

101 - 1139 Yates Street  
Coast Salish Territory  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 3N2

VPWAS Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday, September 27, 2017

# VPWAS AGM 2016

SEPTEMBER 27, 2017 - 6:30 PM

## AGENDA

**Welcome - Moment of Remembrance**  
**Sister Coeur Flambé (Claude Gamache)**

**Guest Speaker: Nathan Lachowsky, PhD**  
**Assistant Professor, School of Public Health & Social Policy,**  
**University of Victoria**

**CALL TO ORDER**  
**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2016 AGM MINUTES**

### REPORTS:

**Financial - Antonio Marante, Treasurer &**  
**TJ Furlani, Bookkeeper**  
**Reporting on financial year ending March 31st, 2017**

**Board Chair - Dawn Clouthier**  
**Executive Director - Craig Dales**  
**Election of Directors**  
**Adjournment**

**Refreshments/Social**

Vancouver Island PWA Society acknowledges the territory of Esquimalt and Songhees Nations (their ancestral families consisting of the Teechamitsa, Kosampson, Swangwhung, Chilcowitch, Whyomilth, Chakonein, Kakyakaan, and Chewhaytsun). It is these families who had established villages and used the territory for hunting, fishing, berry picking, and ritual and cleansing sites prior to Captain Vancouver's arrival in June of 1792 and later James Douglas establishing a colony in 1849.

As Victoria is a large urban centre VPWAS also recognizes families with Kwakwaka'wakw, Nuu-chah-nulth and Metis Ancestry.

Territorial acknowledgment generously written and provided to VPWAS by:  
William A. White, *Kw'ám Kw'um sulitst HIV/AIDS Project Ts'ewulthum Health Centre, Cowichan Tribes*



**VPWAS**  
**101 - 1139 YATES STREET**  
**COAST SALISH TERRITORY**  
**VICTORIA, BC**  
**V8V 3N2**

**PHONE: 250.382.7927**  
**FAX: 250.382.3232**

**E-MAIL:**  
**SUPPORT@VPWAS.ORG**

**COMPASSION |**  
**COURAGE |**  
**COMMUNITY |**



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Board Members**

#### **2016/2017**

**Dawn Cloutier** - Chair  
**Piotr Burek** - Secretary  
**Antonio Marante** - Treasurer  
**Ryan O'Neill** - Director

## **STAFF**

Craig Dales,  
Executive Director /  
Peer Navigation Coordinator

Penny Bradford,  
Peer Navigation

Michael Yoder,  
Peer Navigation

Sarah Wilson,  
Support and Advocacy

TJ Furlani,  
Bookkeeper/Office Manager

## **FROM THE BOARD CHAIR**

The Vancouver Island Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Society (VPWAS) and our partners in the community have suffered many losses this year. Amongst the many are Mike D. and Ryan O., who spent many years volunteering and working with VPWAS. Their loss has had a significant impact on all of us and we shall remember them always. This AGM is dedicated to them and their loved ones.

I have had the privilege this last year to work with amazing people. I would like to thank Craig D., Sarah W., T.J.F., Piotr B., Antonio M., Michael Y., Penny B., Teri M., Steven O., and Martin M. for all their hard work and commitment to VPWAS.

Family, I am learning, is not always about blood. At VPWAS we have laughed together, got angry together and cried together. We are family! You have helped so many people including myself through trials and tribulations this past year. Without you we could have not seen the light at the end of the tunnel!

I personally felt relief this past year from the stigma that follows those of us living with HIV/AIDS and/or Hep C. I do hope that this continues.

I would also like to thank our funders Island Health Authority | STOP HIV Project, the Victoria Foundation, ViiV Healthcare, Resist Stigma, Sara Spencer Foundation as well as our community partners; A.V.I., Anti Violent Project, Men's Trauma Centre, Victoria AIDS Resource & Community Service Society (VARCS), Southern Gulf Islands AIDS Society, S.O.L.I.D., Red Road HIV/AIDS Network, Positive Living Society of British Columbia, PEERS Victoria Resource Society, and the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

At the completion of another year, I am excited to see what this next year brings our way!

Much Love,

Dawn Clouthier, Chair VPWAS

## **25 YEARS OF VPWAS**

### **Victoria Persons with AIDS Society**

**In the spring of 1991**, Victoria members of the Vancouver PWA Society were invited, through an ad in the Society's newsletter, to discuss interest in forming a local support group. About seven members attended the first meeting and agreed that local resources were not meeting their needs. They approached the Board of Directors of the Vancouver PWA Society, the only peer-managed organization of its kind in the province. Historically, in larger cities, peer-support groups have formed separately from AIDS Services Organizations (ASOs) because of fundamental differences in philosophy and priorities. Local members living with HIV/AIDS wanted to create an environment for self-empowerment through mutual support and information exchange in a context of self governance. Finally, the Board accepted and provided a small budget for basic start up costs (e.g. a post box; a telephone line, postage, and travel expenses to Vancouver meetings).

By August, the YMCA had donated a room for weekly support meetings where members shared information about therapies, networking, and navigating one's way through "the system". Meetings were scheduled with the CRD Health Officer and the provincial director of STD/AIDS Control for both moral and financial support. Eventually, in the spring of 1992, an office at 613 Superior Street was acquired through the CRD and a modest operating budget obtained through the provincial Ministry of Health.

At this point, with a budget and an office, it was decided to focus attention on the Capital Region rather than the whole Island. Programs included a drop-in lounge; support meetings, a health education series, a treatment library, a 24-hour telephone help-line, a food bank and clothing/furniture exchange. A management committee (composed of any member who wanted to participate) met weekly to plan activities that were carried out solely by member/volunteers.

By the end of 1993, the management team felt that administration and policy could be streamlined by incorporating the project as an autonomous organization. A governing Board of Directors was appointed and an employee was hired to manage the increasing volume of paper work.

In February of 1994, the Victoria Persons with AIDS Society was officially established.

#### **Founding members**

David Hillman  
John Spencer  
Gordon McGlothlen  
Windi Earthworm  
Mike Casson  
Peter Lomax  
Franklin Clowater

#### **Signed first constitution and bylaws**

Gary Raymond Murphy  
George Vincent Kirkpatrick  
John Charles Page  
Peter Lomax  
Francis Alden McNeil  
David John Hillman  
Michael Steven Doyle

**We know that there is much more to our story than presented here.**

**If you have any details, stories, articles or photographs that you would like to share, please contact us at [support@vpwas.org](mailto:support@vpwas.org) / 250.382.7927 / 1.877.382.7927**



**“Only when I began  
accessing peer  
driven  
organizations did I  
begin to learn to  
look after myself.**

**I owe my tentative,  
slowly growing  
sense of self-worth  
to VPWAS and its  
cohorts.**

**Being successfully  
engaged in a  
community has  
been critical to my  
health and well-  
being.“**

**~VPWAS Member~**



## **“A WELCOME HOME”**

We use the date of June 1, 1992 as our anniversary date as an organization. It was on this date that the first office of the Victoria Persons with AIDS opened. (later Vancouver Island Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Society, 2004)

With gratitude, I honour those pioneers and all those who followed in their footsteps to create this space, whether on Superior Street or Yates Street, this “home-away-from-home” for those of us living with HIV to come together; to share, to learn, to laugh and cry and support one another on our journeys.

Since that time we have come from AZT to HAART (1996) to over 52 medicines and vaccines for HIV that are currently in development, including additional combination treatments, more effective therapies, and preventative vaccines. (32 antiretrovirals and antivirals, 16 vaccines, and four cell therapies)

However many of the issues we faced in the beginning still persist. HIV-related stigma and discrimination, fear and misinformation, equitable access to appropriate health care, poverty, criminalization, ... there is still much work to be done.

No matter where we are located, I remain committed to help create a positive “pozitive” inclusive community and a space where we can, with open arms, greet you with “welcome home”.

This year I look forward to working alongside the board and re-examining our goals and priorities and updating our constitution and bylaws to better reflect the work that we are doing, and the people that we work with, and to bring them in line with the new BC Societies Act and regulations.

Craig Dales  
Executive Director, VPWAS

**Respect, Equality, Compassion, Honesty, Trust  
and Human Potential**

VPWAS guiding principles







**AIDS Candlelight Memorial;  
Spirit Square, Victoria BC**



**Circle of Strength film screening -  
panel discussion; Victoria Event  
Centre**



**David, providing massage at the  
annual yard sale fundraiser**



**Quilt panel created by Pat Doyle  
for her son, Michael Doyle  
donated to VPWAS**



**Drawing names for Elton John  
Tickets; fundraiser with VPWAS  
and Men's Trauma Centre**



**Some lovelies supporting "RED" VPWAS  
annual silent auction fundraiser held at  
the Fernwood Inn**



**Antonio VPWAS Treasurer  
AKA Ms Venezuela**

## WHERE WE'VE BEEN

### Community Education and Outreach

International AIDS Candlelight Memorial

RED: VPWAS Annual Silent Auction/Fundraiser at Fernwood Inn

World AIDS Day

World HEPC Day

Circle of Strength Film Premier at Victoria Event Centre

Harm Reduction Awareness Day

Recovery Day

Vining Street Party on the Plaza

5th Annual Garage Sale/Fundraiser

Gay Men's Health Summit

Positive Gathering

Pacific AIDS Network

Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network's Annual General Meeting

Victoria Native Friendship Centre

Camosun College

CDI College

Our Place Society

VIRCS Multicultural Food and Health Fair

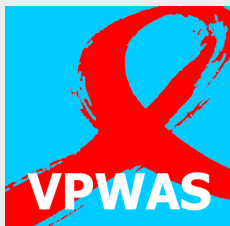
West Coast College of Massage Therapy

### Pride Parades and Festivals

Victoria

Salt Spring Island

Nanaimo



## A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO ALL OUR FUNDERS, SUPPORTERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

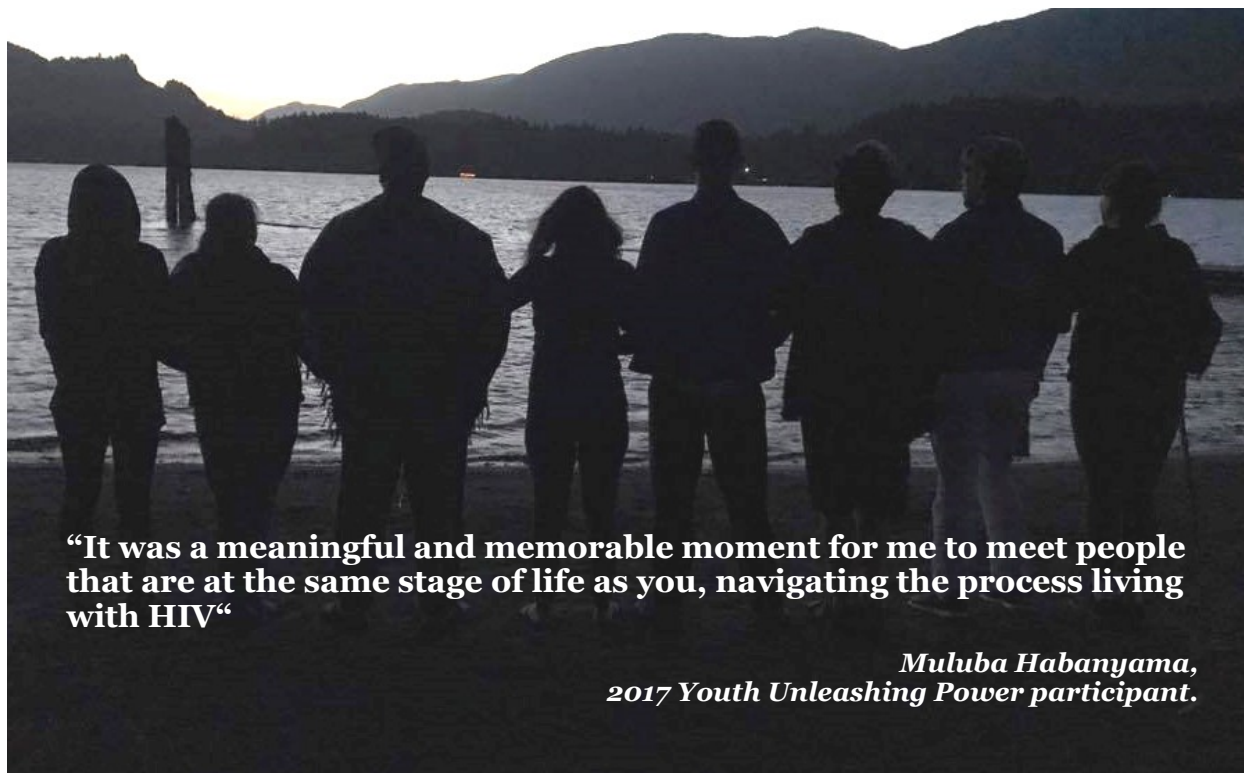
- Island Health Authority | STOP HIV Project •
- ViiV Healthcare: Positive Action Canada Indigenous HIV/AIDS Initiative Community Grants •
- Victoria Foundation – “Vital Victoria Fund” •
  - Sara Spencer Foundation •
- Island Health Community Wellness Grant Program 2016/2017 •
- CANFAR • YouthCo • Resist Stigma • Sukhi Lalli - Lalli Care Clinic •
- Community-Based Research Centre for Gay Men's Health (CBRC) •
  - Provincial Employees Community Service Fund •
  - Level Ground Trading Ltd. •
  - The Fernwood Inn • Thrifty Foods (James Bay) •
- Victoria Pride Society • University of Victoria Students Society •
  - Lucky Bar Victoria • Copper Owl • CRUSH Collective •
  - PLUR Collective • The Belfry Theatre •
- HEPC BC • AIDS Vancouver Island (AVI) • The Men's Health and Wellness Program - (AVI) • Men's Trauma Centre • S.O.L.I.D. • TAPS •
- Umbrella Society • Our Place • VARCS • VIRCS • Pacific AIDS Network •
  - Victoria Cool Aid Society • Positive Living BC • PEERS •
  - Positive Women's Network (PWN BC) • NARSF • Positivelite.com •
- Anti.Violence.Project • UVIC PRIDE • Camosun College Pride • Victoria Native Friendship Centre • AIDS Committee of Durham Region •
- CDI College • Greater Victoria Public Library • Victoria Event Centre •
- Rebecca George and Geoff Plint (At Work - Victoria A Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division Employment Project) •
  - City Studio - Victoria •
  - Dr. Mark Hull - BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS
- Jodi Jollimore (Community Based Research Centre (CBRC) •
- Nathan Lachowsky, PhD (School of Public Health & Social Policy) •
  - Wendy Stark (STI/HIV Clinic Cook Street) •
  - West Coast College of Massage Therapy •
- Christina Chan R.Ac , Heart & Hands Health Collective •
  - David Fredbjornson RMT, Soma Active Health •
  - Tatajna Kowand •
- Victoria Mayor, Lisa Helps and Council •
- Esquimalt Mayor, Barb Desjardin and Council •
  - Murray Rankin MP •
  - Randall Garrison MP •

To the many volunteers who help every day and at all our special events you are the life line of VPWAS

And of course the many private individual and anonymous donors and supporters who have contributed so much over the years.

## THANK YOU !





## Youth Unleashing Power - a positive youth symposium

Youth Unleashing Power (YUP) is Canada’s only National symposium developed by and for HIV/HCV positive youth. YUP 2017 saw 27 positive youth from across the country converge on Lake Cowichan for a 5 day retreat where they had the opportunity to connect with each other, learn about various issues affecting positive youth, and engage in complementary and therapeutic services, all the while creating strategies to further the HIV/HCV movements in Canada.

This year’s theme was storytelling and the beautiful setting of Lake Cowichan was a wonderful environment where participants could open up about their experiences around a campfire. CANFAR supported the project by providing a full day digital story telling workshop, the result of which is a short film about lived experiences with HIV/HCV that will be made available to the public this year, and will be an enduring statement on the impact of peer led spaces. The symposium was a great success and the participants mentioned that it will have long lasting impacts on their well being.

We would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of Island Health, Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research, YouthCo, AIDS Committee of Durham, PLUR Collective, CoopHaus Collective, Crush Collective and all the community partners who ensured the success of YUP 2017. ~ Piotr Burek~





From the time a person makes a connection with VPWAS they enter an environment where they're warmly greeted by VPWAS volunteers or staff and are introduced to a very welcoming space. The reception/drop-in area provides a community atmosphere, refreshments, reading materials, music, and a place to sit and feel like you belong. The shared life experiences of VPWAS staff and volunteers living with and affected by HIV helps create that extra sense of connection, healing and belonging. Our healing space helps fuel the mind, body, heart, and spirit that allows you to take care of yourself and connect with others.

### Complementary Health Care – Wellness Room

With thanks to Community Grant from the **Victoria Foundation**, VPWAS has been able to expand our Complementary Health Care Program which provides complementary holistic therapies such as massage, acupuncture, reiki and more to promote well being while living with HIV. Practitioners are professionals who understand needs of people living with HIV.

96

Massage/  
Reiki  
Sessions

19

Peer  
Navigation  
Participants

### Support Services and Peer Navigation

There has been success in the implementation of our Peer Navigation program, working in close relationship with **Victoria Health Unit - STI Clinic** and the **Cool Aid Community Health Centre**, we have been able to meet with people in the settings where and when they are being tested, to offer information and support when they learn of their HIV status and to help to navigate the sometimes complex environment of treatments, doctors, pharmacies and other allied health services.

### Positively Connected

Social and Support Networking for POZ Gay/Bi Men in Victoria continues to create social connections with Espresso Yourself a weekly coffee gathering, as well as monthly 'POZluck' dinners and 'Suits', a monthly dinner club for HIV Poz guys at various Victoria area restaurants.

72

Positively  
Connected  
Gatherings

26

Outreach  
Events

### Outreach/Education

We continue to participate in many community events, Pride Festivals and health/community fairs such as VIRCS annual Multicultural Health and Food Fair where we get to interact with the public, promote our services and HIV awareness, testing and prevention. Community education events such **"PrEP Talk—HIV Prevention Worth Talking About"** in partnership with AVI's Men's Wellness program, brought Dr Mark Hall from the BC Centre for Excellence to speak to community members about Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (also known as PrEP) for HIV, and Lucie Mattar a counsellor with Victoria Hospice to present an interactive workshop titled **"Accumulated grief and how we can work through it"**.

### Lunch and Learn

The **Lunch & Learn Program** at VPWAS is a series of training and presentation workshops offered to VPWAS members free of charge. Invited community presenters/facilitators offer a variety of practical and educational sessions. Topics have included: **PWD and Getting to 65; Putting Out Fires: Depression, anxiety and improving your relationship with your self; POZ for POZ: HIV Basics** and **Naloxone Training**.

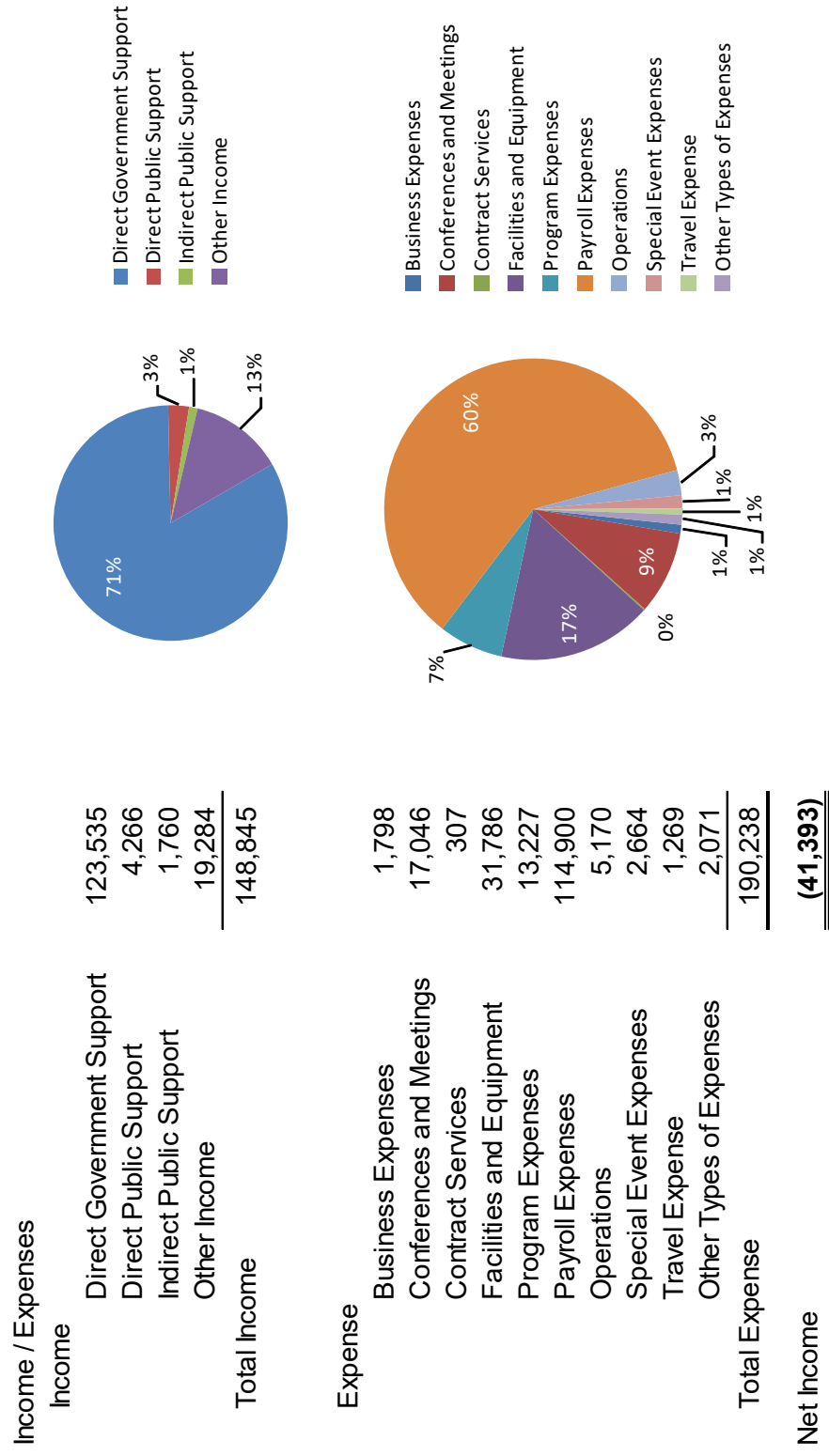
12

Lunch &  
Learn  
Workshops

In 2016/2017, VPWAS drop-in was **open for 254 days** and we provided **Over 1200 Individual Peer Navigation and Support Sessions**. Supported by over **3500 volunteer hours by 40 PLHIV volunteers and allies**. Over **1270** sandwich lunches were provided through Our Place. On Social media we have **991** Twitter followers; **721** followers on our various facebook pages



Vancouver Island Persons Living With HIV/AIDS Society  
Summary of Income and Expense  
April 2016 through March 2017



NOTES: The negative Net Income is mainly due to the following factors:

- 1) Revenue received in prior years not accurately deferred
- 2) BC Gaming Commission Grant not renewed, creating a shortfall of \$30,000
- 3) One extra pay period in the fiscal year covered by VPWAS (approx. \$4,350)

## THE PERSONS WITH AIDS SOCIETY: Capital Region

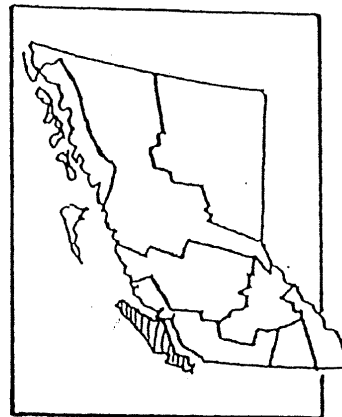
The Persons With AIDS Society, (Capital Region), enables persons living with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and Human Immunodeficiency Virus to empower themselves through mutual support and collective action. It is a community based, self-help, self-care organization which provides services and support to people with AIDS/HIV. The Society is entirely directed by and for people with these conditions and is one of many similar groups throughout the world which have evolved to meet these challenges.

The Society was formed in the spring of 1986 in Vancouver with the inspiration from the New York PWA Coalition, as a response to the specific needs of Persons With AIDS (PWAs) which the founders felt were not being met in other ways. The Vancouver PWA Society, which is where the local chapter's Board of Directors reside, was the first self-help, self-care organization in Canada run entirely by and for PWAs.

The key concept by which the Society defines itself is empowerment, the belief that members must have the information and support necessary to maintain control of their lives and a sense of personal power. The commitment to this principle has shaped the Society's priorities, defined its purposes and provided the impetus for its growth. Since its inception, the Society has earned respect at local, national and global levels for its information, referral and support services and for its knowledge and experience on issues relevant to Persons With AIDS and HIV. Volunteers are also the key to The Persons With AIDS Society, Capital Region and if you are interested in sharing your skills or putting in a few hours a week at the PWA Centre, please call or drop by 613 Superior Street, 383-7494.

## NEW CENTRE FOR PWA COMMUNITY

THE PERSONS WITH AIDS SOCIETY (Capital Region) has opened the new PWA Centre located at 613 Superior St., kitty corner to the Parliament Buildings. The centre maintains the mandates of the Vancouver PWA Society and offers twenty-four hour PEER SUPPORT SERVICE, PEER SUPPORT GROUPS, AN UP-TO-DATE TREATMENT LIBRARY, FOOD, CLOTHING AND FURNITURE BANK, AS WELL AS A HEALTH CARE ROOM FOR MASSAGE AND HAIRCUTS. For more information, call 383-7494.



## VANCOUVER ISLAND PROJECT!

In the midsummer of '91, a group of PWA's consisting of men and women from the Victoria area took on the task of developing what would turn out to be a Vancouver Persons With AIDS Society chapter for Southern Vancouver Island. The Vancouver Island Project functions under the auspices of the Vancouver PWA Society. The group recognizes the inadequacies of existing AIDS services on the Island and is working to change this. Hopefully the new group will be a prototype for other communities throughout British Columbia.

This satellite project has received support and funding from the Vancouver PWA Society. Holding weekly meetings at the downtown Victoria YW/YMCA, and several social activities that all PWA/HIV's are welcome to attend, the group now hopes to find a permanent drop-in/office in downtown Victoria in order to serve the PWA/HIV community better.

The Island Project will extend services and facilitate treatment information, currently available at the Vancouver office. A lobbying base will also be set up. The group will be networking with up-Island and Gulf Island communities.

For more information contact Vancouver Persons With AIDS Society Island Project, P.O. Box 8120, Victoria, B.C., V8W 3R8. 1-381-5067.

An open office and meeting are held every Friday afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30 at the YW/YMCA, Room F, Courtney at Quadra St., Victoria.

Windi Earthworm

## Victoria HIV/AIDS Centre

Victoria has a new tri-agency HIV/AIDS Centre. The Victoria Persons With AIDS Society, AIDS Vancouver Island and the Victoria AIDS Respite Care Society are the new Centre's three partner agencies. The Centre is located at 302/304 - 733 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 3C7. Phone: 250-384-2366. Fax: 250-380-9411. Toll Free 1-800-665-2437.

As a jointly operated facility, the Victoria HIV/AIDS Centre ensures greater accessibility for clients, volunteers and the general public to the programs and services offered by Victoria's three community AIDS organizations.

It's a new era for HIV/AIDS resources in Victoria. The staff and volunteers of The Victoria Persons With AIDS Society, AIDS Vancouver Island and the Victoria AIDS Respite Care Society are dedicated to providing the best possible services and programs for PWAs and the care partners in the Capital Health Region.