

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CROSS CANADA COCKTAIL TOUR – ‘TOAST TO TOAST’**

(VICTORIA, BC – April 18, 2013) Local artist, advocate and activist, Peggy Frank is set to leave on a cross-country cocktail party themed tour with a giant sculpture of a cocktail glass. Starting off from Victoria on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, Peggy and her cocktail glass will visit approximately 30 cities and communities throughout the country before reaching her final destination of St. Andrews, New Brunswick on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Peggy is one of 16 finalists in the 2013 Canadian Sculpture Competition to be held at Kingsbrae Garden. ([www.kingsbraegarden.com](http://www.kingsbraegarden.com))

The 7 foot tall cocktail glass, created out of pill bottles donated by members of the HIV positive community in Victoria and across BC, speaks to the medications which she and thousands of other Canadians who are living with HIV have endured throughout the years since life-saving multiple drug ‘cocktails’ were introduced in 1995.

Peggy, herself HIV positive since 1987, started her initial therapy by taking 49 anti-retroviral drugs. Thankfully with the huge medical advances throughout the years these ‘cocktails’ are now far more manageable. “My life circulated around my alarm clock, having food in my stomach or making sure it was empty. It is much easier now - I can travel and I can now sleep through the night” says the artist.

The collection of almost 2000 pill bottles on the sculpture represents a lifetime of pills she has swallowed to stay alive while living with this challenging virus.

Peggy and The Vancouver Island Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Society (VPWAS) are encouraging community members across the country to gather for ‘cocktail parties’ both to educate Canadians about the realities of HIV today and to celebrate the return to health afforded many now living with HIV.

There will also be opportunities for people around the country to contribute to this art project by placing messages of their personal experiences with HIV/AIDS inside some of the bottles around the base of the sculpture.

VPWAS will be hosting a send-off ‘cocktail party’ on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. Contact Romari Undi ([romariundi@gmail.com](mailto:romariundi@gmail.com) / 250.885.0792) or VPWAS at 250.382.7927 for more information and to R.S.V.P.

## **CONTACT**

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## **ABOUT PEGGY FRANK**

**Peggy Frank** is the Co-Founder and past Executive Director of positively AFRICA.

Peggy has dedicated her life to supporting those afflicted with HIV/AIDS in Africa, especially women and orphans. She has contributed countless hours to the evolution of positively AFRICA and her dedication to this cause continues to inspire its current committee. She has worked and visited many communities in Africa, in Rwanda, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

Peggy is an artist and an avid gardener. She is a practitioner and teacher of energetic healing - Therapeutic Touch and Capacitor, and volunteers with various Canadian AIDS Service organizations.

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CrossCanadaCocktailTourToastToToast](http://www.facebook.com/CrossCanadaCocktailTourToastToToast)

Blog: "What's Peggy Up To?" [www.peggyfrank.blogspot.ca](http://www.peggyfrank.blogspot.ca)

## **ABOUT VANCOUVER ISLAND PWA SOCIETY (VPWAS)**

The Vancouver Island Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Society (VPWAS) is the only peer based HIV/AIDS organization on Vancouver Island, and has been providing peer support and treatment information to persons living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) for over 20 years.

VPWAS is committed to taking a leadership role in developing programs and communities that support PHAs right to live healthy, positive, sexual lives and access the information, resources and tools required to help us achieve that.

We believe that PHAs have the right to live within their individual framework of what it means to live positively, to feel empowered, and to have access to what we need to make healthy decisions within that framework and also that this will support any efforts to incorporate prevention (HIV infection/re-infection & STI) as part of our overall health and well-being.



[www.vpwas.org](http://www.vpwas.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/VPWAS](http://www.facebook.com/VPWAS)

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Under construction, Artist Peggy Frank works on the 7 foot tall “cocktail glass” for the Cross Canada Cocktail Tour in her driveway.

Photo credit: Peggy Frank

More images available: “What’s Peggy Up To?” [www.peggyfrank.blogspot.ca](http://www.peggyfrank.blogspot.ca)