

reACT-Believe

Winter 1994, Volume 7, Issue 1

AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay
P.O. Box 24025, Downtown North Postal Outlet
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7A 4T0 (807)345-1516
AIDS Infoline 345-SAFE

AGM FEATURES TRIBUTE TO TED ROMANOWSKI GUEST SPEECH BY KEN WARD

ACT-B's 1993 Annual General Meeting was held on November 10, 1993, at Trinity United Church. Approximately fifty people were in attendance.

The meeting was opened with a smudge ceremony and prayer by Native elder Tony DePerry. Tony also gave a welcoming address and wished us well in our continuing work.

The business portion followed with reports from the President of the Board, the Treasurer and the Executive Director. In his remarks, Michael Sobota (Executive Director) noted that last year, for the first time in Canada since records have been kept, more than 1,000 Canadians had died from AIDS. He added that this number was expected to be exceeded for the next few years.

A special tribute was given to Ted Romanowski, upon his retirement from the Board. Ted had served on the ACT-B Board of Directors since 1991, and contributed countless hours as a volunteer over the years, while living with the daily challenge of being HIV+. A framed tribute to Ted was read by Sheila Berry, Volunteer Coordinator and presented by Norm Bowers, Secretary on the Board.

The Nominating Committee interviewed and accepted eleven candidates who wished to run for the Board. There were nine positions available. All eleven candidates were in attendance, and spoke briefly about themselves to the assembly. Members then voted by written ballot for the candidates of their choice.

The 1993-94 Board of Directors, including the nine elected at the Annual General Meeting are:

Richard Atkinson
Norm Bowers
Sarah Bunn
Alanna Downey-Baxter
Mahlon Inksetter
Gail Linklater
Rob MacKay
Ed Prinselaar
Bob Richardson
Diane Roberts
Pius White
Derek Zulesky



*image courtesy of Feather of Hope
Aboriginal AIDS Prevention Society
Edmonton, Alberta*

The guest speaker for the evening was Ken Ward. Ken is a 33 year old Native Cree. He was the first Aboriginal in Canada to go public with his HIV diagnosis. He is the founder of the "Feather of Hope Aboriginal AIDS Prevention Society". Ken's address was titled "Living With Hope". He spoke movingly about how his life has evolved and the challenges he faces daily as a Native living with HIV in Canada. He concluded his talk by generously giving gifts to individuals in the audience and to ACT-B.

ACT-B EXECUTIVE OFFICERS CHOSEN FOR 1993-94

The Board of Directors, at their December 15, 1993 meeting, elected their Executive Officers for the coming year.

The selection of officers was made particularly poignant by the news that long term board member Norm Bowers had decided to step down. Norm was leaving the board for personal reasons. He had served as Secretary on the Executive Committee for the past four years. The board respected Norm's wishes and accepted his resignation with sincere regret.

Officers for the 1993-94 year are:

President:	Gail Linklater
Vice-President:	Diane Roberts
Treasurer:	Rick Atkinson
Secretary:	Derek Zulesky

HOLIDAY BASKETS

Several brightly wrapped baskets went out to clients during Christmas week. Volunteers and local businesses donated a variety of gifts and treats to fill the baskets and to show community support for local people living with HIV/AIDS. Items donated included; mixed nuts, chocolates, shortbread cookies, candies, mandarin oranges, sweatshirts, mitts, stuffed toys, toiletries, Christmas ornaments, dream-catchers, note pads, nuts and bolts, crocheted lap warmers, and jewellery.

The AIDS Committee would like to acknowledge the following businesses, volunteers, staff and individuals who collected, donated and/or delivered the gifts: Zellers County Fair, Safeway Canada, Superstore, Magnus Theatre, Odeon Theatre (Victoria), Financial Concept, Guy and Barbara Rivard, The Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, The Body Shop, Mrs. Arnold, Anne Ciemny, Michael Sobota, Sonya Matijek, Marge Cross, Daryle Dollan, Brad Hetsler, Melissa Mauro, Adam Graham, Sarah Watt, and those who contributed, but did not wish acknowledgement. The Holidays Baskets were well received and very appreciated.

Thank you for making it happen!

Sheila Berry - Volunteer Coordinator

BUDDY PROGRAM

Well it's official--almost! Our first group of Buddies are approaching graduation. After seven sessions and almost 36 hours of training and group work, the AIDS Committee hope to pair up volunteers and clients early in the new year. The goal of the Buddy Program is to try to meet clients' requests for more personal contact, practical assistance with rides, errands and housekeeping, as needed. Since this is the first time around for this program, the training has developed according to

the needs indicated by clients' surveys and advice from volunteers and staff. We, at the agency hope that a program like this will help enhance our support for local people living with HIV/AIDS.

Call 345-1516, if you would like more information about this program or would like to become a buddy, a new training program will begin in the spring. Ask for Sheila.

LAZY BOY NEEDED !!

A client is in need of a comfortable Lazy Boy chair in good condition.

Donation of the chair would be to the AIDS Committee so that it could be loaned out to clients. **We would gladly pick it up** if you call us. Ask for Sheila.

WANTED

If anyone has a couch, chair, bed or any other furniture they would like to donate to a client. Pots, pans, plates, etc. are also needed. Please call either Daryle, Ian or Kim at 345-1516.



In Memorium

We remember
with respect and appreciation:

Doug
and
Russell

AFFECTED PERSONS SUPPORT GROUP

A new "Affected Persons Support Group" will be starting early in the new year. This group is open to anyone who has been directly affected by HIV/AIDS (ie. partners, mothers, brothers, sisters, fathers, lovers, etc.). Mary Lang has agreed to facilitate the group. Mary has been a volunteer for ACT-B for more than four years, she has also facilitated the HIV+ Support Group. Mary is a social worker with the Lakehead Regional Family Center and we are pleased to have her as a facilitator. The first meeting will take place on Wed. Jan. 26, 1994 from 7:30-9:30 pm. The group will be limited to 8-10 people in order to keep it personal and workable, so please let Daryle or Ian know if you or a loved one would like to attend.

WAXING UP for AIDS

A health, fun and fitness day
Sponsored by the LAPPE SKI CENTRE



TIME: 10 am to 4 pm
DATE: February 19th
At the LAPPE SKI CENTRE
TICKETS: \$10.00

(includes a day of skiing or ice skating and lunch)
LAPPE members need not pay for skiing.
Food can be purchased separately.
Chilli, hot dogs, hot chocolate and apple cider available

Proceeds to the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay
Tickets available at 217 S. Algoma St. or call 345-1516

ACT-B ADVISORY COUNCIL

Fred Ball	Director, Public Health Laboratory
Beth Huston	Director of Administration, Kinna-weya Legal Clinic
Vivian Johnston	Public Health Nurse, Thunder Bay District Health Unit
Dr. Gordon Milne	Family Physician
Bob Richardson	Co-chair, Businessman
Nicky Tittley	Supervisor of Infection Control, Port Arthur General Hospital
Derek Zulesky	Co-chair, Health & Safety Officer, Lakehead Board of Education

ACT-B BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rick Atkinson	Treasurer
Sarah Bunn	Director
Alanna Downey-Baxter	Director
Mahlon Inkster	Director
Gail Linklater	President
Rob MacKay	Director
Ed Prinselaar	Director
Bob Richardson	Director
Diane Roberts	Vice President
Pius White	Director
Derek Zulesky	Secretary

ACT-B STAFF

Christa Alsch	Secretary
David Belrose	Education Coordinator
Sheila Berry	Volunteer Coordinator
John Books	Fundraising/Communications
Daryle Dollan	Support Service Coordinator
Lawrence Korhonen	Office Manager
Ian Ritchie	Support Worker/Health Promoter
Michael Sobota	Executive Director

**The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay
acknowledges and thanks our various funders:**

: Ontario Ministry of Health
: Health Promotion and Social Development Office,
Ontario Branch, Health Canada
: Ontario Trillium Foundation
: All of the people involved in general fundraising
and the support of many local businesses and
individuals.

**We especially would like to acknowledge all
those who contributed to the Christmas baskets,
and the Thunder Bay Lottery Corporation.**

Join us. Become a member!

**Members set our course at Annual Meetings.
They are kept up-to-date about our work.
They elect the Board of Directors who
keep that work on track.**

Membership form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Enclosed is: _____ \$ 10 Membership Fee

_____ \$ 25 Supporting Membership

_____ \$ Donation

Mail to:

**AIDS COMMITTEE OF THUNDER BAY
P.O. Box 24025
Downtown North Postal Outlet
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7A 4T0**

To be eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting,
your membership must be up-to-date (30 days prior to
the meeting). The A.G.M. is in November. Please renew
your membership now.

Please address any comments on reACT-Believe to:

P.O. Box 24025
Downtown North Postal Outlet
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7A 4T0

(807) 345-1516
9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

John Books, Editor
Mary-Lynn Bragg, Assistant Editor
Ian Ritchie, Editor - Treatment Pages

The opinions and medical information offered by reACT-
Believe are those of the individual authors and not
necessarily those of the staff or Board of Directors of the
AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay. Medical information
offered by reACT-Believe should be used with your own
discretion. Please consult your doctor.

RETHINKING AIDS

A Book Review

[This article contains some technical terms and difficult jargon, and assumes some knowledge of medical aspects of HIV/AIDS.]

The generally accepted medical view is that Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). HIV is seen as necessary and sufficient to suppress the immune system to the point where the infected person is susceptible to the range of opportunistic infections that define AIDS. This view is by no means universally held. Some researchers and others have suggested that the simple HIV=AIDS scenario is inadequate to explain AIDS, and a variety of other explanations have been proposed. Over the years, there has been significant and increasing awareness that HIV=AIDS does not explain many of the unusual aspects of the AIDS epidemic. In fact a Group for the Scientific Re-appraisal of the HIV/AIDS Hypothesis has been formed by some researchers. Theories ranging from cofactors to autoimmunity have been proposed. Most controversially, molecular biologist Peter Duesberg has stated that HIV is harmless, that AIDS is caused by recreational drug use and/or AZT.

The issue of the role of HIV in AIDS has been documented in the recent book **RETHINKING AIDS: THE TRAGIC COST OF PREMATURE CONSENSUS** by Robert S. Root-Bernstein. This book looks at the information available about AIDS, and presents strong arguments for re-examination of the nature of AIDS, and the role of HIV. After exploring some of the anomalies in AIDS that are not explained by the

HIV=AIDS hypothesis, it goes on to demonstrate that there are a variety of other factors which weaken the immune system at work in people at risk for AIDS, some infectious and some non-infectious. **Non-infectious factors** include semen, addictive and recreational drugs, anaesthesia and surgery, prescription drugs, malnutrition, blood transfusions, clotting factors, and age.

Infectious factors include various bacteria, fungi, yeast, and parasites: such as cytomegalovirus (CMV), herpes viruses (HSV), Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), hepatitis viruses, Human T-Lymphotropic Viruses (HTLV), Mycobacterias, Mycoplasmas, candida, and others.

Also explored is the presence of **autoimmunity** (in which the body's immune system begins to attack itself and other parts of the body) in many people at risk for AIDS.

Root-Bernstein presents four alternative hypotheses for explaining AIDS, and suggests that basic research needs to be done to explore these possibilities. The hypotheses are:

1. HIV is Necessary and Sufficient to Cause AIDS

This is the widely-accepted view, on which most research and treatment options are based. There are a number of anomalies that are not explained by this hypothesis. For example, there are great variations in the time to development of AIDS, as well as great variations in symptoms, in different individuals and groups. There are even reported cases of AIDS where HIV is not present.

2. HIV is Necessary but Requires Cofactors

This hypothesis suggests that HIV requires other factors to be present prior to, simultaneous with, or subsequent to HIV infection, in order for AIDS to develop. Some of the

cofactors proposed include adenoviruses, CMV, EBV, hepatitis viruses, HSV, HTLV I, Mycoplasmas, Mycobacteria, heroin, cocaine, "poppers", and malnutrition. Both Gallo and Montagnier (credited as co-discoverers of HIV) have presented versions of this hypothesis.

3. AIDS is a Multifactorial, Synergistic Disease

This hypothesis proposes that AIDS results from a combination of immunosuppressive factors, in which HIV, although usually present, may not be necessary to cause AIDS. Some of the immunosuppressive factors implicated in this theory include: allogenic (causing an immune response) agents such as blood, clotting factors, semen, etc.; drugs such as heroin, morphine, cocaine, nitrites, antibiotics, anaesthetics, etc.; multiple infections such as HIV, CMV, EBV, HBV, HSV, HTLV, Mycoplasmas, Mycobacteria, Candida, Toxoplasma, Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, etc.; and autoimmunities such as antibodies toxic to lymphocytes, optic or peripheral neuritis (damage to nerves), demyelination (destruction of sheath covering nerves), thrombocytopenic purpura (bleeding into skin and mucous membranes), etc. Duesberg is the most radical theorist in this camp with his view that HIV is harmless.

4. AIDS is Caused by Autoimmunity

In this hypothesis, which has several versions, AIDS is caused by an autoimmune response within the body, perhaps triggered by HIV, or perhaps caused by multiple antigens as in Root-Bernstein's theory of multiple-antigen-mediated autoimmunity (MAMA). Autoimmunity may be the primary cause of AIDS, or it may be a secondary phenomenon brought on by the combination of diverse infectious agents.

The following information has been reprinted with permission from the Toronto PWA Foundation newsletter "Friends For Life-Update" (Winter 1993/94) p. 4-5.

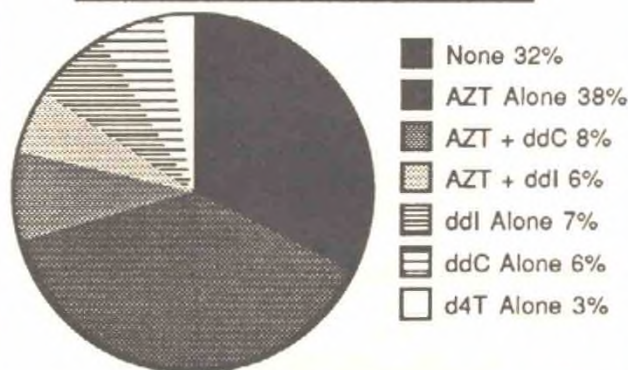
HIV Drug Use

Toronto study of 310 men sheds light

Reported by Mark Whitehead

Making choices about ways to maintain your health and prevent illness can be very complicated for people living with HIV or AIDS. This is especially true in the area of medications. There are many different drugs being studied that may be useful for people with HIV, but very few have actually been approved by the government. Unfortunately, many questions remain about the effectiveness of some of those that have been approved. Nonetheless, there are a number of drugs that are being used by varying numbers of people with HIV in Toronto.

**Use of Antiviral Drugs
by 310 HIV+ Torontonians with
T4 Counts at All Levels**



Earlier this year, the Community Research Initiative of Toronto (CRIT) and AIDS Action Now! (AAN!) produced a report that summarized what drugs are being used by a group of 310 men who are participating in CRIT's Observational Data Base (ODB). (An ODB is a central database with information about the treatment choices of people living with HIV or AIDS.)

Their report showed some interesting trends. This article summarizes its highlights. Please keep in mind. This information is not intended to tell you what you should be doing. Rather, it's presented to help create a snapshot of what this group of people are doing at a particular point in time. Knowing what

others are doing may help shed some light on the difficult choices you are making.

Most people (65%) were taking some kind of anti-HIV drug when the study was done. Thirty-eight percent of the group were taking AZT. Seven percent were taking ddI alone; 6 percent were taking ddC alone; 8 percent were taking ddC combined with AZT and 6 percent were taking ddI combined with AZT. Thirty-two percent of the 310 people weren't taking any anti-HIV drugs when the study was done.

PCP is the most common opportunistic infection among people with HIV. (PCP stands for Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia). Forty-one percent of all diagnoses of opportunistic infections are PCP. Fortunately, PCP is also the most effectively prevented. The risk of developing PCP increases if your T4 count drops below 200.

Of those with T4 counts below 200, ninety-two percent were taking some kind of medication to prevent PCP. Forty-eight percent were taking septri, 16 percent were taking dapsone, and 19 percent were taking aerosolized pentamidine. About 18 percent of people with T4 counts below 200 weren't taking any medication to prevent PCP.

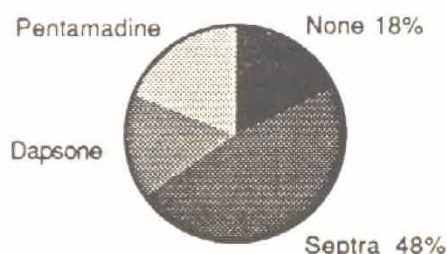
The most common drugs that were being used to prevent or treat other opportunistic infections were acyclovir, ketoconazole and fluconazole. Fifty-eight percent of people with T4 counts below 200 were taking acyclovir (for herpes) and 43 percent were taking either fluconazole or ketoconazole (for candidiasis and other fungal infections).

The records of some people showed that they were also taking one or more other treatments in the hope that they would help strengthen their

Continued on next page

Treatments

Use of PCP Prophylaxis by 141 Torontonians with T4 Cell Counts Below 200



immune system. These included cimetidine, antabuse, naltrexone, NAC, trental, and hypercin). For example, 13 percent were taking cimetidine, and 7 percent were taking NAC.

However, since many of these immune system treatments don't require a prescription, they may not have been recorded in the individual's file. For this reason, information on these treatments may be less reliable than for the other drugs.

The authors of this study believe these results are reasonably representative of the Toronto HIV community at large. The study sheds valuable light on the treatment choices being made by many people living with HIV or AIDS.

Earlier this year, AIDS Action Now! developed a standard of care for people living with HIV or AIDS called AIDS/HIV Management Goals (The back of this booklet tells you how you can get a copy). In comparing the practices revealed in the study with Management Goals, the authors saw some important shortcomings. In particular, they were 'quite alarmed' by the relatively large number of people with T4 counts below 200 who were taking no medication to prevent PCP, since it is the most effectively prevented of all

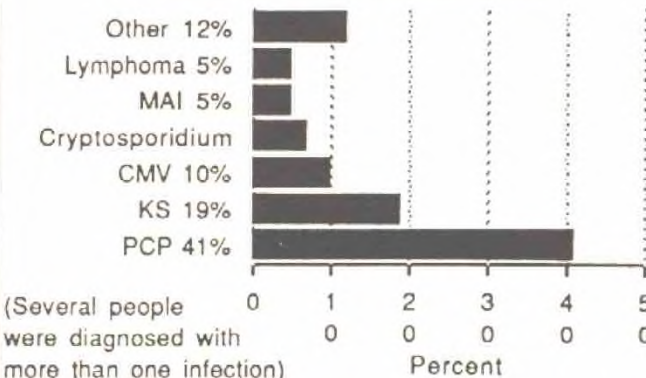
opportunistic infections.

But care should be taken in interpreting these results. Each of us living with HIV needs to make some difficult personal decisions about how we manage our health. The conclusions we come to are equally personal. What is right for one person, may not be right for another, especially in those instances where a drug's effectiveness is not proven with a high degree of certainty.

And in any case, this study focused on traditional western medicine, that is, drugs. There is a wide array of alternative and complementary approaches to staying healthy that each of us is wise to explore.

These results are based on a sample of men living with HIV or AIDS. CRIT is trying to increase the number of women participating in the ODB. If you want your records included, just speak to your doctor. If your doctor needs more information, he or she can call CRIT at 416-324-9505. You can also get a copy of the original study report by contacting CRIT at the same number.

Most Commonly Diagnosed Opportunistic Infections



Root-Bernstein suggests that all of these hypotheses need to be thoroughly researched, in order to get a clear understanding of the processes at work in AIDS, with implications for treatment and prevention. If any of hypotheses 2 to 4 are valid, that will have major impact on the development of appropriate treatment options.

What are the implications of these ideas for prevention and education programs? It is important to note that whichever of the hypotheses turns out to be correct, the prevention and health promotion messages that have been put forth are still valid. Multiple infectious immunosuppressive agents are implicated in hypotheses 2 to 4. Therefore, if we concentrate prevention efforts on the transmission routes of sexual activity and blood, we give individuals the information that can protect them from the range of possible infection sources. Although hypotheses 3 and 4 suggest it is possible to have AIDS without HIV, Root-Bernstein says, "I believe Duesberg is wrong in ignoring the role of HIV in AIDS. It is certainly highly correlated with the syndrome....It is just as big a mistake to ignore the potential role of HIV in AIDS as it is to ignore the roles of all the other immunosuppressive agents that afflict AIDS patients." (p. 343) There is a continuing need for strong safer-sex and other prevention messages, based on a solid health promotion approach.

While **RETHINKING AIDS** challenges much conventional thought about AIDS, it also offers a valuable theoretical approach for research to improve our understanding of the processes that lead to AIDS. We hope that the medical and scientific research community pays attention to this book.

The work being done by community-based AIDS groups already takes into account the uncertainties of science. We need to continue to be prepared to adapt as new knowledge and understanding becomes available.

IN SUMMARY

- * The role of HIV in AIDS is not clearly understood.
- * Research is needed to determine exactly the processes leading to AIDS.
- * Prevention programs must continue to stress safer sex and health promotion.

David Belrose
Education Coordinator

Root-Bernstein, Robert Scott
RETHINKING AIDS: the tragic cost of premature consensus. New York: The Free Press, 1993. 512 p.

GAY/BISEXUAL MEN'S ADVISORY GROUP

A Gay and Bisexual Men's Advisory Group has been established to provide advice and assistance to ACT-B on work with the gay/bisexual male community, including the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of prevention/education programs. Meetings are usually held quarterly, to exchange information and provide a liaison to the community. Two meetings have been held thus far, and a productive brainstorming session, with follow up priority setting, has helped to shape the focus of planning. There was strong agreement on the need to develop initiatives aimed at supporting gay and bisexual youth. Additional participants on the advisory group are invited. The next meeting is scheduled for March 9, 1994. Call the office if you are interested.

BISEXUAL MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

A monthly support group for bisexual men has been meeting since September 1993. In a safe and confidential environment, bisexual men can meet, discuss issues of common interest, explore feelings, and share concerns, including issues around safer sex. Participation in the support group is open to bisexual men. While sponsored by ACT-B in the formative stages, it is hoped that the group will eventually be able to operate independently of this agency.

MAINTAINING HEALTHY SEX

In development since August 1993, this project will produce a next generation healthy sex brochure for gay/bisexual men. Addressing some of the continuing issues that work against consistent safer-sex behaviour, this brochure will replace the very successful "Healthy Sex for Gay and Bisexual Men" (limited quantities of this will continue to be available). Using exciting images and text, we expect this brochure will be an important contribution to the maintenance of consistent safer-sex behaviour among gay and bisexual men. Due in spring 1994, the publication date will be announced later.

POSITIVELY WELL UPDATE

Well, we are halfway through the Positively Well program. On January 6, 1993 Alex Highcrest will be in town from Toronto to speak with our members. Alex will be talking about safer sex after diagnosis of HIV/AIDS. In the works is a PHA retreat in March. For more information about these workshops and the retreat, please call Ian at 345-1516.

POSITIVELY WELL

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay is pleased to announce that Dr. Lark Lands and Dr. Chester Myers will be in Thunder Bay on Feb. 26 1994. They will give two presentations, one to our members and one to health care workers in Thunder Bay. If you have any questions or wish more information, please contact Ian at 345-1516.

Dr. Lark Lands, M.S., Ph.D.

Dr. Lands, author of **"Positively Well: AIDS as a Chronic, Manageable, Survivable Disease"** (new edition to be published Winter, 1994), is a health educator and consultant to the Carl Vogel Center, a non-profit AIDS education and resource center. She worked as a scientist for a large Washington, DC area think tank, the MITRE Corporation, for six years, where she conducted research and designed experiments. She used her research expertise to investigate the area of health enhancement and worked with many hundreds of people living with HIV to develop complementary programs. For eight years, she has compiled information on a total, aggressive, complementary approach to HIV infection and authored numerous fact sheets and monographs summarising her findings. Her articles are widely reprinted in AIDS newsletters and are distributed throughout North America and Europe. Thousands of requests for her "Treatment Strategy" monographs are received annually at the Carl Vogel Center. Dr. Lands has given her **"Positively Well"** seminar worldwide and is a frequent speaker at AIDS conferences. In both her seminars and private health education practice, she attempts to provide a base of information to educate HIV+ people on the elements needed for a comprehensive health plan. She encourages all those with HIV disease to work closely with their primary care

physicians who can best monitor their progress.

Dr. Chester Myers, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D.

Dr. Chester Myers, holds both honours B.Sc and M.Sc. degrees in physical chemistry from Dalhousie University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto (biophysical chemistry) where he investigated the mechanism of action on one of the digestive enzymes. In addition to publishing in the scientific literature and authoring several patents, he has written extensively on topics regarding health and HIV. The latter include articles in **The Positive Side, Canadian AIDS News**, and monographs available from the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT), the Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE), and various other organizations.

MOTHER'S CUPBOARD

WOW!!!! Mother's "empty" Cupboard is starting to fill up. The support from our community is fantastic and overwhelming. For those of you who may be wondering what a "Mother's Cupboard" is, I will explain. Mother's Cupboard was the brain child of two former members Joyce and Ernie, who saw a need for a food bank to provide food for our members. In our last newsletter I asked our members and friends for donations of non-perishable food. A special thanks to Celia Gibbs who asked her church (Current River United) to donate food to Mother's Cupboard. The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay would like thank the following organizations and people: ComCare, Current River United Church, Celia Gibbs, Saan and all the anonymous donors. If you or your organization wish to make a donation of non perishable food, please either bring it down to our office or call Ian, at 345-1516, and I will arrange a pick up.

Letters to my Son

Letters to my Son is a small book written by Anne Ciemny, who is a long time volunteer of ACT-B. After losing her son, Rick in a motor vehicle accident, Anne began a yearly ritual of writing a letter to him on the anniversary of his death. **Letters to my Son**, contains those letters from 1972 to 1992, a long journey of agony, memories and healing.

Keenly aware that our clients, their friends and loved ones and the staff of this agency must deal with our grief, Anne has graciously donated 100 copies of the book to ACT-B. Proceeds from the sale of those books will go to the AIDS Committee. Copies can be obtained from our office or by calling 345-1516.

Thank you, Anne for your generous gift.

LETTERS TO MY SON
A HEALING JOURNEY



BOOK REVIEW

"WHERE EAGLES DARE TO SOAR"
Indians, Politics and Aids
by Kevin White
(Book and Video)

available through NORAM Inc.
Box 243
Kahnawake, PQ J0L 1B0

Kevin White is a 31 year old Chapleau Cree who is living with AIDS. He recently (October /93) launched his book and video entitled "Where Eagles Dare to Soar". The book and video have been promoted as "an education tool for health professionals in native communities."

Kevin is an affable, feisty individual in person. This certainly is evident in his book, as well.

However, the book is more an expose on the aboriginal and non-aboriginal elites in Canadian politics and business, than it is an educational tool on AIDS. In fact, there are only a very few pages in which the virus itself is referred to. Further, there are some statements that actually contradict everything we know about how the virus is transmitted. For example, he states, "For all I know Indian Affairs could have put the virus in my coffee at 'the Junction' to try to kill me off" (page 61). Further on in the book, in the one chapter that deals almost exclusively with the disease, he states, "Parents have to talk to the kids and warn them how AIDS is transmitted through sexual contact." This is an excellent message, but on the same page he states "Parents have to talk to their kids about sexuality. You can't put it on the back burner. It is important now today. If not, this will kill our people. For all I know Indian Affairs invented this virus and gave it to me" (page 96.)

Kevin does "his people" a disservice sending this kind of message. He knows as well as I do, that the virus is primarily spread through unprotected

sex (anal or vaginal) with an infected person, or through sharing blood (frequently through intravenous drug use) with an infected individual. From evidence in the book, it is clear Kevin's lifestyle led to his contracting HIV. His message that somehow Indian Affairs is responsible for his contracting the virus can only serve to instill hysteria... something we have had to battle against since day one.

I am not without sympathy for Kevin's plight. Certainly, the experiences he suffered as a child and youth have contributed to his present situation. The historical suppression of aboriginal Canadians (and everything that accompanies that, such as inadequate health care, substandard housing, etc.) has played a role in limiting Kevin's (and any other native Canadian's) choices later in life.

AIDS, like cancer, is a disease that does not discriminate. It is affecting (and infecting) aboriginal, white, black and Asian people. It is now largely preventable, through

practising safer sex (using a latex condom for intercourse) and not sharing needles and syringes with others. This is the message Kevin should be sending to other aboriginal Canadians. The corruption in Canadian business and politics, whether native or non-native is a separate message, and this is what the book is about.

Daryle Dollan

**WE ARE A
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OF THE
THUNDER BAY LOTTERY CORP.
SUPPORT**

WIN!
THUNDER BAY

LOTTERY LICENCE # P932913

Presenting:

Dr. Bill's Waiting Room

The Notorious Healthy Sex Cabaret

'Za doctoor veell zee you noow

Saturday March 12, 1994

Prince Arthur Hotel

Doors open at 7PM

**Tickets: \$15 available
from the AIDS Committee
in mid February**

Co-ordinated by Dr. Bill (William) Roberts



The Three Saving Graces: or fundraising before the fiscal year ends

Since last writing in the newsletter, the AIDS Committee has marked up a few modest fundraising efforts.

However, fundraising revenues are lagging behind our goal. Our fiscal year, ends on March 31st, so a lot is riding on the fundraising events of February and March. But then, we've saved the best for last.

In the next few months, there are three to watch for: our 2nd Lappe Ski Day, an art auction and the notorious Cabaret.

Lappe Ski Day

Tickets for the Ski Day (February 19th) are \$10 and available from the office. The ticket is for one day of skiing at the Lappe Centre and food from the kitchen (perogies, hot sausage and hot drinks). Members of the Ski Centre need not pay the \$10 fee but can purchase food from the kitchen.

Dr. Bill's Waiting Room

The 6th Annual Healthy Sex Cabaret, a night of surprises, adult humour and all round fine entertainment will be on March 12th at the Prince Arthur Hotel. Tickets are \$15 this year and will be available from the office. Get your tickets early for this sellout, popular event. The Doctor is waiting!

On February 26th, the AIDS Committee will hold its first art auction. **ART AIDS; Put Yourself in the Picture** will be at the Valhalla Inn. Tickets are \$25 (for which you will get a charitable receipt of \$10).

The response from the local craft and artistic community has been very gratifying. We have easily met our goal of donated craft and art work.

Put Yourself in the Picture will be a slightly different auction; shorter, jazzier, with an eclectic mix of some of the finest craft and fine art work produced in Thunder Bay.

Before the auction begins at 8PM, meet the artists who have generously donated their work to this cause. This is an opportunity for artists and patrons to get acquainted. Jamic Philps will be at the piano, adding jazz compositions to the start of the evening.

"Whenever, we take time from our busy schedules to contribute whatever we are able, we add meaning to our lives", David Ramsay.

Plan on attending this event, an evening of colour, warm music and community support in the midst of Winter.

"The Answer To AIDS Is A Caring Community"

How can we thank all of you enough? I want you to know how much we need your help, and how deeply, deeply we appreciate what you have given to ACT-B.

I recently received a charitable receipt for a small donation I made to ACCESS: The AIDS Committee of Sudbury. Their thank you card contains the words that are the title of this column.

I share that sentiment with all of you who have helped us during the past year. Again and again you have responded to our requests, from the simple need of an extra volunteer on a community bingo night, to your willingness to participate in our first agency Public Service television commercial, to direct contributions of dollars in support of our services.

We are struggling in very difficult economic and emotional times. Your generosity, be it your time or skills or dollars, has buoyed us up on many a needy occasion. Thank you. Each one of you is helping provide an answer to AIDS. Each one of you is proving this is, indeed, a very caring community.

Michael Sobota
Executive Director

A benefit art auction

**Saturday, February 26th
from 7PM to 11PM
at the Valhalla Inn**

Call 345-1516

Tickets are **\$25** available from the AIDS Committee

Cash bar complimentary hors d'oeuvres

Over 50 of Thunder Bay's finest art and crafts will be up for bid, with prices ranging from under \$100 to over \$1,000.

Raffle draw for Linda Lundstrom Laparka coat.

ART AIDS sponsored by Thunder Bay Celluar and CBQ Radio.

ART AIDS

Put yourself in the picture.