A safe place
Drop-in
Needle Exchange
Condoms and lube
Refreshments
Peer counselling
Resource material
Outreach

382-5118
#214-620 View St.
men@peers.bc.ca
www.peers.bc.ca

**Be the
Safest
Happiest
Hustler
that you can be!**

Jim Wilton, Coordinator
Jason Poitras, Youth Facilitator

men@peers is funded by



Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

Prior to the Up Yours! Forum (Nov. 23, 2001) on anal sex and health (including fisting), we conducted a pre-forum survey of gay men in Victoria over two evenings and received 49 written responses. In this survey we learned, among other things, the following from the respondents:

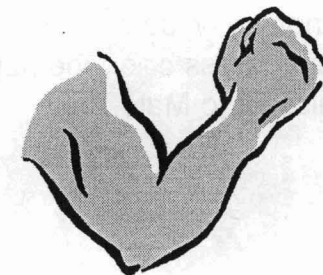
- 20% (10) said they have fantasized about being fist-fucked
- 22% (11) said they had fantasized about fist-fucking someone
- 5% (2) said they have been fist-fucked
- 20% (10) said they have fist-fucked someone

There are some significant numbers here. And these men, whether they are involved in fisting or just thinking about it, deserve good information on protecting themselves. That means talking about the issue in its entirety, not talking around it, or leaving out the squeamish bits because they make some people uncomfortable. It's about harm reduction and meeting men where they are at in their sexual practices. To not provide this information because fist-fucking is controversial in some circles, when we know there are men practicing it or who are going to, would be irresponsible:

There is no mention of the risk of anal incompetency resulting in fecal incontinence. I have come across this problem in men who use large dildos and/or who practice fisting over a long period of time.

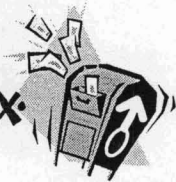
Thank you for pointing out that we should have discussed this issue. From the research I have been able to do, it appears that there is some risk of damage to the sphincter muscles (scarring) from using very large sex toys or from fisting, particularly if trying to accommodate too much too fast, and that this may cause difficulty controlling the sphincter muscles at some point down the road. This damage, as we mentioned, should be greatly reduced or eliminated provided the use of toys or fisting is done gradually and with considerable care.

Your comments are always welcomed.

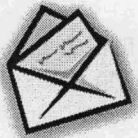


Jim Oliver

using the MaleBox



Send in your question! You can do this by:



Snail Mail. Send your letter to *MaleBox*, c/o MWP, AIDS Vancouver island, 1601 Blanshard Street, Victoria, BC. V8W 2J5

Drop off. Bring your question to AVI in a sealed envelope marked *MaleBox*, c/o MWP.



Email. Send your question to men@avi.org with *MaleBox* in the subject line. Not anonymous? Create a separate *Yahoo* or *Hotmail* account!



MaleBox researches your question thoroughly and consults with Dr. Doug McGhee and other health professionals.

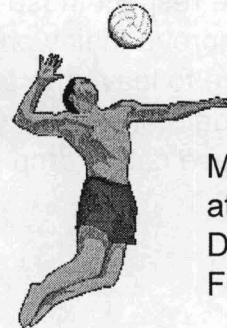


Your question, along with the answer will be printed in the next *Men's Briefs* issue.

For anonymity, do not include your name, address or phone number in your submission to *MaleBox*.



around town



Spikes Volleyball

Meets 6:30 on Wednesday evenings at 2549 Fifth Street in Victoria.
Drop-in fee \$2.00
For more info call 389-6711



Transcend

Transgender Support & Education Society
Provides individual counselling and support including a monthly drop-in: (250) 413-3220
www.islandnet.com/transcend
transcend@islandnet.com



Triangle Recreation Camp

Gay camping near Granite Falls, WA.
Our local rep is Stephen Davis. He may be reached at 217-1202. Visit the TRC website: www.camptrc.org

ADMIT ONE

around town



Prime Timers of Victoria

Social, educational and recreational organization for mature men (40+).
Meets monthly and holds special events.

www.members.shaw.ca/primetimersvic/
primetimersvic@shaw.ca



Queerly Canadian

Tune in to Gay radio from
CFUV 101.9 FM.
Tuesday evenings, 8:30 - 9:00 pm

Shadow Falls Camp

Gay clothing optional campsite
under two hours from Vancouver,
near Harrison Hot Springs.
Contact Bryan at
Camping@ShadowFalls.com



dear MaleBox

Dear MaleBox,

It's been one of those milestone years for me, and a couple of so-called clever friends gave me gifts of little blue pills (one even put them in an antique pillbox).

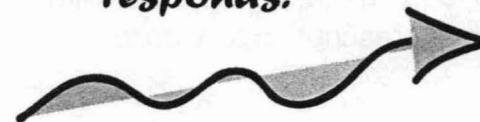
Yes, I'm talking about *Viagra* but actually like the TV ads say I discovered it works great. So what's the problem, well I heard someone say they can be risky.

What about if you do other drugs? I only do the harmless stuff, beer, poppers, but I'm thinking of a pal who's positive (no idea what he's on if anything) and he wants to try a few pills.

Middle-aged blue stud.

MaleBox

responds!



next page!

Dear Blue Stud,

You heard right; there are some risks involved with *Viagra*. There have been a couple of hundred deaths worldwide after taking *Viagra*, though mostly in people with pre-existing risk factors; and these could include: cigarette smoking, obesity, cardiac history.

There are short term effects too: headaches, upset stomach, diarrhea...

Viagra should only be used under doctor supervision. It's for erectile dysfunction, those needing some help getting and staying hard. And combining the drug with ones containing nitrates i.e. "poppers" (Amyl/Butyl Nitrate) can suddenly lower blood pressure and lead to death.

So the little blue pills are really not the sort of thing to pass around casually among friends. There's been a fair bit of that, combining *Viagra* with party drugs (side effect of these drugs, eg. crystal meth, can mean loss of erection, right?)

If you've hit a milestone, you should be headed to the doctor anyways for a checkup; have a chat about the beer consumption at the same time... Who knows maybe you'll leave the office with your own personal prescription to *Viagra*.



Pacific Rim Yacht Club



Pacific Rim Yacht Club welcomes all Boaters!

We are a group of boaters established to encourage friendship among G/L/B/T Persons interested in boating. We schedule monthly activities, on the water and land.

Email us at pryclub@hotmail.com
A rep will reply. Discretion assured.

PEABODYS

Books

Calendars

Underwear

Jewelry, Lube

Clothing, Cards

Hosts an MWP
Information Board

10-6pm Mon-Sat
12-4 Sunday
250.383.3459

633 Courtenay
Victoria BC V8T 1B9

www.peabodys.ca

ADMIT ONE

around town

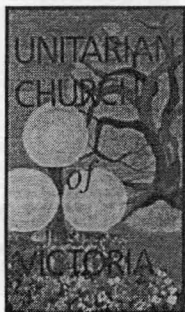


Ferry Riders MC



6 years strong, the FRMC is Vancouver Island's motorcycle club for gay men. Call Jim at 370-9539 or email ferryriders@hotmail.com

www.geocities.com/ferryriders



First Unitarian Church of Victoria

Welcomes all to worship together on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am. Provides LGBT unions. 5575 West Saanich Rd. Contact: (250) 744-2665

www.islandnet.com/~unitvic/



GLOSSI

Salt Spring Island Gays, Lesbians, Allies

Plan social events, get involved in education, exploration and visibility projects. For more information call: (250) 537-7773

www.saltspring.com/glossi

NewsWire



Anthony Porcino, Tom Graff

British Columbia Legalizes Gay Marriage

On July 8th British Columbia became the second Canadian province to allow same-sex couples to marry. The BC Court of Appeal ruled that it was lifting a one year moratorium on gay marriage.

Earlier this year the court declared the federal definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman unconstitutional because it discriminated against gay and lesbian couples. In striking down the ban the court gave the federal government until July, 2004 to change the law.

After the Ontario Court of Appeal issued a similar ruling, but without the delay, same-sex couples in British Columbia returned to court to ask that it also make the ruling immediate. The federal government issued a brief stating it had no objection to removing the moratorium. There were no interventions opposing the move.

One BC couple wasted no time in tying the knot. Anthony Porcino and Tom Graff exchanged vows outside the Vancouver courthouse as soon as the decision was released. "We believe in the public commitment and support of relationships, the richness of the public-private nature of that act of community and the personal belief in the equality of all Canadians," the couple said in a statement earlier.

(from 365gay.com)

NewsWire

Amsterdam's young gay men getting HIV from steady partners

The overwhelming majority of new HIV infections among gay men in Amsterdam are happening within the context of steady relationships. Every six months since 1995 members of the Amsterdam Cohort Study were asked to complete a questionnaire about their sexual behaviour. The cohort is made up of gay men aged under 30 who live in the Amsterdam area.

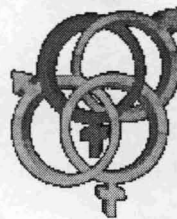
Far more unprotected anal sex took place between regular partners than casual partners, and the investigators estimated that 86% of new HIV infections were occurring within the context of relationships.

As less than 50% of gay men in Amsterdam had tested for HIV, gay men were often having unprotected sex without reliable knowledge of their own or steady partner's HIV status. Further, an estimated 10% of gay men in steady relationships who were having unprotected sex with their main partner did not have a "negotiated safety" agreement to help prevent HIV being introduced into the relationship from unprotected sex with casual partners. An estimated 12.5% of gay men who did have such agreements broke them by having unprotected sex with casual partners: "the majority of new infections among young homosexual men in Amsterdam can be attributed to steady partners. Changes in risky behaviour with steady partners thus have a greater impact on HIV incidence than the equivalent changes among casual partners."

IDSMap, © SEA-AIDS



around town



BI Victoria

Contact: (250) 472-4393
www.angelfire.com/bc3/bivictoria
bivictoria@angelfire.com



Bleeding Rose Multimedia
& Afterdark
"Your One Stop Queer Shop"

Free events . . .

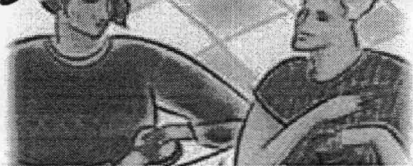
102 - 764 Yates Street
Victoria
For more info call 385-3099 or
email bleedingrose@telus.net

Comox Valley Queer Connection

Website offering personals, events listing,
chat and mailing list. Serving gays and
lesbians in the Comox Valley.

www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/cafe/3319

Youth Resources



Camosun College Pride Collective

Lansdowne: Fisher 112
250-370-3429

Interurban CC 133
250-370-3484

PFLAG

(Parents, Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
PO Box 5474 Station B
Victoria, BC 250-385-9462
Comox Valley: comoxpflag@home.com

UVic Pride

PO Box 3035
Student Union Building
University of Victoria V8W 3P3
250.472.4393
pride@uvss.uvic.ca



Victoria's Queer Youth Group

Regularly has up to 30 youth out to
it's weekly evening meetings. Call
Kathryn Saunders for more info. at
386-7511 (YM/YWCA)

NewsWire

Bi Teens More Likely to Have Unsafe Sex

Much of the AIDS education in North America has targeted gay men, but little has been done to go after bi-teens. A survey of high school students suggests teenaged males who say they are bisexual are less likely to practice safe sex than teens who say they exclusively date males or exclusively date females.

Bisexual teens were also between 8 and 10 times more likely to have been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease. All of these factors can increase a person's risk for contracting HIV, according to the American Journal of Public Health.

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New guidelines available for HIV drug resistance testing

Despite the availability of at least 17 drugs for the treatment of HIV/AIDS, keeping HIV at bay is tricky. Over time the virus can change or mutate, developing the ability to resist the effect of one or more anti-HIV medications.

The International AIDS Society convened a panel of leading researchers to help develop up-to-date guidelines for the use of resistance testing. Their recommendations appear in the July 1, 2003 issue of the Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases and explains how HIV develops resistance to different HIV drugs. Ultimately, the panel hopes that the guidelines help doctors integrate resistance testing into the care and treatment of their patients.

© CATIE News

health **f**ocus

crystal meth

Crystal meth is a synthetic stimulant affecting the dopamine, serotonin, and other receptors in the brain.

The short term effects:

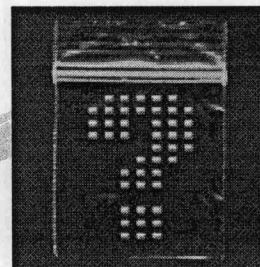
- increased energy
- euphoria
- sweating
- reports of "feeling sexier"
- nervousness, anxiety
- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- unexpected aggressiveness or changes in mood
- auditory and visual hallucinations
- "Crystal Dick" (impotence)

Cautions:

crystal use has been linked to severe consequences in long-term use including: liver, kidney and lung problems, damage to cells in the brain and strokes...

*speed, krank, tina,
tweak, ice...
methamphetamine*

for more information:



www.crystalneon.org

www.tweaker.org

www.Buzzcode.org

www.dallassociety.com

for drug counselling services
anywhere in BC:

Alcohol and Drug Referral Line: 1-800-663-1441