



April, 1993

NEWS & VIEWS

A quarterly newsletter by the Nova Scotia Persons With AIDS Coalition

NEWS & VIEWS is a quarterly newsletter produced independently by the Nova Scotia PWA Coalition. It is a forum for HIV/AIDS issues, debate, concerns, information and news which affects PLWHIV/AIDS, their partners, families, friends and interested individuals.

NEWS & VIEWS objectives are the following:

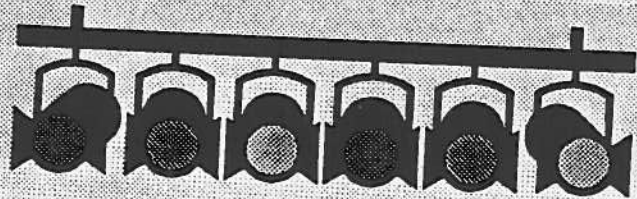
- an information tool used for promoting the services provided by the NSPWAC
- to encourage a two-way flow of information/communication in the province
- to provide a regular link between PLWHIV/AIDS as well as with the Coalition
- to provide useful information for PLWHIV/AIDS on a day-to-day basis
- to promote education and awareness
- treatment update information
- to present information on events or activities occurring within the community
- to inform the audience on news about HIV/AIDS-related issues

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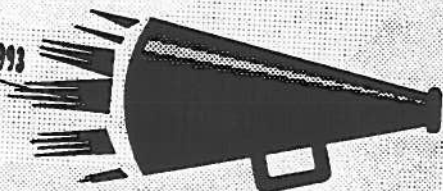
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BID FOR LIFE

Friday, April 30, 1993
 Hilton Hotel
 8:00 P.M.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Is there something on your mind?
Need to express appreciation or get something off your chest?*

Feel like you have something to say?

**Please write us, we want to hear from you
(Anonymous if preferred).**

We're looking for comments on HIV/AIDS, experiences you may have had that could help someone else, good or hard times your going through, new information you have to share, poems you write, absolutely anything you feel like talking about!

Send your letters to:

Letters to the Editor

Nova Scotia PWA Coalition

2093 Gottingen St.

Halifax, N.S.

B3K 3B2



My time at the PWA Coalition has been an experience in a class all by itself, a very good experience.

I have really enjoyed doing volunteer work here. It has also been very enjoyable being here with my friends. I've known a few persons with HIV/AIDS for a couple of years now and I consider them close friends. I love helping people, whatever their situation or problem. A good part of my life hasn't been a bed of roses and I have received muchly appreciated help from family and friends.

Life is a special gift and a wonderful achievement for us all. As human beings, to learn to have love, patience, understanding, respect and caring for one another, as equals, is a great accomplishment, which a lot of us have in our hearts and some of us need to find.

My experience of life and my experience here has helped to make me a better person.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Ray

Living with HIV on the South Shore of Nova Scotia
(an excerpt of a letter sent to the NSPWAC)

I have been aware of the fact that I have been HIV positive for the past two years. Living in a rural area can be frustrating. I now know that I was carrying the virus for six years without knowing I was infected. I'm a young man who wanted a great future and that is gone now. The person I've committed my life to is HIV negative and accepts me as I am, for better or worse. The psychological hell of this disease is madness to go through day after day - dealing with the community's prejudice in wondering if they're going to find out you are HIV positive and living around doctors who are not educated about this disease. One doctor said to me that AIDS is not presently a problem in the South Shore. I myself was not highly sexual. Doesn't this tell people that a person does not have to be highly sexual to get this disease. It only takes one time to get HIV.

I don't know of other people who have the virus in this area and have come forward, so we can help each other. I'm not going to run away from it anymore. I have always been a fighter and whatever help I can give to those who need it, I will, until I take my last breathe.

I wanted to start an awareness programme in the South Shore...I hope that my health can remain stable so I am able to build a foundation...with all the strength I have I want to change the system as much as I can, not only for myself but for others as well.

The south shore has about 166,000 strong and proud people and when our backs are against the wall we come out swinging with both fists. Our people have known difficult times before. This epidemic could have horrible consequences unless we all band together.

I love the people here and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else, but there is fear for me because of all the madness that is happening on the south shore. Halifax just sees us through the (Eric) Smith story in Shelburne county, and one little community does not tell the story of the people of the south shore. Before people's sons and daughters become infected by this disease, let's try to stop the dying now! The PWA Coalition deserves my thanks for not giving up on the south shore.

LETS GET TOGETHER AND FIGHT THE FEAR NOW!

One thing that you can count on is that I won't give up on life, I just get stronger. Let's show the rest of Nova Scotia that we care about the human beings that live on the south shore.

I'd like to send a personal note to Eric Smith. Don't give up. What you stood for was the right thing, and I hope that they realize what they lost in Shelburne county. So thank you for your stand my friend, and maybe we will meet someday.

Thanks, Your Friend
Tony

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the coordinator for the Women and AIDS Project. The project has received initial funding to carry out a province-wide needs assessment and to develop an outreach project. The needs assessment will access the population of HIV infected women to document the needs of women who are infected, the needs of women who are affected and the needs for culturally specific education and information among women in Nova Scotia.

The need for the project arises out of discussions among women who are affected by HIV, HIV+ women, women who are family, friends, lovers, caregivers of infected persons, and women who have been involved in support and advocacy work.

The project will be developed through this initial phase (the needs assessment); subsequently a second phase of the project will implement those outreach strategies for education, support, and advocacy which will be identified by the needs assessment.

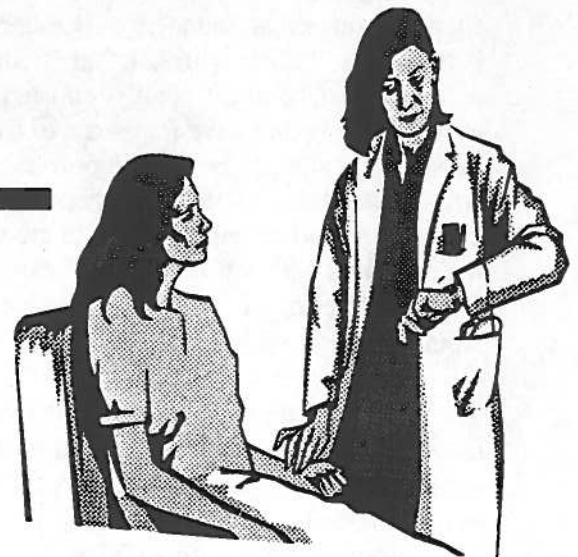
I know from my previous work in the HIV/AIDS field that there are many women doing lots of very important work in the area of women and HIV/AIDS. I look forward to reconnecting with those of you that I know, and getting caught up with all of the work that you have been doing; and of course meeting other women working in this field.

If you are interested in connecting up with this project or getting more information please contact me at:

Nova Scotia PWA Coalition.

Keep on keepin' on!

Jane Allen



*AND
AIDS*

NEWS
IN
BRIEF
NEWS
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BRIEF

SPRING FLING

Join us at our offices on April 16 from 3:30 to 5:30

- to welcome Marianne to the Coalition as our new Administrative Coordinator;
- to bid farewell to Robert as he prepares to spend the next six months golfing;
- to recognize the dedication and hard work of all our volunteers; and
- to celebrate spring!

Everyone's welcome. Bring a friend, bring some munchies and help us celebrate our Volunteer Recognition/Hello Marianne/Goodbye Robert/Spring Fling. See ya all there!

INFORMATION NIGHTS

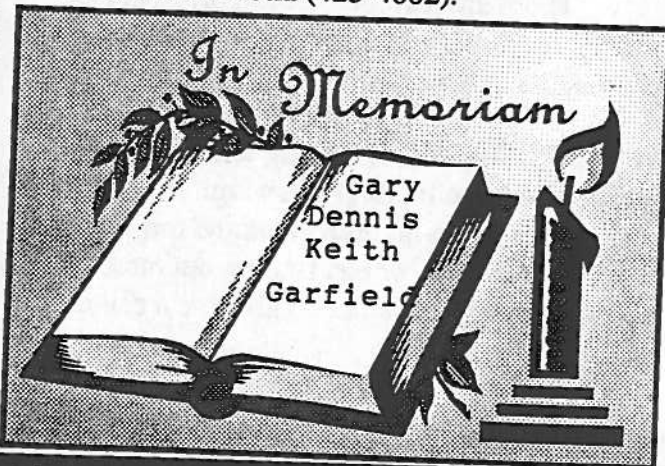
Information nights are presented jointly by the NSPWAC and AIDS N.S. every second Monday of each month. The nights are held from 7 - 9 p.m. at AIDS N.S. (5224 Blowers Street).

April 19
Claire McNeil from Dalhousie Legal AID will be speaking about legal issues for PHA's
May 4

Roger Lewis from Mary Jane Alternative Tastes will be speaking about nutritional supplements.

BID FOR LIFE

This year's auction will be held on April 30 at the Grand Ball Room at the Hilton Hotel. The preview is 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. and the auction starts at 8:00 p.m. For more information, call AIDS Nova Scotia (425-4882).



Nova Scotia PWA Coalition



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR SPRING BABIES!

We would like to wish our new Administrative Coordinator, Marianne; our Treatment Information Coordinator, James; our Community AIDS Educator for the B.O.P., Kim and her assistant, Rodney a very Happy Birthday.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Our staff would like to sincerely thank all our volunteers for the time and energy given to the Coalition. Special thanks to the musical, spiritual and comical Rick, an AST student who has been with us since last September; Penny who's always smiling and smelling like rose petals; Adam who we're happily watching bloom and grow; Darcy, a great companion for those dreary days; Steven, the genius immunology student who's held on to the most brain cells around here and Ray, our drop of golden light! Also, the staff would like to welcome our newest volunteer, Howard, who will be designing and laying-out our newsletter. Thank you Howard.

NEWS
IN
BRIEF
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Drug Mixture curbs H.I.V in Lab, Doctors report, But Urge Caution

By Lawrence K. Altman, Special to the
New York Times.

Washington, Feb 17 - A medical student has found what Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston says "may be the Achilles' heel of H.I.V.", the virus that causes AIDS, and has developed a novel drug strategy that eliminates the virus from human cells grown in the test tube.

The strategy involves using a combination of three drugs to attack a single component of H.I.V., an enzyme that makes copies of the virus's genetic material. In test tubes, the combination of drugs has blocked the virus from growing and from spreading to other cells, the team is reporting Thursday in the British scientific journal *Nature*. The scientists noted that the test-tube strategy apparently prevented infection of healthy cells and successfully treated H.I.V. in cells that had been infected.

NATIONAL TESTS ARE PLANNED

The authors of the paper approved the press release from Massachusetts General Hospital, saying they may have found the Achilles' heel of the AIDS virus. But they and other experts emphasized that they did not want to create false hope; they cautioned that medicine was full of examples of substances that had seemed promising at the test-tube stage but had not led to the production of viable drugs, whether because they were ineffective in patients or caused unacceptable side effects.

The Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association says that of 5,000 chemically synthesized substances only 250 reach the stage of being tested in animals, 5 reach tests in humans and one is approved by the Food and Drug

Administration.

The strategy devised by the student, Yung-Kang Chow, involves two marketed anti-H.I.V. drugs, AZT and ddi, and either of two experimental ones, pyridinone and nevirapine.

Last week the National Institutes Of Health in Bethesda, Md., chose 10 medical centers throughout the country to test Mr. Chow's therapy concept in 200 patients with advanced H.I.V. infection, said Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, an N.I.H. official. The institutes said they were not yet ready to announce the names of the 10 centers.

"The concept clearly needs to be pursued very actively, not only with these three drugs but also with other drugs," said Dr. Fauci, who directs the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

He added in an interview: "Even though this is potentially very important, we have to restrain ourselves from immediately making the leap to say that this is the answer to the treatment of H.I.V."

Dr. Martin S. Hirsch, who as director of AIDS research at Massachusetts General is Mr. Chow's supervisor and co-author of the report, said nevirapine, which is made by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc. of Ridgefield, Conn., would be the third drug used with AZT and ddi in the trials.

The effectiveness will be determined by studying two groups, one of which will receive all three drugs, and the other of which will receive only AZT and DDI for purposes of comparison.

"There's always the potential that these drugs will interact in unfavorable ways that we don't even understand yet," Dr. Hirsch said.

But, he said, no immediate adverse effects were seen at the University of Alabama in Birmingham where doctors have just started giving the combination to four patients in experiments supported in part by Boehringer Ingelheim. This trial is designed to test safety but not efficacy.

LISTEN UP!

A new monthly radio broadcast for persons living with HIV
and everyone concerned with AIDS

"Living After Diagnosis"

Newest information on HIV/AIDS,
treatment options, concerns and questions from you.

CKDU: Radio 97.5 FM

Last Tuesday of each month

5:30 PM

Hosted by James Shedden

Brought to you by "The Word is Out" and the Nova Scotia PWA Coalition

mean that we can eliminate virus from people because that is a completely different matter."

The experiments have shown that H.I.V., at least in the test tube, has a limited number of ways it can mutate to escape a drug to which it is sensitive.

The Boston team showed that if H.I.V. mutates to escape one drug, then mutates to escape a second drug and then mutates to escape a third drug, the combination of mutations that is required for resistance to all three at the same time is incompatible with replication.

Dr. Fauci said, "It is essentially the combination of drugs telling the virus, you have a choice: either you are going to be sensitive to one of the three of us and you are going to die, or you are going to mutate yourself out of existence."

STILL MAJOR HURDLES

The Boston team was aided by several recent basic research developments that have linked specific mutations with drug resistance, Dr. Fauci said, adding, "There is a kind of mutation that is relatively indicative of AZT resistance, and there is another combination of mutations that is more indicative of ddI resis-

tance."

The new report may give a boost to the class of drugs to which nevirapine and pyridinone belong. About a year ago, many researchers became discouraged about such anti-H.I.V. drugs because H.I.V. developed resistance so rapidly in trials.

Speaking of the upcoming clinical trials, Dr. Hirsch said: "The major hurdle is that there is so much virus in the body of an H.I.V. infected individual that the virus may have capabilities that we do not yet know of developing still other mutations that will combat all three drugs. We have tried very hard over the past year and a half to show whether that can happen in the laboratory, using all kinds of different techniques, and so far have not been able to develop any virus that is resistant to all three agents. But that does not mean it can't happen in patients." Scientific journals have pledged to speed up the publication of "Hot" papers relating to AIDS. In this case, the Boston teams report was submitted on July 30 and accepted for publication on December 7.

from **'The Prophet'**

And a youth said, speak to us of friendship.

And he answered saying:

Your friend is your needs answered.

He is your field which you saw with love and reap with thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside.

For you come to him with your hunger, and you seek him for peace.

*And when he is silent your heart ceases not to listen to his heart;
For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all desires, all expectations
are born and shared, with joy that is unacclaimed.*

*When you part from your friend, you grieve not;
For that which you love most in him may be clearer in his absence,
as the mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.*

And let your best be for your friend.

*If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know it's flood also.
For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill?*

Seek him always with hours to live.

*And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter,
and sharing of pleasures.*

For in the dew of little things the heart finds it's morning and is refreshed.

In loving memory of Archie Munroe, November 15th, 1991.

*I miss you terribly.
Love Forever & ever
Cathy xo*