

Happy Birthday AIDS Vancouver!

This year the agency is 25 years old. Look out for upcoming details on how you can join us in celebrating our legacy and moving forward into our future.

Pride Participation



I had attended and walked in the Calgary Pride Parade for the past two years as a representative of AIDS Calgary. That was a beginner parade compared to what I viewed at this year's Vancouver edition.



The day dawned early for Peter and me, as we met for breakfast before heading to AV to pick up our tent and accompanying accoutrements. Everything went smoothly in setting up the tent and table for AIDS Vancouver. We did find out that the freezer in the AV grocery is really a cooler, as the freezies we were hoping to give out ended up being chilled juice tubes!



I had to get a vehicle out of the area, so I left early and had a break before returning to view the parade. What a spectacle! 400,000 + people converging on Vancouver's West-end, culminating at Sunset Beach and the small tent city that had been erected that morning. The weather was outstanding, just enough breeze to keep the heat bearable and the sun beat down on everyone all day long.

What amazed me the most was how many young people were involved. The support and understanding our fair city provides the LGBT community truly allows this younger generation a safe and respecting environment in which to be themselves. I am proud to be a part (albeit small) of all that is PRIDE!

Mike Fraser, Intermin Reception/Helpline Services



AIDS Vancouver Welcomes New Board of Directors

AIDS Vancouver held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday September 24, 2008. 25 people attended the AGM including representatives from BC Persons With AIDS Society and Positive Women's Network.

5 staff members were recognized for their years of service to AIDS Vancouver: Sheila Biddiscombe, 3 years; Veronique Crozier, 3 years; Shannon Krell, 3 years; Rachel Thompson, 5 years; and Laura Mervyn, 10 years. Heartfelt thanks for their years of commitment and service to AV.

Volunteers leaving the Board of Directors were thanked for their contribution particularly Scott Brearley, Chair, Paul Harris, and Jeanne Nzeyimana. And a warm welcome to the new Board of Directors - returning board members Ken Werker, Chair; Stephen Anthony, Vice-Chair; Lloyd Pritchard, Secretary; Tulia Castellanos; Richard O'Donnell; and Roy Wadia. Also a special welcome to new board members Randy Glenn, Treasurer; Tuan Luu; Noah Stewart; and Elizabeth Storbo.

Over the coming issues we will profile individual board members to highlight the strength of skills and experience that volunteers bring to AIDS Vancouver. We look forward to the coming year as the board of directors spearheads projects like the development of a new strategic plan for the agency and events to mark AIDS Vancouver's 25th Anniversary.

Farewell Message

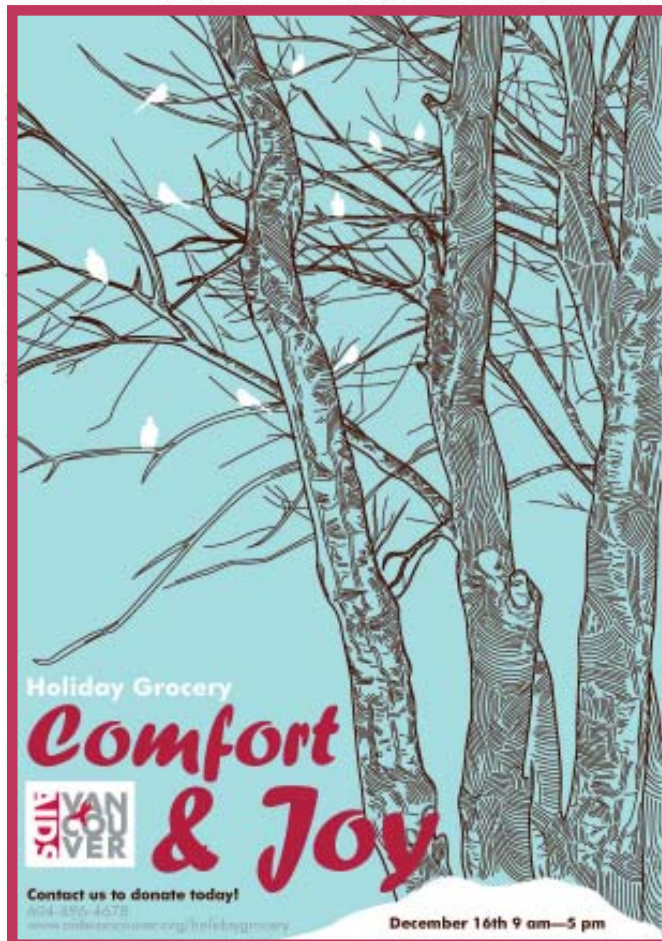
For the past four months, I've had the privilege of working here at AIDS Vancouver as acting Director of Programs and Services. I have to admit that I was concerned about the state of affairs at AV given the number of major changes that folks here have endured in recent months. Now, however, I've had the opportunity to see first hand what goes on at the agency.



Every day, I've been absolutely amazed, delighted, inspired and humbled by the dedication, perseverance, professionalism and down right friendliness of the staff and volunteers who provide support and services to our clients. The work at AIDS Vancouver isn't virtual, theoretical or conceptual. It's practical. It's people helping people. And it's you, our volunteers who are at the core.

Having been involved in this kind of work for quite a long time now, it's sometimes easy to become complacent, discouraged and even cynical in our struggles against HIV/AIDS. Yet, it's the fine work like yours here at AV that keep my spirits buoyant and my determination keen as we together prevent, act and support to alleviate our vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. Thank you all.

Moffatt Clarke
Acting Director Support Programs



Calling All Volunteers!

Please help AIDS Vancouver bring comfort and joy this season by volunteering at our Annual Holiday Grocery! This year's event will take place on December 16th and will include warm winter treats, festive decorations and much more! Join us for a morning (8:45am-12:45pm) or an afternoon (12:45pm - 5:00pm) shift for the following positions: Check-In, Restocking, Bagging and Distribution. Together, we can make a difference for so many this Holiday season.

For more information or to register, contact our Grocery Coordinator at (604)-696-4678.

Jessica Wall
Interim Grocery Coordinator

Help the AIDS Vancouver Grocery bring comfort & joy this holiday season.

Please Donate Today

<http://www.aidsvancouver.org/holidaygrocery>

On Sunday September 21, 2008 the sun came out in Stanley Park for the annual

AIDS Walk for Life.

As a community partner, the AIDS Vancouver Team walked and raised \$4000 to help support and serve our clients living with HIV. As our walkers enjoyed the seawall, our outreach volunteers had a busy day tabling and handing out Safer Sex packs and buttons to all who attended. A fun day was had by all - thank you for being there!



Training:

AIDS Vancouver offers its Orientation and Education session to all agency volunteers, staff and board of directors. This training is offered three times a year. This comprehensive, informative and dynamic opportunity allows participants to learn more about the agency as well as key information, impacts, trends, findings and facts regarding HIV and related issues.



Prevent. Act. Support.

We're doing it online.

AIDS Vancouver is pleased to launch our newest website. It is a great tool for us to do our important work and fulfill our mission to prevent, act and support.

1. We **prevent** the spread of HIV by connecting visitors with the power of information in an instant.
2. We **act** with online campaigns and get others to join in the action too.
3. We **support** people living with HIV/AIDS by directing them to our many client services.

We want our website visitors to find what they want fast, anytime day or night. Have a question about [how HIV is transmitted](#)? The answer is a click away. Want to join our amazing force of volunteers? An [application](#) is at your fingertips. We want visitors to keep coming back to find the most current, engaging and accessible information about the challenges of responding to HIV/AIDS in Vancouver—and in the world.

Some of the features you'll find on our website:

A page for people [recently diagnosed](#) as HIV positive: When someone is first diagnosed, their doctor will suggest they come to AIDS Vancouver. Our Library and support staff are here to help. But do questions crop up after hours? Of course they do. Our website can help answer questions day or night.

Up-to-date listings by subject area of journal articles, books, weblinks and other resources. Our [PARC Library](#) boasts the largest collection of HIV/AIDS resources in Western Canada, and our staff and volunteers want to put our excellent resources in your hands. You'll find up to date information on our website, and often links to PDF versions of articles that make your research much easier.

- Programs, Events & News highlighted on the [homepage](#). Find out about AIDS Vancouver programs, upcoming events and campaigns. The latest news comes from a syndicated news feed that updates with international and local HIV/AIDS news on the hour.
- Web tools. Visitors to our website can comment on blog entries and stories like this (see bottom of page), email information to friends and family with one click, and subscribe to our [RSS Feed \(what's an RSS Feed?\)](#). Look for more user tools in the coming year. We want our website to be vibrant and interactive.

What's under the hood?

Our website is driven by an Open-Source Content Management System (what a mouthful!), called Drupal. In plain English, Drupal is a free software package that allows

us to easily publish, manage and organize a wide variety of content on our website.

Open-source systems are in keeping with AIDS Vancouver's own principles of sharing knowledge and supporting each other.

Did we do it alone?

No. We were lucky to collaborate with the talents at [Koumbit](#), a non profit organization whose mission is to promote the appropriation of free/libre and open source software by social groups. Koumbit mentored us in the ways of Drupal, and coded their little hearts out to help get our site off the ground and into cyberspace. We also had outside help for the programming, design and content of the site from local volunteers and contractors over the course of this lengthy project. We would also like to thank Coastlines Creative for their assistance in the development of the website.

We value your feedback

Our website is a work in progress that we'll continue to refine and expand upon. Write a comment below to tell us what you like. And what you don't. We're open to feedback.

With your continued help and support, we can make this website a powerful tool to respond to HIV/AIDS. Let's prevent, act and support together — on the web and all over the world.

Rachel Thompson
Website Coordinator
webmaster@aidsvancouver.org

Volunteer Opportunities

If you or anyone you know are interested in volunteering with AIDS Vancouver, please visit our website www.aidsvancouver.org for a list of current volunteering opportunities, as well as our application process. If you don't have web access you can call our Information line at: **604-696-4626**

Submission Deadline: Jan 23, 2009

AIDS Vancouver Volunteer Resources Program Philosophy:

Volunteer Resources strives to build organizational commitment and competency by providing meaningful and relevant volunteer opportunities that support and enhance the mission of AIDS Vancouver. Paid and unpaid staff work together to alleviate vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS.

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