



**Regional
HIV/AIDS
Connection**

Community Inspired. Courage Driven.

Regional HIV/AIDS Connection

30-186 King St.
London, ON N6A 1C7
519 434 1601 or 1866 920 1601
Fax# 519 434 4318

Our Mandate is to serve the 5 counties surrounding London and to:

- Improve quality of life for those living with & affected by HIV/AIDS
- Reduce the number of new HIV infections
- Increase community awareness about HIV/AIDS

Our service users include thousands of people: those living with HIV/AIDS, their partners, friends and family, and those who are concerned about HIV/AIDS—anyone at risk for HIV, and anyone who provides services to people with, or at risk for, HIV. All of our services are free and confidential.

We are a registered charitable corporation, #11877 9008 RR0001.

Contact Us:

Executive Director- Brian Lester ext. 243

Client Services:

- Director of Client Services- Shannon Dougherty (currently on leave)
- Interim Director of Client Services - Sonja Burke ext. 244
- Interim Manager of Client Services- Miriam Rivera ext. 235
- Case Manager- Richard MacDonagh ext. 228
- Peer Support Worker- Rob Newman ext. 253

Communications and Partnerships:

Community Relations Coordinator – Martin McIntosh ext.252



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SPEAK OUT
A Newsletter For and By PLWHA

Spring 2013

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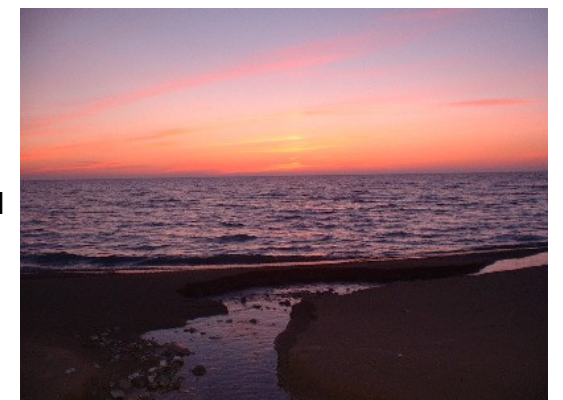
About once a month I get together with a group of friends; we have dinner, visit, nothing exciting but always enjoyable. The last time we got together we watched a video that most of us had

played some part in and this video was made about 15 years ago. The video itself brought about memories of days gone by and was a reminiscent treat for us all. I couldn't help but notice that we had all travelled extraordinary life paths both before and since that video had been made. The video literally took a picture of where we were in our lives almost a generation ago and preserved it for us. We have all come a long way and as we enter our 50s – 60s I can't help but be proud of each and every one of us in this little group of people I call friends.

We talked at length about the children in the video being all grown up and having children of their own, the friends that have passed and those that have moved on. The video was a documentary made for Camp Wendake and was made when the camp was just 3 years old. The camp was and still is a phenomenon of planning, perseverance and great patience. Wendake is about to celebrate its 17th summer on the shores of Lake Huron. What started as a camp with approximately 40 campers has doubled in size and become a labour of love for those involved.

This year the camp has changed up the way they do things and are looking at new and innovative ways to welcome campers to this most fabulous place set apart. Many campers who have been regulars for years are looking at moving into volunteer staff roles to continue their connection to the camp.

Camp Wendake has never been about camping, or the great outdoors. Camp Wendake; which is a Huron word for “a place set apart” is all about the people that attend the campers and the staff. Even if all the staff and all the campers were different every year the essence that is this magical place would remain.



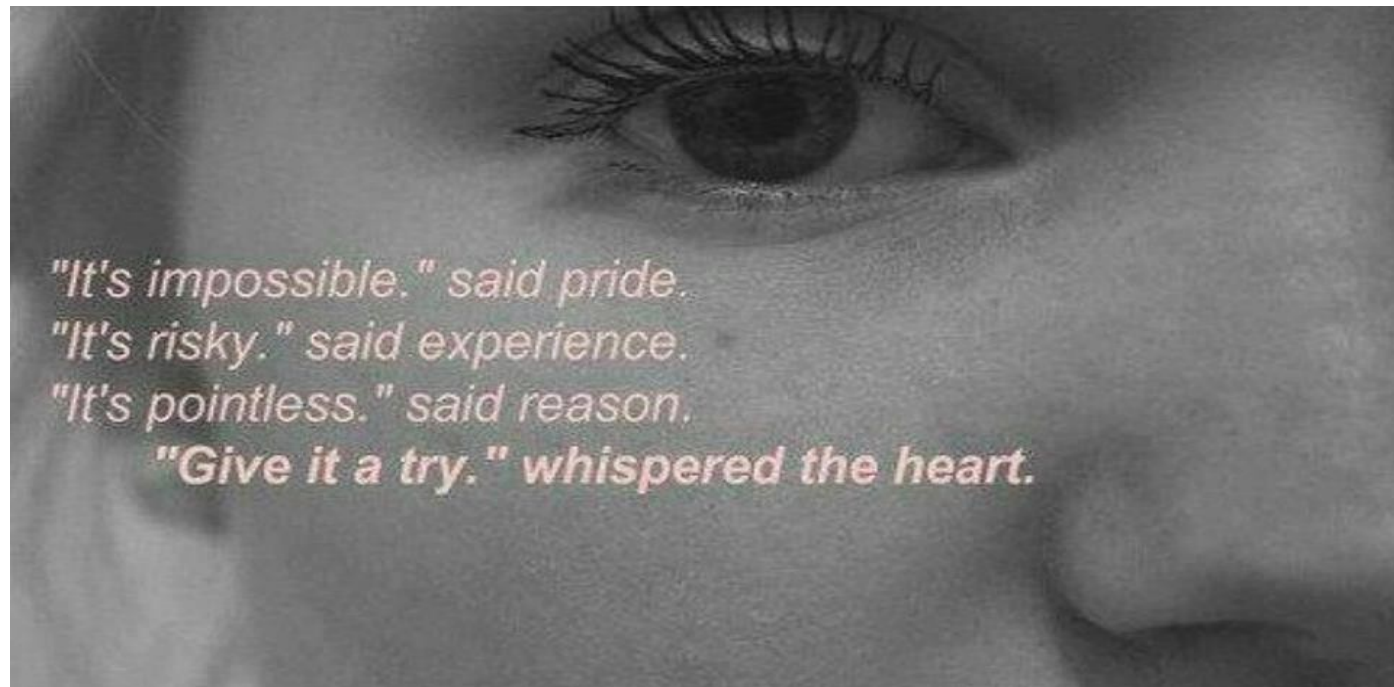
I am a volunteer at RHAC, and I am HIV+.

I used to work as a PSW and I loved my job very much. Because of the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV I had never really told anyone and my work became my life and my colleagues became my family, my friends.

When I retired I felt very alone; I missed my friends, my family. On a visit to the Infectious Diseases Care Program in London a counselor suggested I volunteer at RHAC to pass the time and perhaps make new friends. I met with a case manager at the agency and discussed volunteering and what that would and could look like for me.

I was very shy and nervous about volunteering and it took me a while to get to know the staff and the other volunteers; but soon they became my new family and friends. I volunteer weekly with the "Couch Crew" a group of volunteers who do a myriad of administrative tasks for the various departments here at RHAC. It is never dull here and there is always so much to be done. I have come to see not only how important RHAC is to our communities but how important I am to them. I encourage all who have the time to try volunteering here ... it has truly enhanced and changed my life.

By: BH



Client reminder calls

Want to get more involved in Regional HIV/AIDS Connection? Contact a member of client services staff and ask to have your name added to the client reminder call list and you will be notified by a dedicated volunteer for any and all upcoming events



As we move into the new year we want to hear from you about what kind of lunch and learn topics you would like to take part in ... medications ... skill building opportunities ... employment training ... budgeting ...

LET US KNOW!!!

Activism is the rent we pay for living on this planet. - Alice Walker

Camp time is drawing near! If you have been a camper before and want to experience camp as a volunteer staff person ... you will



want to watch out for the application announcement. For those of you who have never been to camp before ... it's an experience you will carry with you forever be that as a staff person or a camper.

TASTE FOR LIFE

Wednesday April 24, 2013

is proud to once again host "A Taste For Life" in London and in Stratford. It's a great opportunity to gather with friends / family and support the work that RHAC does everyday simply by dining at one of the many restaurants participating in this years event. (see website for more details).

Mark your calendar



PHA PICNIC

Thursday June 27, 2013
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Gibbons Park



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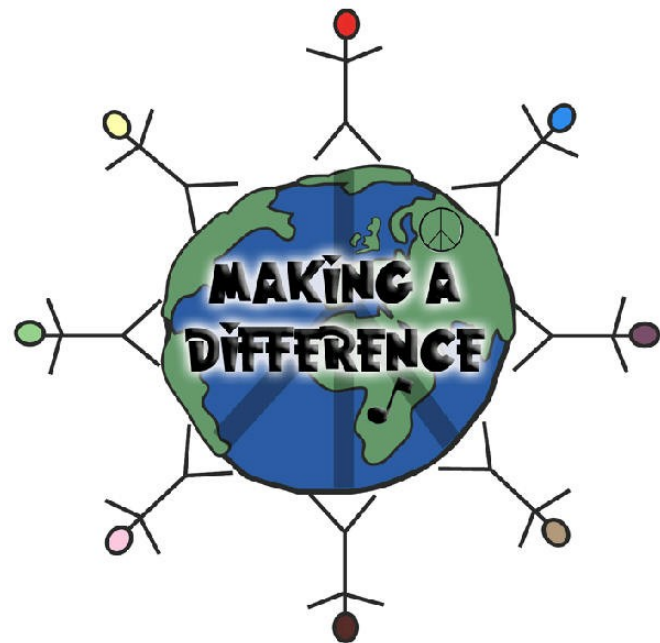
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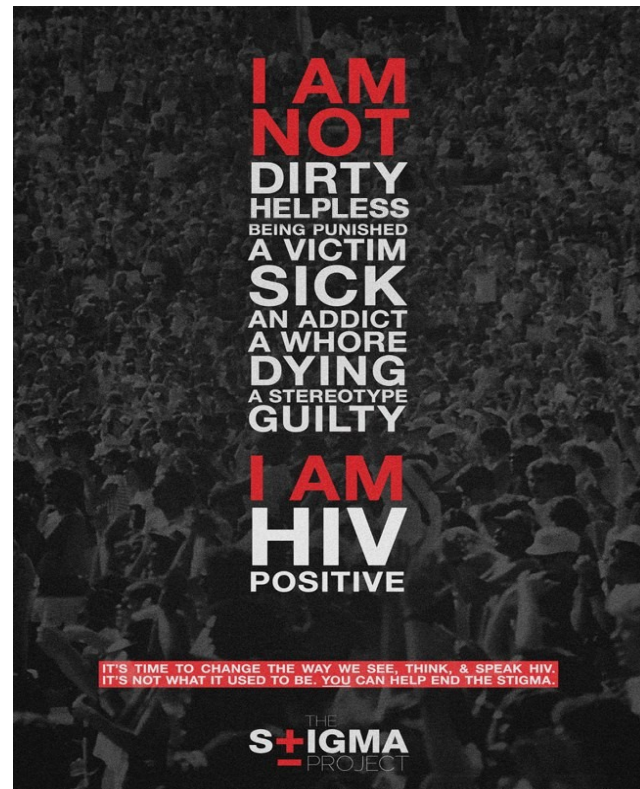
Games and Prizes - fun for everyone
Refreshments BBQ and salads

For more information contact Client Services
519-434-1601 / 1-866-920-1601
[*rnewman@hivaidconnection.ca*](mailto:rnewman@hivaidconnection.ca)

This event is for people living with HIV/AIDS



SPEAK OUT



SUE BROOKS

Sue Brooks is the new Director of Community Relations for RHAC. Sue has been affiliated with the agency almost since the beginning 27 years ago. Sue has worn many hats both as a staff person, a dedicated volunteer and also when she served on our board of directors. Welcome (back) Sue!

MARTIN MCINTOSH

Martin joined the RHAC staff team at the start of this year to fill the newly created contract role of Community Relations Coordinator. An important part of this role is to maintain and build on the strength of the RHAC volunteer program, which helps to underpin the delivery of our agency mission. Additionally, in this newly created position, Martin will be responsible for supporting the development of corporate sponsorship opportunities in association with our ongoing RHAC events and service programs.

Martin has recently returned 'home' to London, after living in both the United Kingdom and Toronto for the past 16 years. What he has brought back with him, is 15 years of experience in the field of corporate marketing and advertising consultancy. More importantly, he has brought back with him a personally strong passion to serve and engage with those living with, at-risk for or affected by the challenges associated with HIV / AIDS. In his own words "I'm grateful to be back home in London, and fiercely proud to be working at RHAC".



What's happening?

SUPPORT GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES @ RHAC

PHA CAFÉ

Is a support group for people living with HIV/AIDS. It runs every **second** Thursday of each month @ 6:00PM

Join us for Discussions, Guest Speakers, Movies And More!

For more info contact

Richard at 519 434 1601 Ext. 228

PHA Women's Group

Is a Support Group for Women Living with HIV

Come and join us for great discussions, good company, laughs and good food.... just between us, girls!

The **Last** Thursday of the month @ **6:00PM**

for more information

Contact Miriam or Keri at

519 434 1601

HEP C Peer Social

A chance for people who are either currently living with or have been through Hep C treatment to come out, socialize and meet new people. Light snacks and refreshments will be available.

Contact: **Keri Wheatley, Peer Support Worker @**

519-434-1601 x.261

Winners Circle

Is a support group for long term survivors living with HIV/AIDS

For more information please contact Rob Newman, Peer Support Worker

519-434-1601 x.253



Meeting with the Executive Director

Brian Lester
And
Client Services Staff

Join us for lunch and share your thoughts with us regarding client services at ...

REGIONAL HIV/AIDS CONNECTION

Friday May 24, 2013
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

30-186 King Street London, ON
For more information or to RSVP for this lunch please call **Rob Newman**
519-434-1601 / 1-866-920-1601
rnewman@hivaidsconnection.ca



HOLIDAY DINNER

The Client Holiday Dinner was on Tuesday December 4th of 2012 and it was a resounding success. This year we bid a fond farewell to the ladies of AXA Insurance who had been volunteering to prepare our fabulous feast. After almost 10 years they handed the baton to long time volunteer Chrissy Bellamy who, along with a dedicated team of volunteers prepared a masterpiece of a meal for almost 100 guests. Santa made a surprise visit for the children and over 30 door prizes were handed out and everybody left with a full belly and a gift bag themed in the holiday spirit. Thanks again to the host of donors, volunteers and Byron Community Church.



WORLD AIDS DAY VIGIL

This year Regional HIV/AIDS Connection clients, supporter, volunteers and community partners came together for World AIDS Day Vigil at the Civic Garden Complex on Springbank Drive. In London and one day earlier (Nov 30) at the Community of Christ Church in Stratford. Our yearly celebrations of life and declaration to Remember Honour Celebrate and have hope that one day there will be a cure was attended by many.

KNOWING IS POWER

Hepatitis C Screening

Thursdays 1-4PM

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Get Informed!
Get tested!



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