



# HIV/AIDS Regional Services



20th Anniversary

### WISH LIST

- Hygiene products
- Clothing
- Bedding
- Vitamins
- Non-perishable food items (stews, soups, crackers, etc.)
- Tea and instant coffee
- Dog/cat food and supplies
- Canadian Tire money



*Good Food for  
a Good Cause*

Wednesday, April 29th

Listing of restaurants will be available at the end of February.

Please check [www.hars.ca](http://www.hars.ca) or [www.atasteforlife.org](http://www.atasteforlife.org) for more information.

# A TASTE FOR LIFE

SUPPORT EDUCATION INFORMATION  
NEEDLE EXCHANGE FREE CONDOMS

**Executive Director  
John MacTavish**

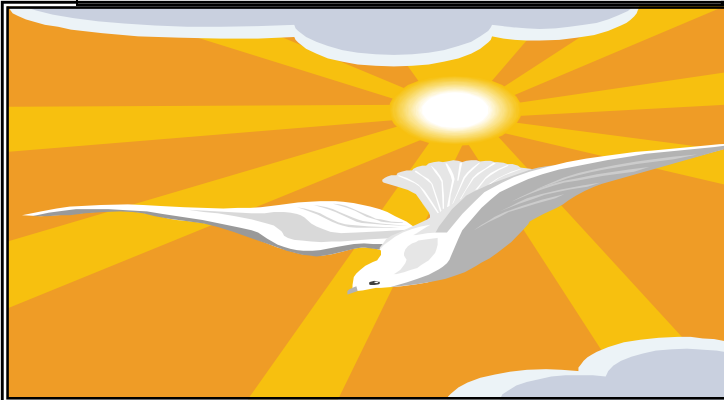
Here we are in February already. The rush of the holiday season is behind us and we are busy with getting many projects and events off the ground for the Spring. The Board and Staff have begun working on HARS Strategic Plan for the next four years. This plan will assist us in continuing to meet the needs of those we serve as well as look at new initiatives for the agency.

The Ministry of Health and Long-term care, AIDS Bureau, has increased our core funding which includes the money to hire a Volunteer Coordinator. We are very excited with this opportunity as volunteers are very important to us and this will enable us to extend their involvement at HARS.

Speaking of volunteers, we are also currently looking for individuals that might like to sit on various committees such as fundraising, policy and procedures, etc. If you are interested please contact me for more information.

As always if you are by the office drop in for a coffee and chat.

-John MacTavish, ED.



*In Memory of ...*

**Sarah Martel  
and  
Charles Keeping**

*-we wish them peace.*

**Prison Support Coordinator  
Diane Smith-Merrill**

First I would like to wish Happy 2009 to everyone, and to wish for you all that you wish for yourself.

The year has started out a little slower, but is gradually picking up now. Some of the issues I have been addressing are accessing medications for those offenders who are being deported upon release from Canadian Federal Prisons. This often involves contacting different countries, some in North America and others in different parts of the world, and securing access to medical care and medications. As we know, missing meds can cause difficulties for PHA's, and adherence is vital for stable CD4's and viral loads. While this is easier in first world countries, I have also had some success with those countries categorized as third world or developing. To date, I have been lucky in this endeavour and have had great cooperation from health services at the various Federal Institutions in pre-release planning.

Opening Doors will be upon us in April and I hope that many are able to attend this year. It is always a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk too others working in the area.

-Diane Smith-Merrill, Prison Support Worker



Opening Doors Conference April 29, 30 and May 1, 2009. Glen House Resort, Gananoque. Brochures will be available March 1. If you would like further information please contact John at [hars@kingston.net](mailto:hars@kingston.net)

# HARS

## Art Day

Friday March 6<sup>th</sup>  
10 to 3

Join us for a fun day of arts and crafts at the HARS office (844a Princess St.). Make collages, decorate boxes, paint canvases, or make jewelry.

Art supplies will be available  
Lunch will be provided



Everyone Welcome  
Talk to Allison to sign up for the day.

## HOOD Study Participants

**Were you enrolled in the  
HIV Ontario Observational Database  
(HOOD) at your doctor's office?**

**Have you since changed doctors?**

The HOOD Study has now become the Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study (OCS). Like HOOD, the information collected in the OCS is anonymous and confidential. If you were enrolled in the HOOD Study at your doctor's office and have since changed doctors, **your information will automatically be included in the OCS.**

**If you do not wish your information to be included in the OCS, you must notify either:**

- ▶ The doctor's office where you were enrolled in HOOD  
OR
- ▶ Thomas Egdorf at The Ontario AIDS Network  
1-800-839-0369 or 416-364-4555, extension 309

For more information about the OCS, visit:

[www.ohtn.on.ca/OHTNCohort.htm](http://www.ohtn.on.ca/OHTNCohort.htm)



### City Support Coordinator Allison Cope

Greetings one and all from City Support Services. The long cold days of mid-winter seem to be taking their toll on people. While we can't make winter any shorter, we can try to make it a little less boring. HARS is organizing an Art Day for Friday March 6<sup>th</sup>, 10 to 3 pm, at the HARS office. We invite PHA's and friends to join us for a day of arts and crafts where we will be making hand prints, masks, jewelry, mobiles, and painting canvases for the TELL project (among other things). Lunch will be provided. Anyone interested in attending will need to talk to me first, as spaces are limited.

In the next few months I will be organizing a Queer Health Network, to bring together people, organizations and groups who are working with the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans communities in any capacity. The purpose of this group will be explore what services and resources exist for GLBT in Kingston as well as working together to try to fill in some of the many gaps in services and resources. For example, there are very few resources for trans people in Kingston, and something needs be done to rectify that. If you are interested in being part of a Queer Health Network give me a call. I will be sending out letters describing this Network in the next month and hope to have a preliminary meeting by late March.

-Allison Cope, City Support Worker

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# The Library of Life Project

Mark Twain once said: "There was never yet an uninteresting life. Such a thing is impossibility. Inside everyone, there is a drama, a comedy, a tragedy."

## What is the Library of Life Project?

The Library of Life project is an opportunity to tell our life stories through written memoirs. HIV/AIDS has had a profound impact on anyone involved whether infected or affected by the disease. We all have stories; stories of suffering and triumph, adversity and resilience, love and loss. It is through these stories that we evolve. When these stories are shared they allow us to see where we are all connected in our journeys. We learn where others found joy in sorrow and resilience through strife. Our aim is to create a space where these stories are accessible and can be shared with each other, and with our communities. These are the stories of our lifetimes.

The Library of Life is seeking personal memorials or life stories either in part or in their entirety, anonymous or distinctive. They will be displayed in the office and available for anyone to access. These materials will also be used in various awareness and fundraising campaigns.

## Who can participate?

If you are living with HIV in your body, in your family, among your friends, or in your community we encourage you to contribute to this project.

## How do I become involved?

Anyone can start by writing, if you do not have the supplies needed, HARS will provide them for you. If you are looking for assistance or instructions, contact the office and we will ensure they reach you. You do not need to have any special skills to do this, only a story to share.

## How do I get more information?

To find out more about the Library of Life project, please contact Kate Brett, at the HARS office at 1.800.565.2209 or [kbrett@kingston.net](mailto:kbrett@kingston.net).

## Regional Support Coordinator Kate Brett

I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season and if not, at least it is over now. New Year's Resolutions may also be over now, but I thought I would put together a few things that may inspire us to keep to these resolutions. One of the biggest tricks to sticking to these resolutions is how we go about making them. Sometimes a little revision of our goal making process can make all the difference in our ability to manage it. For instance, we often will make generic goals, like "I want to lose weight in the New Year". This is a great goal, but it doesn't answer some questions like, how much weight do you want to lose, how do you plan on losing this weight, where can you go for support to help you stick to your goal, etc. So, the following are a few tips to help make your goals clear, manageable and accessible.

1. Be realistic in goal making. So instead of saying, "I will never eat chocolate again", saying "I will eat less chocolate than I do now", is more realistic.
2. Plan ahead when making goals. Goals made New Year's Day don't tend to last as there are almost afterthoughts, or guilt inspired.
3. Make a plan for how you will carry out your goal. Having a plan for when that craving for a cigarette happens will help you reach your goal of stopping far more effectively.
4. Talk about it. Tell others about your plan so that they may support you through getting there. It's harder to give up on a goal that everyone knows about instead of just you.
5. Reward yourself. Of course this doesn't mean you should gorge yourself on chocolate when you have made a resolution to eat better. Reward yourself with things that don't contradict your goals.
6. Keep track of your progress. A simple journal to keep track of how you are moving toward you goal can be very inspiring when you hit a wall.
7. Don't beat yourself up. We are all bound to slip from time to time. Do the best you can each day and take it one day at a time.
8. Stick to it. Experts say that takes about 21 days for an activity to become a habit and about 6 months for it to be part of your personality. It will become second nature in no time.
9. Keep trying. If your resolution has run out of steam by now (February), don't worry. There are no New Year's Resolution police that will force you to only make resolutions at New Years.

-Kate Brett, Regional Support Worker

### The Library of Life Project

Please see information on the preceding page for the Library of Life Project. Below are some tips on how you can get involved by sharing your life stories:

1. **Just start writing!** Do a mind dump. Get it out of your head and down on paper, the computer, the tape recorder, wherever. Don't worry about how it sounds. Just write. Resist the temptation to edit yourself; there will be time for editing later.
  2. **Be yourself.** Don't worry if your grammar or spelling isn't perfect. Write it as you would say it.
  3. **Honesty is everything.** The best writing tells it like it happened.
  4. **Include humor.** Favorite jokes, stories, anecdotes
  5. **Detail, detail, detail.** What kind of floor did the kitchen have? What color was the scarf she wore when you first met?
  6. **Go at a comfortable pace.** Don't try to capture an entire lifetime in a single session of furious writing. Write, allow time to reflect, and return again to writing.
  7. **Consult others.** Family members and friends can be invaluable sources of facts and interpretation.
  8. **Use photos to jog your memory.** Tip: Set out photos in a timeline of your life, starting from your very youngest days, and moving through current times. Write or record to your visual storyboard
- Look for themes in your life.** Themes are broad ideas that are central to your life. Did you always want to be a pilot? A preacher? Own a restaurant? Be a farmer? Tell the story of how you met your goal, or how the goal changed to something else totally unexpected.

**Education Coordinator  
Rhoda Gounden**

Winter seems to have reached its peak and we are all wishing for warmer days and sunshine. I have been working with HARS for five months as a part-time education coordinator and thus far it has been a wonderful new experience. I say a new experience as I am originally from South Africa. I was born in Kwa-Zulu Natal, the east coast in South Africa; a beautiful vibrant country full of culture and diversity. But with that being said, it is also true that the laughter of many children has been silenced by the HIV/AIDS pandemic that is ravaging the country, wiping out almost a whole generation and leaving children orphaned while destroying the family structure. Many of these orphans have been forced to become parents to their siblings, providing and caring for them, while some who are more fortunate are taken care of by their "Gogo" (Zulu word meaning grandmother). A lot of strides have been made, in terms of free access to ARVs (medication), decrease in mother to child transmission and better prevention and awareness strategies. While working at a hospital in South Africa, there were many experiences that I had encountered and one that will never be erased from my memory was a four year old patient of ours who was diagnosed at the age of two when her mum tested HIV positive. Mother and child were both put onto our treatment program and followed up every two weeks and then on monthly visits as her health progressed. They both were doing very well until appointments started being missed. We then followed up and realized that mum had passed away due to poor compliance and that her body was only discovered after a few days with her little girl holding on to her cold body. It still brings a chill to me. This is what it has become and it is hard to ignore. In Canada the prevalence of HIV is increasing and the sad thing is that people think it is out there and is only a problem in Africa, Asia or developing countries, but the fact is that it is very real here and we need more people that are highly motivated to change the course of this disease that is literally spreading like wildfire. The best treatment for HIV/AIDS is not the triple drug therapy but prevention and awareness. I am privileged to be part of HARS being able to enable others to become less ignorant and aware of the choices they will make in the future. On a lighter note it is also great fun working in this field so I encourage people out there to volunteer and be a part of this effort, our doors are always open.

-Rhoda Goundin, Education Coordinator

**Education Coordinator  
Rebecca Anweiler**

This February 16th is the twentieth anniversary of artist Keith Haring's death of AIDS at the age of 31 in New York. While the world lost many fine artists as a result of the AIDS pandemic, Haring's work had the ability to



Keith Haring, Ignorance=Fear, 1989 Poster 24 X 43 1/4inches

attract a wide audience and assure the accessibility and staying power of his imagery, which has become a universally recognized visual language of the 20th century. Haring was diagnosed with AIDS in 1988. In 1989, he established the Keith Haring Foundation, its mandate being to provide funding and imagery to AIDS organizations and children's programs. Haring enlisted his imagery during the last years of his life to speak about his own illness and generate activism and awareness about AIDS.

I'm in the office a little less often these days as I balance a teaching job at Queen's with my education work at HARS. Nonetheless, please feel free to contact me by email at [anweiler@kingston.net](mailto:anweiler@kingston.net) for any of your education or workshop needs.

-Rebecca Anweiler, Education Coordinator

# The Lucy Fund

The Lucy Fund is a special HARS assistance program to benefit some of our four-footed friends. The fund came into existence with a donation by Ruth Sheridan after the death of her beloved dog Lucy. Ruth has been a supporter of HARS for many years and she wanted to do something that would assist PHA's and their pets. The hope is that we will be able to provide PHA's with help covering some of the costs of having a pet. At this time the assistance that we can provide is minimal, but we hope to continue raising funds to make this program viable. We are also collecting pet supplies (food, collars, leashes, new toys, kitty litter etc.) to be given to pets in need.

Our animal companions can make a significant difference to the quality of our lives. They bring us unconditional love and acceptance. They don't judge us or stigmatize or make us feel like we don't count. Lucy's Fund is a way for those of us who love our furry friends to contribute to the health and well-being of someone else's beloved companion. If you would like to donate to this project please mark your donation to **The Lucy Fund**.



Lucy, Oct. 29, 2001—Sept. 24, 2007.

**"There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face." ~Ben Williams**

**"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole." ~Roger Caras**



## FUSE

A drop-in for LGB?TT?IQ youth (*under 19*)

**Every Tuesday**

**99 York St. 3:30-5:30pm**

Chill out. Grab a snack. Meet new people. Chat.  
Do art. Get info & much more.

For info contact Marney at  
[marneymcdiarmid@gmail.com](mailto:marneymcdiarmid@gmail.com)

# HIV/AIDS

## Regional Services

844 A Princess Street  
Kingston ON K7L 1G5  
Business:  
613.545.3698 or  
1.800.565.2209  
Fax: 613.545.9809  
hars@kingston.net  
www.hars.ca

### Staff Members

Executive Director:	John MacTavish
City Support Coordinator:	Allison Cope
Regional Support Coordinator:	Kate Brett
Prison Support Coordinator:	Diane Smith-Merrill
Education Coordinator:	Rebecca Anweiler
Education Coordinator:	Rhoda Goundin

### 2008-09 Board Members

Chair	Stevenson Fergus
Vice-Chair	Joseph Babcock
Treasurer	Andy Visser
Secretary	Mary Louise Adams
Director	Erich Prohaska
Director	Mathew Hou
Executive Director (ex-officio)	John MacTavish

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