

# ACG Positive Views

AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH  
AND WELLINGTON COUNTY

Making a Difference Together — Summer 2008

## Membership Campaign Set in Motion

*The following article was submitted by Lauren MacDonald, a Public Relations student, while on placement from Conestoga College.*

20 years has gone by at the AIDS Committee and they are hoping a summer membership drive will reflect how long the organization has been running. As a Public Relations student at Conestoga College, one of my classes required us to find a real client and develop a campaign for them. With previous volunteer experience at the AIDS Committee in Guelph, I met with Acting Executive Director, Tom Hammond, to discuss the possibility of creating a membership campaign. When I first met with Tom

Hammond in January of this year, he told me about the importance of membership. Members are kept up-to-date on events, funding and services, vote on the Board of Directors, attend the Annual General Meeting, and are a part of the growing HIV/AIDS movement. Therefore, Tom feels very strongly that an increase in membership will lead to a more aware and stronger organization. Other than

a membership form, there had never been a formal plan to attract more members at the agency.

The membership campaign I created reflects the results of surveys filled out by volunteers, clients and current members, as well as my discussions with a few of the employees. Some of

the methods to increase membership include: creating more awareness about membership through an information postcard, soon to be available at the clinic; more one-on-one communication with clients and volunteers about the benefits of membership; a redesigned membership form; and a user-friendly internet link from the website to the form.

These techniques will be used throughout the summer, and members will be counted at the

end of September. The goal is to increase membership from around 20 to 45. After the official timeline of the campaign is complete, ACG membership is hoped to continue to increase as current clients and volunteers, as well as new ones, become aware of the many benefits.

If you wish to become a member of the AIDS Committee, please fill out a copy of our application on page 3.



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### The AIDS Committee of Guelph Mission, Vision and Values

#### **Mission:**

To provide exemplary service in the area of HIV/AIDS in Guelph and Wellington County through innovative health promotion strategies and community partnerships

#### **Vision:**

To be a leader in the area of HIV/AIDS so that the community as a whole, lives well and lives longer with optimal health.

#### **Core Values**

##### **Compassion:**

To exercise care and compassion to all.

##### **Open/Accessible:**

To be open and accessible using innovative, collaborative responses in all we do.

##### **Respectful:**

To respect the uniqueness of each person, to offer resources that foster empowerment.

##### **Accountable:**

To maintain professional integrity and accountability to ensure consistent, quality service.

# New Staff at ACG

## Brian Woolsey— Coordinator of Support Services

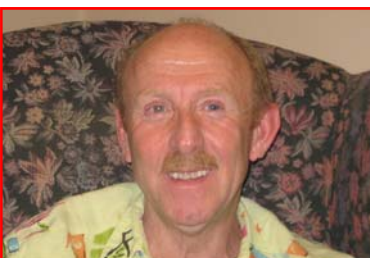


Hello everyone at the AIDS Committee. My name is Brian Woolsey and I am one of three new additions to the staff here and I look forward to meeting all the clients and volunteers over the next while. I will be taking on the role of the Coordinator of Support Services and will do my best to bring genuine service and strong advocacy to all clients of this agency.

The majority of my experience comes from working within social services in the areas of AIDS support services, palliative care, head injury, and housing / employment advocacy. One of my passions in life is to be involved with those overcoming difficult or challenging circumstances in their lives and together work toward better outcomes. Supporting one's goals and assisting a client along the way is what it is all about.

As the direction and needs of those affected by HIV/AIDS continues to evolve, I am very excited to be one of the links of this very committed and progressive team here at ACG. Knowing that the service users have been in very good hands, I will do my best to continue to foster that same supportive environment that the community here has come to know.

Thanks to everyone at ACG for welcoming me and inviting me to be onboard with such enthusiasm. I invite all clients of the agency to contact our office; I would like to meet and get to know you.



## Gary Roche—Supportive Housing Coordinator

I have been fortunate enough to come into this position after five years of volunteering with the AIDS Committee of Guelph on the Board of Directors where I served as Treasurer for four of them. I have also been active in other areas of the AIDS Committee: a volunteer driver for clients and a member of the Red Ribbon Gala Committee for the past two years. During this time I have also been involved in many workshops and conference's to enhance my knowledge in the area of HIV/AIDS. I am excited to be on the ground floor of a new housing project for people living with HIV/AIDS, as the need for safe, secure and affordable housing in Guelph and the

surrounding area is always a challenge. I also brings 18 years of customer service and strong interpersonal skills which I believe will be beneficial in my new role here at the AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington County.

## Cheryl Tucker—Positive Prevention Coordinator



Hi Everyone! My name is Cheryl Tucker and I am thrilled to be one of the newest additions here at ACG. As the new Positive Prevention Coordinator, I hope to help ACG in its mission of providing exemplary service in HIV/AIDS throughout Guelph and Wellington County.

Positive Prevention is a new program at ACG and I am very excited to be a part of it. Positive Prevention focuses on increasing the self-esteem, confidence, and ability of HIV positive people to protect their own health and to negotiate safer sex practices. Over the next few months I will be organizing and running two series of workshops specifically for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) and PHAs co-infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) as well as providing 1-on-1 education counselling.

I graduated from Brock University last June with my Bachelor of Arts in Community Health. I grew up in Guelph and am happy to be back here working. Everyone has been so wonderful and helpful over the last few weeks. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can over the next few months. Feel free to pop by my office and introduce yourself the next time you are in. I would love to meet you!

**ACG**  
  
**AGM**

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday September 24th, 2008

6:30pm—Reception & Refreshments

7:00pm—Meeting and View of Documentary "20 Years Gone By", The History of ACG  
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church & 161 Norfolk Street & Guelph, ON



AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH  
AND WELLINGTON COUNTY

## 20 Years Gone By Membership Application

The AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington County is honouring our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and we are looking to increase our membership among clients, volunteers and community members who would like to be more involved with the AIDS Committee.

### Benefits to You:

- You will stay updated on events, funding and changes at ACG.
- You will receive our quarterly newsletter that will keep you informed about our services and new developments in HIV.
- You can play an active role in the HIV/ AIDS awareness movement.

### As a Member You can:

- Attend our Annual General Meeting;
- Be an important voice at the Annual General Meeting and;
- Vote on Bylaw Changes and the Election of our Board of Directors that directly shape the future of the AIDS Committee of Guelph.

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Yes, I want to be a member of AIDS Committee of Guelph! I, or the agency I represent, support the Mission, Vision and Values of the AIDS Committee.

This form must be completed and returned one month prior to our Annual General Meeting in order to be eligible to vote. The membership fee is \$25.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if applicable)*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City / Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment:  Cash  Cheque  Credit Card or  Waive Fee

Please return completed form to: The AIDS Committee of Guelph  
409 Woolwich Street, 2nd Fl. Guelph, ON N1H 3X2

## INSITE COURT DECISION CONFIRMS CANADIAN DRUG POLICY AT ODDS WITH PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Ottawa must correct course, rather than intensify  
failed “war on drugs”**

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, May 29th, 2008

The decision by a British Columbia court, preventing the federal government from shutting down Vancouver’s supervised injection site and declaring parts of Canada’s drug laws unconstitutional, is the latest indication that the federal government must re-think its basic approach to dealing with illicit drugs, said the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.

The call came as Parliamentary committee hearings into the matter got underway and just two weeks before Canada is to attend a high-level United Nations meeting to review progress on tackling the AIDS epidemic, including among people who inject drugs. “In exempting Insite users from criminal prosecution for possessing drugs while at the facility, the court recognized that a simplistic approach of criminalizing people with drug addictions contributes to death and disease that could otherwise be prevented, and violates basic human rights protected by the *Charter*,” said Executive Director Richard Elliott. “Sadly, the Health Minister and Prime Minister appear unwilling or unable to recognize this. All the evidence shows health services such as Insite help protect individual and public health, yet the federal government has axed such harm reduction measures entirely from its new National Anti-Drug Strategy.”

In fact, said Elliott, the government has also proposed legislation that would make matters even worse: Bill C-26 would impose mandatory minimum sentences for drug offences. The bill passed second reading last month and still needs to be debated before a committee.

The Legal Network urged the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health to raise these questions with Health Minister Tony Clement during his appearance. “The government seems intent on not only ignoring the evidence of what works to prevent harms, but on implementing laws that have been shown to do real damage to both public health and human rights,” Elliott said.

“The U.S. has had mandatory minimum sentences for years, yet the drug problem there is only getting worse, while the number of people imprisoned has skyrocketed. Inevitably, this contributes to the spread of HIV and hepatitis C,” he explained. “Despite the government’s best efforts, drugs get into prisons and people inject them, but the federal government has refused to ensure prisoners have access to sterile injection equipment — even though needle exchange programs outside prisons are accepted as a key public health program, and numerous other countries have had these programs in prisons very successfully for years.” The Legal Network said the government’s approach of disregarding evidence of what works is also an international embarrassment and is hypocritical.

“Two years ago, Canada joined all other countries at the United Nations in committing to adopt effective measures to prevent the spread of HIV, including harm reduction measures such as ensuring access to sterile needles,” said Elliott. “In two weeks, the UN General Assembly will meet to assess countries’ progress. Will the federal government continue to embarrass Canadians on the world stage with its ideological opposition to harm reduction programs and its misplaced faith in more of the failed ‘war on drugs’ approach?”

The UN General Assembly is convening a High-Level Meeting on AIDS in New York on June 10-11 to review progress made in delivering on commitments agreed upon by all countries in 2001 and reaffirmed in 2006.

**Empower Yourself**

**For Anyone Who...**

- Has difficulty negotiating safer sex
- Has recently been diagnosed with HIV
- Is afraid to disclose their status
- Is concerned about themselves, their partners, relatives or friends
- Has put them self at risk, but is afraid to be tested
- Has partied too much and is now questioning their risk for HIV/AIDS
- Is interested in a free in-service or workshop
- Needs needles, works, safer crack use kits, condoms, lube, or other harm reduction supplies

**Please call**

ACG  
AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH  
AND WELLINGTON COUNTY

409 Woolwich St., 2nd Floor  
Guelph, ON  
N1H 3X2  
Phone: (519) 763-2255  
Fax: (519) 763-8125  
Toll Free: 1-800-282-8505

A Special thank-you to The Red Ribbon Gala Committee and Volunteers who helped make this evening such a wonderful success.

# Red Ribbon 08 gala



Our heart-felt appreciation to the sponsors and donors who made the Red Ribbon Gala a big success this year. This gala art auction, held May 5<sup>th</sup> at the Italian Canadian Club, raised over \$70,000 for three critical initiatives: Support and

Education Services provided by the AIDS Committee of Guelph & Wellington County, The Masai Centre Regional HIV Clinic in Guelph, and the Masai for Africa Campaign. Your support of this event helped to save lives.

- |                      |                       |                      |                       |                     |                      |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| A Place in Time B&B  | Cambridge Centre      | Resource Centre      | Leslie MacTaggart     | National Ballet of  | Gardens              |
| Adam Bookkeeping     | Honda                 | Guelph Jazz Festival | Leslie Miles          | Canada              | Scott Abbott         |
| & Tax Services       | Canadian Baseball     | Guelph Storm         | Leslie                | Mr. and Mrs. O.     | Second City          |
| Alicia Homer         | Hall of Fame          | Hamilton Bulldogs    | Wechselmann           | Chaput              | Seque Music          |
| (OHAfrica)           | Casa Loma             | Harmony Crafts       | Manhattans Pizza      | Natures Scene       | Shakespeare Arms     |
| Ampersand Printing   | Casey's Bar & Grill   | Hockey Hall of Fame, | Bistro & Jazz Club    | Nestle Waters       | Sheila Dantzer       |
| Andrea Bird          | Centre in the Square  | BCE Place            | Maple Leaf Sports &   | New Dundee          | Sleemans Brewery     |
| Angela Machaj        | Cheryl Ruddock        | Heather Daymond      | Entertainment         | Emporium            | Solé Restaurant      |
| Anne Marie           | Chris Fray            | Hubert Haisoch       | Linda O'Neill         | Restaurant and      | Staples—Woodlawn     |
| Pincivero            | City of Guelph        | Irene Smedley        | Lisa Lawless          | Fashion Boutique    | Steve Fernando       |
| Annette Twist        | CN Tower              | Iris Williams        | Lois Ryder            | Nighthawk Tattoo    | Stone Store Natural  |
| Anthony Bragg        | Connie Melnik         | Jean Loney           | Maarten Perera        | On The Verge        | Food                 |
| Aqua Hair Salon      | Country Depot         | Jennifer Tarrant     | Marg Mohan            | Outdoor Services    | Surroundings         |
| Artisanale Cafe      | Dale Vardy            | Jim Chaput           | Margaret Peter        | Parachute School of | Suzi Chick           |
| As We Heal           | Danby                 | JL's Home Hardware   | Maria Bernacsek       | Toronto             | Talisman Resort      |
| Babel Fish Bistro    | Delta Hotels          | Joan Rosemary        | Marineland            | Patricia Lenore     | Village              |
| Bamco Custom         | Diana's               | Vanderkamp           | Mariposa Cruises      | Penguin Group of    | The Sleeman Centre   |
| Woodworking &        | Donna Kwasnicki       | Joel Masewich        | Marks Work            | Canada              | The Wine 'N Beer Co. |
| Hanlon Well Drilling | Doreen Kirkland       | John Geeza           | Warehouse             | Petch Family        | Toronto Maple Leafs  |
| Barbara Cohen        | Doris Clemes          | John McGill          | Marlene Jofriet       | Chiropractic        | Toronto Raptors      |
| Barber Gallery       | Drayton Festival      | John Roberts         | Marta Coutts          | Peter Brazolot      | Trish Rumig          |
| Barry McCarthy       | Einstein's            | John Verdone         | Mary Calarco          | Philip Mahar        | Vickie Martin        |
| Beauty Supply        | Laminated Art         | Julie Cradder-       | Mary J. Simpson       | Pizza Pizza         | Victor and Martine   |
| Outlet               | Elizabeth Fasken      | Thompson             | Mary Karavos          | Planet Bean         | McQuade              |
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| Bernardi Precast     | Elton Yerex           | Karen and Randy      | Michael Johnson       | Guelph Country      | Whirlpool Jet Boat   |
| Beverly Matson       | Establo Leather       | Bellamy              | Michael Robinson      | Depot               | Tours                |
| Bingemans            | F & M Breweries       | Kathy Crain          | (RMT)                 | River Run Centre    | Wild Birds Unlimited |
| Birute Znotinas      | Fat Duck Gastro Pub   | Ken Danby Studios    | Mike Cathcart         | Robert Bateman      | With the Grain       |
| Blackshop            | Flamboro Downs        | Kloepfer Custom      | Mirvish Productions   | Robert Munch        | Woolwich Arms        |
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| Blyth Festival       | Georgian Creed's      | Kurt Spinrad         | Design                | Rockwood Pharmacy   | Wordsworth Books     |
| Bookshelf Cinema     | Gerry Weiler          | K-W Symphony         | Moose Winooski's      | Rosalinde           | YCMA-YWCA            |
| Brownstone           | Glenna Rebick         | Lana Lang            | Moxie's Classic Grill | Baumgartner         | Zesty's Italian      |
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## OTTAWA ADOPTING FAILED U.S.-STYLE “WAR ON DRUGS”

**New National Anti-Drug Strategy plays politics with people’s lives**

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

**TORONTO, October 1, 2007**—The new National Anti-Drug Strategy is a huge step backward for Canada’s response to HIV/AIDS, said the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.

The new strategy funds law enforcement, prevention and treatment programs — three of the four so-called “pillars” common in many drug strategies. But the fourth pillar, harm reduction — which includes needle exchanges, methadone clinics and safe-injection facilities — has been eliminated.

“The federal government is ignoring widely published scientific evidence on the value of investing in harm reduction programs,” said Richard Elliott, Executive Director. “It seems clear that the new drug strategy is based on ideology instead of evidence, and from every angle — human rights, public health, or use of taxpayers’ dollars — that’s irresponsible and unacceptable.”

Even worse, Minister Clement is sowing confusion by claiming that other measures, such as law enforcement, constitute harm reduction in their own right.

“This is just smoke and mirrors,” said Elliott. “The reality is that some people can’t or won’t stop using drugs. Harm reduction pragmatically and realistically acknowledges this fact by providing evidence-based programs and services to lessen the harms associated with drug use. Arresting

and imprisoning people can’t be considered harm reduction.”

The new drug strategy apes the failed U.S. approach of treating drug addiction primarily as a criminal matter, rather than a matter of public health. But despite spending billions of dollars on its “war on drugs,” not a dent has been made in reducing either drug supply or drug consumption in the United States. Rather, the establishment of “get-tough” criminal approaches to drug addiction has filled U.S. prisons with non-violent, often small-scale offenders.

Relying on criminal law inevitably also leads to increased fear, stigma and discrimination. As a result, many people hide their drug use, which usually means avoiding the public health and harm reduction programs that could help treat them. Insite, Vancouver’s safe injection facility, is one such program.

“The facts speak for themselves: Insite has lowered the rates of syringe-sharing and deaths from overdoses, reduced the risk of HIV and hepatitis C transmission, and increased the chances of directing drug users to addiction treatment services,” said Elliott. “Instead of mounting a public misinformation campaign, Minister Clement and his government should be sharing these facts with Canadians to explain why funding harm reduction programs like Insite is a responsible investment in public health.”

### About the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network ([www.aidslaw.ca](http://www.aidslaw.ca)) promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research, legal and policy analysis, education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada’s leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

#### AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH STAFF LISTINGS

Tom Hammond  
Interim Executive Director.....ext. 129

Brian Woolsey  
Support Coordinator.....ext. 126

B.J. Caldwell  
HIV/AIDS Educator.....ext. 135

Kim Paton  
Admin / Volunteer.....ext. 128

Cheryl Tucker  
Positive Prevention .....ext. 150

Gary Roche  
Supportive Housing.....515-0699



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 **Danny Lui, B.Sc. Phm.**

 **519-837-4594**  
281 Stone Rd. E

# #6 *Are there risks of getting HIV if I drink or use drugs?*

Yes! Alcohol or drugs won't infect you with HIV, but taking risks while you're drunk or high might.

When you drink or use drugs, you may not make the same decisions as you would when not under the influence. For example, you may not bother to use protection during sex. Having unprotected sex is a common way of getting HIV.

You may also take the risk of sharing a needle to inject drugs. About one quarter of all new HIV infections occur among people who inject drugs. This is due to the invisible amounts of blood that are in the needle or syringe (or other injection equipment such as cookers, water, cotton filters, straws and pipes). If you use the same needle as someone who is infected with HIV, you shoot her/his infected blood into your bloodstream.

Remember that poppers (nitrite inhalants) and Viagra® increase blood flow by dilating the blood vessels in the pelvic area, making the skin of the vagina and anus thinner and weaker, and therefore easier to tear. Tiny tears in these tissues make it easier for viruses to enter your bloodstream, increasing your risk for HIV infection.

### **How can I protect myself if I choose to drink or inject drugs?**

Reduce your risk of HIV infection:

- ▶ limit drinking or drug taking before sex—this way, you are more likely to take precautions.
- ▶ if you are going to be drinking or injecting drugs, bring latex or polyurethane condoms (or other protective barriers) and/or clean needles with you; condoms and needles can often be obtained for free from your local public health department).
- ▶ practice safer sex.
- ▶ practice “safer needle use”—use a new needle and new supplies each time you inject drugs; don't share any injection drug equipment.

### **If I must re-use drug-injecting equipment, how do I reduce the risk of infection?**

You can reduce the risk of infection by cleaning your needle and syringe:

- ▶ Fill syringe with clean water, shake it for 30

seconds and empty it. Throw away the water.

- ▶ Fill syringe with bleach, shake it for 30 seconds and empty it. Repeat.

Remember, needle cleaning with bleach may reduce your risk for HIV infection, but other viruses like hepatitis may not be killed by bleach. Do not re-use needles unless you have no other options.

*For more information, contact The AIDS Committee of Guelph at <sup>(519)</sup> 763-2255 or speak to your local health practitioner.*



# UPCOMING WORKSHOP SERIES

The new Positive Prevention Program at ACG will be running a number of workshops throughout the coming year.

Our first series will take place in July, October and January (dates yet to be finalized). These workshops are designed for people living with HIV/AIDS and those co-infected with HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C.

The workshops will centre on increasing self-esteem and confidence; disclosure; transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C, and negotiating safer sex practices, and will be led by guest speakers from across the province. The workshops will provide a great opportunity for you to learn more about the issues that affect your health and will also help you gain valuable skills and tools for your everyday living.

Our first introductory workshop will be held on:

**Wednesday, July 2nd at 6:00 pm**  
**Guelph Community Health Centre**  
**176 Wyndham St.**  
**Dinner will be provided**

If you would like to attend, please call:

**Cheryl at (519) 763-2255 ext. 150 or email**  
**positiveprevention@aidsguelph.org.**

Check out our website  
**([www.aidsguelph.org/positive-prevention](http://www.aidsguelph.org/positive-prevention))**  
for more information and updates



## Clinic Hours

**Tuesday to Thursday**  
**9am—3pm**  
**519.780.5298**

**New Patients Always Welcome**

## HIV / AIDS Testing.

**Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30**

**Anonymous. Walk-In.**  
**Confidential.**

Testing is also done for  
Hepatitis B / C and Syphilis.

Please Note: Testing for STI's are done under a medical record and therefore are Confidential but *NOT* Anonymous. A Health Card is not required.

**Free Hepatitis B / Hepatitis A Vaccinations**  
**For Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)**  
**and Injection Drug Users (IDU's)**

Testing is courtesy of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Unit.



ACG is funded through the United Way, Ontario Ministry of Health & Long Term Care and The Public Health Agency of Canada. Private and Public Donations.



## Female Volunteers Needed

**The Ontario HIV Fertility Program**  
**needs volunteers for a SURVEY.**

**If you are a woman who is HIV-positive,**  
**living in Ontario and between the ages**  
**of 18 and 52. You may be eligible to**  
**participate in a research project.**

If you are interested in completing an anonymous questionnaire about PREGNANCY PLANNING, please call 519.763.2255 ext. 126.

Participants will receive a \$25.00 honorarium once they complete the questionnaire.

This project is sponsored by the Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research (CANFAR). This research is part of the Woman and HIV Research Program, Women's College Research Institute.



**ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL**