

Xtra!

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WHITE LEATHER & RUFFLES

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OTTAWA'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

#217 MARCH 18, 2010

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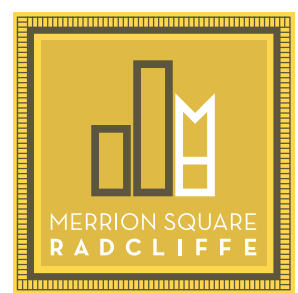
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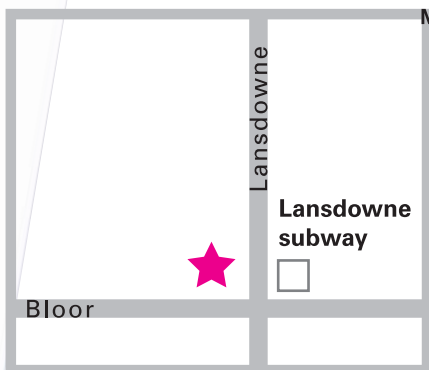


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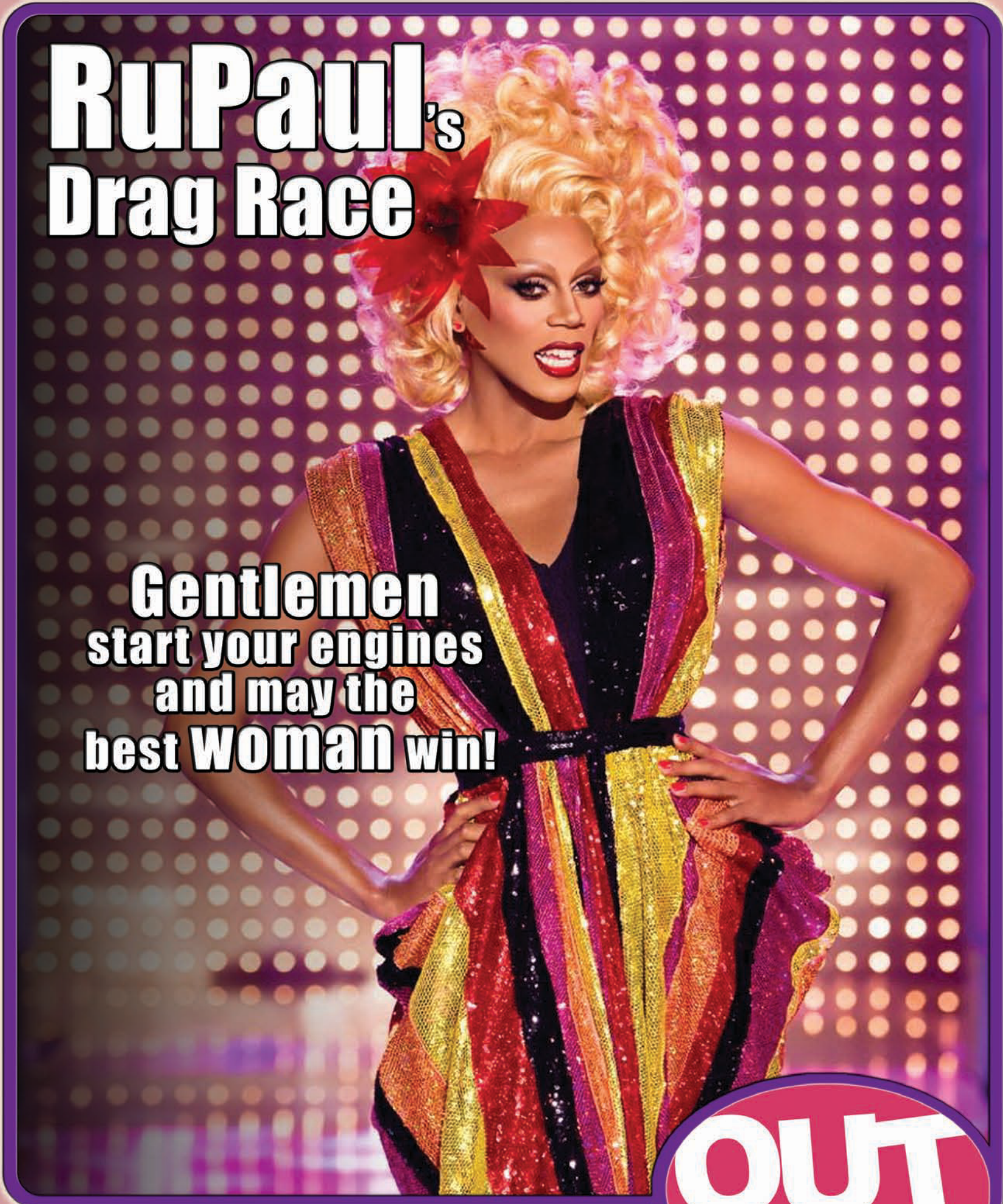
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Roundup



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LESLEY PEDRAZA FOR FAB MAGAZINE

SMALL TOWN GAY BOY

A Canadian in LA

If you think Craig Ramsay looks a little like Dr Frankenfurter's hunky, butch boytoy, you're not far off. He's not Rocky, but he did play him on tour. For Ramsay, an out gay actor and dancer living the Tinseltown dream, it's all in a day's work. **>19**

NEWSFRONT

BIA-Village relations thaw

The Bank St BIA is rethinking the street's flimsy blue banners. The big surprise? They invited the Village's Glenn Crawford to sit on the committee. **>7**

OPINION

Butch dykes: get over your ex

Drive places with your dog in your truck. Ivan E Coyote offers poignant (user-generated) advice for how to get over your last girlfriend. **>11**

ONLINE

Sexual violence & community shunning

When a dyke is accused of rape, the urge to shame and shun her is strong. Quarantine her. Isolate her. But what if we talked with her instead? **>xtra.ca**

ONLINE

A milestone for queer youth

When Ottawa's Youth Services Bureau turned 50 earlier this year, it was a milestone for the city. But it was also a milestone for queers, who've been included in YSB programming for 30 years. **>xtra.ca**

XTRA EXCLUSIVE

Uganda, gay sex & life on the ground

Xtra goes deep with a multi-part series that uncovers the realities of gay life under one of the most homophobic governments on earth. **>xtra.ca**

OUT IN THE CITY

Let's get radical

Queers, university students and other radicals get together for a weekend of workshops, films and discussion. **>17**

BOOKS

Whispers in your ear

Our *Suggestive Reading* column continues, with more queer-on-queer advice on Canadian titles. This month: Jane Rule. **>20**

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COVER PHOTO BY POLKA DOT, JUPITER IMAGES/ & JOHN FOX/THINKSTOCK

Comment

You might live in Centretown if...

Sod's Opera
Marcus McCann



AS THE SNOW RETREATS, leaving its slobbery trail of road salt and cigarette butts, the neighbourhood creaks back to life. There's nothing like spring in Centretown. In honour of the Village crew, I present a meme for our neck of the woods.

Ahem. You might live in Centretown if...

Your ideal living space has hardwood flooring, a bay window, a pass-through, a deck, a turret, stained glass, a clawfoot tub, a community garden and a cutesy mailbox.

Your bathroom floor is made of tiny black and white mosaic tiles.

Your idea of a neighbourhood improvement plan would be the addition of a hardware store in Centretown. Sometimes you wish

they'd tear down Somerset House (at Bank and Somerset) and put in an LCBO.

The yellow Bridgehead cup is more familiar to you than the red and brown Tim Hortons one.

You know where all the evening patios are between the Canal and Bronson. And you know the patios north of Laurier don't count, since by dinnertime everything's already closed. Your default Sunday brunch place is the Manx.

You think a big trip is to Walmart or Canadian Tire. You never go to Home Depot, because how would you get anything home? CostCo is a place you never visit, but you know that the one in Quebec sells booze.

Until you got one yourself, you thought it was cruel to keep a dog in Centretown.

You give bad driving directions because you completely forget about one-way streets.

You have owned at least one pair of Converse sneakers. You have never owned Crocs.

You've heard of Ben Franklin Place,

but couldn't point it out on a map. Your bike has a name.

You're not fazed by the appearance of the drug paraphernalia van in your neighbourhood.

You wake up every morning to Kathleen Petty. Your favourite Centretown resident is Alan Neale.

You voted for Alex Munter in the last municipal election. You've thought about voting for the Green Party.

You go to the grocery store at least three times a week.

You think it's déclassé to ogle joggers, but you do it anyway. You have a membership to either Goodlife Fitness on Queen St or the YMCA, but that doesn't mean you actually work out.

You can construct a thoughtful argument about Ottawa's best shawarma shop (and it's in Centretown.)

on other pages

Bank St BIA thaws **>7**
 Gays throw second Bank St love-in **>19**

"The outcome that we seek is this — gay and lesbian people daring together to set love free."
 Xtra is published by Pink Triangle Press at 491 Church St, Suite 200 Toronto M4Y 2C6.

INBOX

Send your letters to letters@xtra.ca. Letters must include the writer's full name, which is published, and telephone number, which is for verification purposes only. Xtra reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Comments can also be posted directly to Xtra.ca.

Anglicans & Uganda

I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE CRIMINALIZATION of homosexuality in Uganda with deep concern. The only way we can help stop this happening is with international pressure.

We have tried through the Anglican Communion, but the Anglican Church in Uganda only contributes to homophobia. Archbishop Rowan Williams — the titular head of the Anglican communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury — appears

to be afraid to further antagonize the Anglican Bishop of Uganda by speaking out against the criminalization campaign.

Integrity International and Other Sheep have been putting on pressure but to no avail. Even a recent meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion with the Episcopal Church in the USA's Presiding Bishop in attendance failed to address Uganda.

A partnered lesbian was elected as a suffragan bishop in Los Angeles in December. There is supposed to be a moratorium on election of gay and lesbian bishops as a result of the Windsor Report and the recent Lambeth conference. If her election is approved by the majority of American Episcopal Bishops, the Archbishop of Canterbury will kick the Episcopal Church in the USA out of the Anglican Communion. One Episcopal Church Christ church in Savannah Georgia has switched allegiance to the Bishop of Uganda. So the church only contributes to misunderstanding.

*Peter Iveson
 Toronto, ON*

across as racist — but he's spent some time in the insane US military so I don't blame him for being a bit of a nutbar". The article then goes on to describe Sinz as a sweet guy. Really? Since when are bigots sweet?

*Ken Kelly
 Toronto, ON*

comment

"When I was in high school in the '70s and early '80s, I was crucified by other students because I was gay ("Homophobia 101," Feb 18 Xtra). The teachers and the nuns did sweet bugged—all when I complained.

It seems things haven't changed a bit. It's high time we all put pressure on the education sector to address the problem of homophobia in our schools."

—Kieran Earles
 Mount Pearl, NL

To comment, go to xtra.ca.

comment

"I don't even have the stomach to read this article completely ("Is this fiscal austerity?" Feb 18 Xtra). Scanning it, it's sadly obvious that it's written with the usual liberal view.

In the past, I have asked friends that vote NDP and Liberal in federal elections how they'd feel if someone they love was murdered. Every one of them answers that they'd be horrified and crushed.

As usual, these people want their cake and they want to eat it too. They want criminals punished, yet they won't vote for the party that wants to punish the criminals."

—Jeff Taylor

To comment, go to xtra.ca.

XTRA

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NOTEWORTHY > UPDATES > EPHEMERA

Xcetera

JUST SAYING

I'd like to do a movie about men on the DL. I think that's such an interesting subculture that has not been explored.

-Gay director Lee Daniels (Precious, Monster's Ball) answers the question "Will you ever make a gay film?" for about.com



LINGO

Thurple (thru'ple)

also, thurple. n. A closed relationship of three, rather than two, people. A triad. Deborah, Jan and Tina were the best-dressed thurple at the polyamorous potluck.

ACTION ITEM

SURVEY SAYS...

The folks who are trying to get a snapshot of trans communities in Ontario have set their sights on Ottawa. That's because so far Ottawa's trans community is under-represented in the data. The Trans Pulse survey, which takes 60 to 90 minutes to complete, includes questions about healthcare as well as questions about income, employment, housing, social support, sexual health, emotional well-being and more.

Haven't filled out the survey yet? Go to transpulse.ca for more. Survey closes April 30.

HINDSIGHT



Anti-porn feminists battle lezzie sluts

"Anti-porn feminists battle lezzie sluts before top court," this paper reported, 10 years ago this spring. At the time, Little Sister's, a gay Vancouver bookstore, was making its case before the Supreme Court of Canada.

Little Sister's was the subject of ongoing harassment by Canada Customs (now the Canada Border Services Agency), with books regularly seized and shredded at the border.

The case was argued by Little Sister's, its lawyer, Joe Arvay, and interveners including Cynthia Petersen (pictured here at the Supreme Court in March of 2000) for Equality of Gays and Lesbians Everywhere, as Egale Canada was then known.

Little Sister's won, but its victory was bittersweet. Border guards continue to hold gay material, most recently three films destined for the Inside Out Film Festival.

The headline poked fun at Equality Now's Janine Benedet, who read a gay rape scene into the record during the case. Equality Now, US academic Catharine MacKinnon and others argued at the time that porn is sick and damaging - rather than a healthy, fun part of many people's sexual lives. PHOTO BY SHAWN SCALLEN

WORDLE

TONGUE LASHING



Dan Savage's March 4 screed against philandering Conservative "family values" cabinet minister Vic Toews. WORDLE.NET

To read the full article, go to thestranger.com.

ONLINE

Piqued your interest

The five stories from the February issue that generated the most traffic on Xtra.ca

- 1 Conservative cabinet minister John Baird ousted by Tory peer
2 Ten steps to getting over the ex who just walked out on you
3 Homophobia 101: How the Canadian education system is failing queer youth
4 Watching the watchers
5 Cheeky bugger: Performer Glenn Nuotio remixes the Baird tape

To read these stories yourself, go to xtra.ca.

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Upfront

IF WE CAN'T GET KENNEY TO CHANGE JOBS, PERHAPS WE CAN GET HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND.

Gays cut from citizenship guide >9



OTTAWA NEWS

BANK ST BIA THAWS

Blue banners to get a rethink this spring

Noreen Fagan

TWO GROUPS THAT WERE ONCE AT LOGGERHEADS OVER THE branding of Bank St appear to be patching their relationship, after the Bank St Business Improvement Area (Bank St BIA) extended an olive branch to the Village Initiative on Feb 18.

The two groups sparred publicly during the reconstruction of Bank St in 2008 and 2009. Now, Gerry LePage, director of the Bank St BIA, has offered Glenn Crawford, chair of the Village committee, a seat at the newly established banner design committee, which will present ideas for street banners to the Bank St BIA.

Crawford's appointment symbolizes the tentative unification of all major stakeholders — local businesses, the city and the queer community — toward building a marketable Bank St.

The blue banners hanging from lampposts along Bank St will be replaced this spring, and Crawford, a professional graphic designer, says he is eager to help figure out what should replace them.

Banners are not only an aesthetic landmark but are used in cities as marketing tools to highlight urban renewal, market designated areas and promote businesses within those areas.

LePage invited two other people who have publicly supported the Village project to help pick new banners: Grant Cobb and Shawn Menard.

Cobb, one of the gay owners of the Second Cup at Bank and Somerset streets, has donated to the Village project and now has rainbow decals on his storefront.

Menard, president of the Centretown Citizens Community Association, has spoken publicly about how gay-friendly branding would "enrich" the neighbourhood.

Cobb has confirmed he will sit on the committee. Denis Schryburt, Vice-President of the Centretown Citizens Community Association, has confirmed he will sit on the committee for Menard.

The project to get more rainbows onto Bank St faced two major setbacks — city plans for the new streetscape omitted anything queer, and the BIA issued a press release declaring their ambivalence about the Village.

Since 2008, there has been little help or recognition from the city or the BIA. Instead, the volunteer-run Village committee raised money to buy rainbow flags and decals for interested businesses, including Bridgehead, Second Cup, Venus Envy, After Stonewall, Wicked Wanda's and the Youth Services Bureau's young men's shelter. That work now appears to be paying dividends.

"I think our community can take pride in everything we have done because certainly, it hasn't been about just six or seven people on a committee doing the work. It's the community behind us supporting it and the businesses and organizations that have agreed to it," says Crawford.

Xtra contacted LePage to confirm the role of the banner committee and the BIA's decision to identify Crawford as a stakeholder. LePage declined to speak with the paper, and, through his secretary, said he would never sit for an interview with Xtra again.

Find more stories about the Bank St BIA's troubled relationship with the Village at xtra.ca.



It appears that relations between the Village initiative and the BIA's Gerry LePage (pictured) are thawing.

PHOTO BY PAT CROTEAU

COMMUNITY



FEMME FRATERNITY

In the fall of 2009, Fiona Mantha started Femme Family Ottawa, a discussion group for queer, femme-identified folks of all genders. They meet on the first Saturday of each month

at 1pm at Raw Sugar Café (Somerset at Cambridge streets). A handful of lovely ladies, including Mantha (pictured), were on hand March 6 for the meet-up. PHOTO BY PAUL GALIPEAU

OTTAWA NEWS

GAY PRISON GUARD VINDICATED

Ontario Grievance Settlement Board sides with former Corrections officer

Neil McKinnon

A FORMER OTTAWA PRISON GUARD experienced a homophobic and "poisonous" work atmosphere, Ontario's Grievance Settlement Board has found.

Robert Ranger has been on long-term disability since 2002, has felt suicidal and has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, the Ottawa Citizen reported.

A Jan 18 decision upheld a complaint filed against the Corrections Ministry that it allowed harassment against Ranger to continue unchecked from 1998 to 2002. During that time, Ranger worked at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. When he left, it took 18 months for prison officials to begin investigating his complaints.

A recent 72-page conclusion names guard Mark Grady, who was president of the Correctional Services' OPSEU Local 411, as Ranger's chief bully.

"The investigator examined three complaints against Mr Grady of alleged discrimination, harassment and poisoned work environment on the

grounds of sexual orientation. Specific allegations included that the respondent 1) simulated sex acts to taunt the grievor, 2) repeated the word "cocksucker" in a manner that was not part of a conver-

SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS INCLUDED THAT THE RESPONDENT SIMULATED SEX ACTS TO TAUNT THE GRIEVOR.

— Report from the Ontario Grievance Settlement Board

sation but in the presence of the grievor and 3) made sexual jokes during a training session on Feb 11, 2002, at the expense of the grievor," says the report.

And: "It is the union's position that Mr Ranger suffered harassment and discrimination based on his sexual orientation, which was condoned by the employer.... The employer did almost nothing to change the environment. The union claims that even when Mr Ranger made a complaint after an incident on Feb 11,

2002, which led to the grievor taking sick leave, the employer failed to investigate until 18 months after the event. When the report of the investigation substantiated some of the allegations made by the grievor, the employer did nothing to address the workplace environment. The union submits that because of the harassment and discrimination, the grievor became ill and was away from work from February 2002 until March 2005."

In a phone interview from his home, Ranger claims the ministry minimized what happened to him.

"The process diminishes what happened because it's taken so long to get settled. I remember hoping I'd get hit by a bus. I complained to my employer and they turned their backs. They did nothing about it. I fell sick. They still didn't do anything about it until a year and a half after I left," says Ranger.

On his lawyer's advice, Ranger says he cannot comment until the appeals process is complete.

"If you read the decision, everything you want to know is there. My lawyer said this is not final. There may come a time in the near future I want to speak with you. I will contact you whenever the day comes," says Ranger.

Read the full findings at xtra.ca.



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SEX LAWS

MAN CHARGED WITH BUGGERY

Army police resurrect long-dead law

Neil McKinnon

BUGGERY MAY NOT BE ILLEGAL anymore, but that hasn't stopped military police in Ontario from investigating a 40-year-old complaint against a man in his 70s.

Details are gradually emerging about the case against a retired army chaplain, but crucial questions — including why police are using an archaic law to prosecute him — have yet to be answered.

When the alleged encounters happened, Roger Bazin was a young man and Roman Catholic chaplain at CFB Borden. Before retiring in 1995, he achieved the rank of brigadier-general and chief commander of all Catholic chaplains in the Forces.

The *Toronto Star* reported on Feb 19 that Canadian Forces paid a settlement to the family of another (male) teen in 2006 because of his relationship with Bazin.

He faces a basket of charges, including sexual assault. Bazin was also charged with buggery, a now-abolished law.

"Certainly, you wonder why they're using that," says Richard Hudler, one of a clutch of seasoned gay activists working with the newly formed Queer Ontario.

He suspects Bazin's lawyer will petition to have the buggery charge

dropped. He says that in the 1990s, men were charged with breaching an anal sex law that had been ruled unconstitutional. But because the men didn't know they could challenge the law, police used it to leverage longer prison sentences and as a weapon during plea-bargaining.

"Most of the people who were charged didn't know that it had been found unconstitutional and some pled guilty," says Hudler.

Canada inherited its buggery law — which covers both anal sex and bestiality — from Britain. In 1969, the law was relaxed to exclude consensual sex if both partners were over the age of 21 and the sex was conducted in private. In 1988, the buggery law was scrapped altogether and replaced with a prohibition on anal sex with people under the age of 18. That law has been struck down in several jurisdictions, including Ontario, because it sets a different age of consent for gay sex, 18, than straight sex, 16.

Peter Bochove, a Toronto bathhouse owner, says the reports so far raise more questions than they answer.

"How will this man defend himself nearly four decades after the fact? For that matter, how can there be any evidence to prosecute him successfully?" he asks.

A spokesperson for the Canadian



Forces investigation service insists the application of the law as it stood in 1972 is both legal and ethical.

"He's being charged for buggery because it was a legitimate charge under the Criminal Code of 1972 when the alleged offence happened," says Paule Poulin, who's working with the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service.

Poulin says civilian police were not involved because the alleged incident took place on an army base.

Bishop Donald Thériault, head of the Roman Catholic Military Diocese of Canada, hinted that Bazin may be the victim in this case, rather than the victimizer.

"It seems as though a victimization has taken place... whatever way it happened," he told *Xtra*.

Thériault says Bazin maintains his innocence and will fight the charges in court. The bishop described Bazin as "a gentleman and a lovely guy."

—with files from Marcus McCann



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OTTAWA NEWS

Seven protest Uganda bill

Noreen Fagan

ON FEB 15 IN JINJA, UGANDA, 350 people rallied against homosexuality. The day before, 100 gathered in Kampala for a pro-gay conference. Yet in Ottawa, where legal rights for gays are a given, only seven people came out to protest Uganda's proposed anti-gay legislation.

The small group stood outside the Ugandan Embassy on Feb 17, holding placards and posters. The turnout was small compared to the anti-gay march in Uganda, but the group had fire and passion.

The protest, organized by the AIDS Committee of Ottawa (ACO), was promoted on Facebook, and more than 40 people pledged to attend. ACO spread the word through their networks, and according to Frédérique Chabot, ACO's women's outreach coordinator, they received a positive response — a response that was not followed through with action.

"It's too big and too far away," says Chabot. "Even though a lot of people seem to be against it and are very ashamed that is happening somewhere in the world — it doesn't seem real."

Xtra called the embassy, but no one was available for comment.

briefs >

Dyke Tory to keep up anthem battle

Dale Smith

LESBIAN CONSERVATIVE Senator Nancy Ruth was sitting in the Upper Chamber on March 3 while the Governor General read out the government's plans to make the national anthem more gender neutral — one of Ruth's top causes since being appointed in 2005.

"It was like, 'Yes!'" Ruth says. The 1908 version had the line "Thou dost in us command," rather than "In all thy son's command."

But the Senator's elation was short-lived, and a mere 48 hours later, the government said that it was abandoning its proposal to change the anthem.

Cabinet ministers were mum when it came to promoting the issue, including Helena Guergis, minister of state for the status of women.

"I actually hold some of the media responsible," says Ruth. "They didn't once focus on the gender inclusiveness. I was pretty angry at the CBC and other places in the media."

Ruth plans to continue to push the issue and has heard that Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett is planning to move for a revised English and French version of the anthem.

Read the full version of this story on xtra.ca.

on the web

extensive coverage of the situation for gay Ugandans >xtra.ca>national

FEDERAL POLITICS

GAYS CUT FROM CITIZENSHIP GUIDE

Minister's office rebuffed bureaucrats' attempts to include queers

Dale Smith

IMMIGRATION MINISTER JASON Kenney ordered references to gay rights removed from a citizenship guide released late last year, according to documents obtained by the Canadian Press (CP) under access to information legislation.

As well, a top bureaucrat tried to have references to the decriminalization of anal sex and the advent of same-sex marriage returned to the booklet at the 11th hour, according to reports, March 2.

While the CP story made it clear the omission was intentional, Kenney initially said otherwise. On March 3 in the House of Commons, Kenney denied any personal role, saying "I did not do such a thing."

During Question Period, he later said that he's proud of the final version of the guide.

Opposition MPs have been left fuming.

"It's becoming more and more clear that the Conservatives did not intend this to be a Canadian citizenship guide, but instead a Conservative citizenship

guide," says gay Liberal MP Scott Brison.

NDP MP Bill Siksay, the party's queer issues critic, echoes the sentiment.

"Jason Kenney can't edit gays and lesbians out of Canadian history," he says. "I think this is an obnoxious attempt to do that. Clearly, he has to commit to a revision of this booklet, and the reprinting has to include these references."

Siksay adds that if there's anything in recent Canadian history that's important for newcomers to know, equality for queers is it.

Egale Canada's executive director, Helen Kennedy, first broached the topic with Kenney in late 2009, shortly after the guide was released. At the time, Kenney told her the omission was an oversight and gay rights information would be included in the second edition.

When asked whether she could still trust Kenney's promise to include gay rights in a reprint, Kennedy said she has to "take him at his word" for the commitment he made to her in December.

—with files from Brent Creelman



Although he initially denied involvement, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney now says he's proud of the guide as it stands. And although he told a gay rights group in December that the omission of queer history was an "oversight," documents show Kenney's office nixed mentions of gay history intentionally. PHOTO BY SEAN KILPATRICK/CP

Send Jason Kenney your gay books

Writer Paul Vermeersch has some choice words for Jason Kenney. After a lengthy invective on the website Open Book Toronto, Vermeersch issued a challenge: we should send gay books to Jason Kenney.

Vermeersch's suggestion came the day after it was revealed that Kenney, Canada's immigration minister, removed references to gay rights in a guide for immigrants applying for Canadian citizenship.

The ideal Kenney curriculum would include Timothy Findley, Ann-Marie MacDonald, Shyam Selvadurai and Michael V Smith, Vermeersch wrote.

Vermeersch is also the guy behind a Facebook page calling for Kenney's resignation. That page now has more than 8,000 fans.

"If we can't get Kenney to change jobs, perhaps we can get him to change his mind. What if he simply needs to be enlightened? Maybe all he needs is to read the right books," Vermeersch wrote.

Mail sent to MPs' Parliamentary offices doesn't need postage.

Gay books can be sent directly to: Jason Kenney, 325 East Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6.

—Marcus McCann

OTTAWA NEWS

Brunching for Iran

Noreen Fagan

MORE THAN 60 PEOPLE TURNED up for a fundraising brunch organized by the Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees (IRQR) on Feb 27 at Ottawa City Hall.

IRQR is a Toronto-based organization committed to helping queer Iranian refugees through the asylum process.

Gilles Marchildon, president of the board of directors, was instrumental in convincing IRQR to launch its awareness campaign and fundraiser in Ottawa.

"It's very compelling, because you compare our situation here in Canada, with formal equality recognized in the laws, and then you think about the situation that queers in Iran face, which involves not only persecution but actual death," he says.

Marchildon described the IRQR as a modest but effective organization, partly due to the diligence and perseverance of its executive director, Arsham Parsi.

Parsi himself spent 13 months as an Iranian refugee in Turkey before he was granted asylum in Canada. In 2001 — aware of the circumstances surrounding queer refugees — he began working as a gay activist, offering support to refugees.

"We want to have freedom and justice; we want to have our rights," says Parsi.

Read the full story at xtra.ca.

FUNDRAISING



BIG BUCKS FOR TEN OAKS

In what has become one of the biggest one-day gay fundraisers in Ottawa, the Ten Oaks Project raked in \$37,600 at its bowl-a-thon on March 6. More than 175 people participated, with top honours going to Marie Robertson, who raised \$3,465.

The Ten Oaks Project runs a weeklong sleepaway camp for kids in queer families (and budding queers) each summer. In 2009, they introduced a youth leadership program called Project Acorn, aimed at the 16–24 age group.

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REPORT ON NEIGHBOURHOOD
ASSOCIATIONS: THEIR**Power
Influence**Whitewashing neighbourhoods
in the name of safety**Noreen Fagan**

THEY'RE UP-AND-coming neighbourhoods: rough and tumble and edgy but with a certain amount of charm. Gradually, they become known as hip, affordable alternatives to suburban living; as that happens, people buy property and renovate.

This often puts new residents at odds with the frequently scruffier set that pre-dates their arrival.

Gentrification comes hand in hand with new residents wanting to redefine the character of the neighbourhood. Often, community associations are formed and protecting property values becomes a priority. Original residents who do not represent the ideal of the suitable neighbour are forced out, usually under the guise of safety concerns.

Gays have a long history with gentrification, first as its victims and then as its ostensible agents. Most famously, a bustling queer underground was squeezed out of downtown Montreal's Peel St neighbourhood in the 1970s (we regrouped further down Ste Catherine St in what is now the gay village).

To feel safe is an innocuous request — everyone wants to feel safe — but for some associations, it's a wedge used in two ways. Firstly, neighbourhood associations pressure police to step up their presence in the area. Then, when they find the existing laws — or the police's interest in enforcing them — lacking, they lobby municipal and provincial politicians to introduce new laws to make evictions and criminal prosecutions easier.

And that makes them — with their law-and-order agenda — an essentially conservative movement. Over the past 20 years, these associations have become increasingly savvy at fighting for their cause and influential in dictating city and provincial legislation.

Case in point: in the 1980s, during a bout of gentrification, the Lowertown Community Association used economic and political capital to lobby for more police. It worked, and gradually police pushed undesirables — the homeless, drug users and street-level sex workers — out of Lowertown and into Hintonburg and Vanier.

Then the gentrification of Hintonburg began. Cheryl Parrott is a member of the security committee of the Hintonburg Community Association and a woman dedicated to improving her neighbourhood. Parrott has been part of the association since it formed in 1991 — she is one of the founding members — and through her efforts, the security committee worked with city councillors and police to reduce crime in Hintonburg and across the city of Ottawa.

"Part of the process we have gone through is finding out what laws we have and where the gaps are," says Parrott. "Then trying to figure out how you fill that in. At what level of government and what committee, and is it provincial or is it federal?"

Parrott and the security committee have been successful at jostling politicians to take up their ideas and have been forthright in their courtship of Ottawa's politicians.

"When politicians were running for the provincial legislature in the last election," says Parrott, "we took them all on a walkabout and talked to them about the issues in the community and about SCAN [Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods] legislation. By then, we felt it was something that really would be another tool facing the habitual problem properties."

Their walkabout was a success, and Yasir Naqvi, who was later elected MPP for Ottawa Centre, took up Parrott's cause as his own (see sidebar).

"We'll certainly be working very



JUPITER IMAGES / & JOHN FOX / THINKSTOCK

“THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS — COMMUNITY BASED ON A SPATIAL DEFINITION. THERE ARE PEOPLE LIVING TOGETHER IN CLOSE PROXIMITY, AND YET THEY ARE EXPLICITLY EXCLUSIONARY.”

—Christine Bruckert, criminology professor, University of Ottawa

hard to make sure it gets back into the legislature and has a chance for third reading," says Parrott.

Professor Christine Bruckert, from the department of criminology at the University of Ottawa, is not a fan of neighbourhood associations. She refers to them as a middle class movement not interested in the rights of ordinary people — in short, they are not a populist movement.

"They are supposed to be community organizations — community based on a spatial definition," says Bruckert. "There are people living together in close proximity, and yet they are explicitly exclusionary."

In some cases, the community associations have little to do with the neighbourhoods they purport to represent. In at least one case, the group's meetings aren't even public.

Meanwhile, a case study of the Hintonburg Community Association shows their power on the ascendant. Together for Vanier (that neighbourhood's association), now just three years old, is already finding its feet.

Bruckert's position is borne out by research conducted by *Xtra* that shows a steady flow of help from the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Police Service to neighbourhood associations — which in turn lobby for more invasive police measures. Rather than grassroots organizations, our research shows a well-connected network that meets, shares members and lobbies together.

on the web

Find more information, including original documents, on xtra.ca/ottawa

Find stories about Ottawa's uptick of hooker sweeps & Yasir Naqvi's SCAN legislation xtra.ca/ottawa

A portrait of increasing clout THE HISTORY OF THE HINTONBURG COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

1991 The Hintonburg Community Association is established. The association lobbies the city to make developers consult them on new projects. Their lobbying efforts are successful; developers must consult community associations before proceeding. Although it is not mandated, failure to do so will slow down

the process (since projects have to be put forward to the public).

EARLY 1990S Hintonburg Security Committee is formed to combat drugs and street-level sex work.

1992/1993 The security committee launches an aggressive campaign — that still exists — against street-level sex workers.

They develop a sex trade activity report (STAR) for residents to record and ID sex workers and their customers, and an incident report sheet for residents. A neighbourhood watch program is started with financial assistance from the police board.

1995 The Hintonburg Community Association

establishes a task force on problem properties. They work with the city and the police to highlight properties allegedly connected with illegal activities and to secure evictions, prosecutions and property seizures.

1996 The security committee approaches the Ottawa Police Service and the Crown

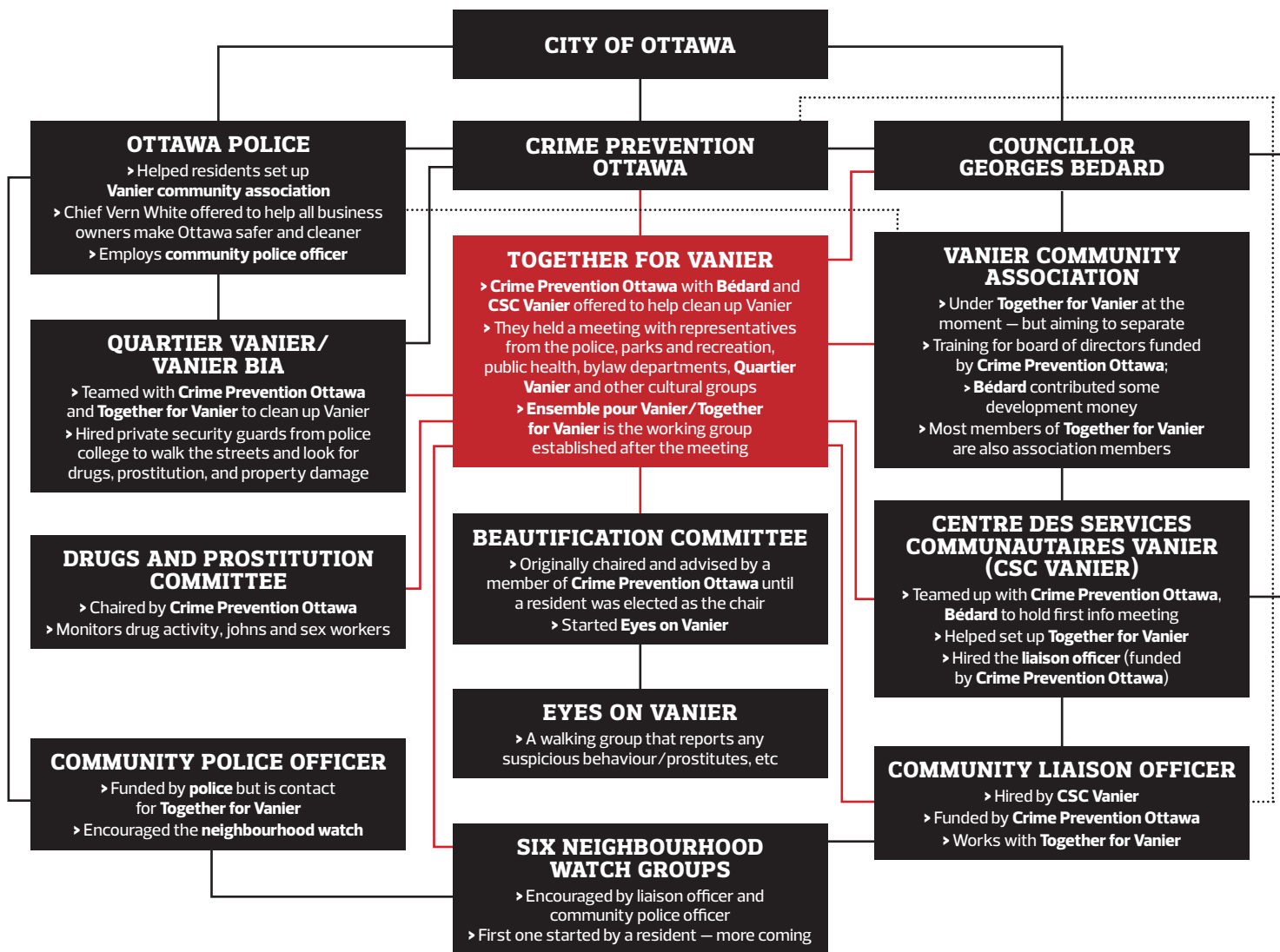
Attorney with the idea of a John School. It is a pre-charge diversionary program for first-time offenders. The johns, instead of being criminally charged, are given an option — as long as they have no previous offences — to pay for a course on the consequences of paying for sex.

1997 When the city and the police approve the three-month pilot project for the John School, the project goes citywide.

2000 The needle-pick-up program, started by the security committee, also goes citywide.

2001 The security committee publishes

CASE STUDY



Power play

In 2008, several of these groups – neighbourhood associations, police and Crime Prevention Ottawa – came together to applaud Liberal MPP Yasir Naqvi for introducing a private member’s bill that would make it easier to evict bad tenants. Naqvi made the announcement at the Hintonburg Community Centre.



Police officers stand behind Cheryl Parrott of the Hintonburg Community Association (left) and a member of Crime Prevention Ottawa.



Crime Prevention Ottawa head Nancy Worsfold listens behind Vanier councillor Georges Bédard. Both endorsed Naqvi’s bill, which was introduced at the prompting of the Hintonburg Community Association.



Ottawa police chief Vern White spoke in favour of the bill. He brought more than a half dozen patrolmen with him to the press conference.



Housing Helps and Prostitutes of Ottawa-Gatineau Work, Educate, Resist (POWER) crashed the party. Former AIDS Committee of Ottawa staffer Nicholas Little was among those who protested the announcement.



University of Ottawa professor Christine Bruckert followed a heated discussion between Little and Naqvi. PHOTOS BY MARCUS MCCANN

ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY

Tight nest includes city, police and community associations

Noreen Fagan

TOGETHER FOR VANIER IS peculiar among neighbourhood associations in that it wasn’t started by a groundswell of community support.

It was started (and funded) by the city-run Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) and has links to the area’s business association, city councillor and other neighbourhood associations.

In 2007, CPO – itself closely tied to Ottawa Police Services – started Together for Vanier as part of their community development initiative to combat crime. The working group was formed after CPO held

an information meeting with Vanier community leaders, police and councillor Georges Bédard.

CPO is still actively guiding Together for Vanier three years later.

CPO funds the group’s community liaison position and a CPO staffer chairs the group’s drugs and prostitution committee. With the success of Together for Vanier, residents started a separate neighbourhood association called the Vanier Community Association.

CPO funded the training of its board of directors, and Councillor Bédard also contributed money to the development of the association. For now, the association works under

the umbrella of CPO and Together for Vanier.

Together for Vanier’s members are mainly from north of Montreal Rd, an area that is being slowly gentrified. Many members belong to both Together for Vanier and the residents’ association.

None of which is, in itself, sinister. But as both city council and the police begin to use neighbourhood groups as political cover, it is worth noting that influence flows in both directions. And this complex nest of connections contradicts the perception that Together for Vanier is a grassroots group and represents the neighbourhood.

Together for Vanier has done some good work. Its beautification committee has taken a lead in cleaning up the parks, reclaiming concrete flower boxes once filled with garbage, starting an adopt-a-garbage-can program and establishing community gardens.

But Together for Vanier is also vigilant. Members of the Eyes on Vanier walking club meet to walk their dogs – armed with cell phones to report any suspicious activity.

The drugs and prostitution committee publishes tips on its website for spotting and reporting suspected sex workers and johns.

With the encouragement of the police, a neighbourhood watch was started – there are now six active watches in the area. Even Vanier’s business association, Quartier Vanier, has stepped in, hiring private security officers to walk commercial avenues.

Together for Vanier is not yet as politically powerful as the Hintonburg Community Association – they have not driven any legislative actions and remain undecided on SCAN. But as they become more established, how will they use their clout?

a handbook for residents: Dispelling the Myths: Stories of the Effects of Street-level Prostitution on Communities.

2005 Jeff Leiper, then-president of the association, and Cheryl Parrott give evidence to a Parliamentary committee reviewing Canada’s solicitation laws. They argue for the retention of the solicitation laws.

2007 The association begins lobbying for Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods (SCAN) legislation. SCAN’s ostensible target is habitual problem properties; it targets the landlord or property owner and makes them responsible for stopping illegal activities from taking place on the property. But SCAN also lowers the standard of proof necessary

before property can be seized or tenants evicted. It is based on anonymous complaints, so defendants can’t cross-examine their accuser. By the time the provincial election campaign wraps, Liberal candidate Yasir Naqvi has taken up the cause. He is elected MPP for Ottawa Centre.

2007 The security committee launches a new program – a community safety letter

is sent to the residence of any driver stopped by the police for talking to prostitutes.

2009 After two years of gathering research – including tracing police calls under the Freedom of Information Act – on an alleged crack house in Hintonburg, the association takes its findings to the police. The police present the case to the Ministry of the Attorney General. In turn, the Crown uses

the Civil Remedies Act to seize the property without laying any charges. It is the second time the Civil Remedies Act has been used since it came into law in 2001.

2009 In December, Jeff Leiper and Cheryl Parrott present to MPPs studying Naqvi’s SCAN legislation at Queen’s Park in Toronto. The bill is blocked by New Democrat Cheri DiNovo.

2010 The association endorses a by-law amendment proposed by councillor Georges Bédard. If passed, it would allow by-law officers to fine boisterous people on the streets and sidewalks. The association members see the law as another tool to keep their neighbourhood safe.

–Noreen Fagan

ANALYSIS

FANTINO CRUSADE CONTINUES

Media covers mega-sweeps, ignores what happens next

James Dubro

JULIAN FANTINO HAS STRUCK AGAIN.

On March 10, in a massive press conference from OPP headquarters broadcast live on many local TV stations, the OPP commissioner, now in his fourth year as Ontario's top cop, sat amongst dozens of police brass to announce a province-wide kiddie porn bust.

It was "a massive, coordinated" police operation involving many police forces across the province and resulting in 122 charges against 35 men and teens.

The language echoed a similar Fantino-chaired OPP press conference 13 months earlier, when 31 men were arrested in what Fantino then called the "largest bust for child porn in Ontario history."

And it was very similar to the press conference of February 2008, when 22 men and one woman were charged with child porn offences. After three high-profile busts over the last two years, very few cases have actually gone to court. When they have, they have received scant media attention. It is the difference between individual cases heard in court and highly orchestrated,

scripted, televised police press conferences after charging a large group. Why does the media cover these charges so prominently, naming names, without any analysis or follow-up?

Mark Bourrie, an Ottawa historian and an expert on media and censorship issues, says this is typical of the Fantino machine.

"Fantino is a tireless self-promoter," he says. "He always leaves the impression these charges involve seven-year-old kids exploited by Mafialike porn-makers."

"Of course, no one in the media says, 'boo.' They don't want to be tagged as defenders of child molesters, and Fantino's version of reality makes for another great menace storyline."

Rob Teixeira, a doctoral student researching sexual regulation, agrees. "It's interesting that many [in the public] are taken in as soon as they read 'kiddie porn' in the press. Critical thinking is shut down, and the media report the police perspective almost exclusively."

Fantino dramatically announced on March 10 — as he did a year earlier — that he would "not rest" until he had "hunted down all the child predators"

out there. This personal pledge has been picked up by many TV stations and some newspapers as "news" several times over the years.

In the current bust, the accused men are mostly accused of internet child porn possession or distribution. Police call this charge "make available," but the police promotion machine sees no difference between creating kiddie porn and having it on your computer.

The men were from 16 cities across the province, including Ottawa, where five were arrested. All 35 men were charged with what Fantino apocalyptically called "one of the most heinous crimes that human beings can inflict on each other."

Curiously, charges of "sexual assault" appear in much of the press coverage but not in the OPP official list of charges to date. And pointedly, Fantino and the other police brass present gave no specific details of the alleged crimes, the ages or even the sexes of the "victims," or how the police became aware of those charged, or anything else upon which an independent analysis or assessment could be made. One has to take it on faith, as the mainstream media did, that the cops had broken up a huge kiddie porn operation and that the accused were all child abusers.

Surprisingly, most of the 32 formally charged were young people themselves. Nine are teenagers aged 15 to 19 (five are 17 or under); 10 are in their

20s (five of these between 21 and 23). Just six of the men were 36 or older.

This may be because the younger generation live much of their lives online, and many casually exchange photos all the time, Teixeira notes.

"Child porn offences can be incurred by anyone as easily as clicking on the wrong link. That is considered 'possessing.' Teens can be charged with these offences just for taking images of themselves and sending them to other teens. In that case, they can be charged with making, possessing and distributing. Teens are indeed being arrested under this law."

Only two were eventually convicted of pornography offences. But by 1994, Fantino had persuaded the then-NDP provincial government to provide London police with funding for a province-wide police program attacking the perceived growing threat of kiddie porn rings. Richard Hudler, a long-time gay activist who closely watched Fantino's anti-child-porn crusade in the '90s, sees reason for hope this time around, as Fantino did not target any particular group — like gay men.

"I'm a little encouraged to see that they don't appear to be creating as much moral panic as previously. My hope is that the public is starting to realize that the hype attached to these massive numbers of charges is exaggerated," says Hudler.

Of course, Fantino isn't the only one in the OPP prone to overstatement. Fred Goldschmidt, the officer in charge of the special child porn section of the OPP, said that one computer seized had six million child porn images on it. This amazing number was particularly hard to believe — who would look at, let alone count, six million photos? And if they haven't looked at all the images, how can they tell they are porn, let alone child porn?

As the individual cases work their way through the courts, a more measured picture is likely to emerge. Following the last three mega-sweeps, there is usually no media exposure when charges are dropped, plea-bargained or prosecuted in the courts. And in the meantime, more than two dozen men have been named and shamed in their local newspapers.

James Dubro is an award-winning true-crime writer and past-president of the Crime Writers of Canada.

FANTINO IS A TIRELESS SELF-PROMOTER. HE ALWAYS LEAVES THE IMPRESSION THESE CHARGES INVOLVE 7-YEAR-OLD KIDS EXPLOITED BY MAFIALIKE PORN-MAKERS.

—historian Mark Bourrie

This has been Fantino's modus operandi since his days as the London, Ontario, police chief from 1991 to 1998. There he targeted gay men in "Project Guardian" for involvement in what he called — in highly publicized press conferences — a province-wide "kiddie porn ring."

It was later shown to involve people who mostly didn't know each other, teenaged hustlers and their older johns.

Divergence Movie Night

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March 16th: Africa Rising

Every day, six thousand girls from the Horn of Africa to the sub-Saharan nations are subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM). With little more than fierce determination and deep love for their communities, brave African activists are leading a formidable and fearless grassroots movement to end five thousand years of FGM. This extraordinary and powerful film is the first to focus on African solutions to FGM, presenting an insightful look at the frontlines of a quiet revolution taking the continent by storm. (62 min)

April 13th: Ten More Good Years

Those who "could not take it anymore" some 40 years ago at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco, The Stonewall Inn in New York City, and elsewhere across the United States, are older now and are facing an onslaught of discrimination from their government, social service networks, and even from their own community. Ten More Good Years introduces remarkable LGBT Elders who share inspiring stories of their lives and Queer History. It is through these stories that the governmental and social injustices quietly reveal themselves, shedding light on what it is now, and what it will be to grow old and Gay in America. (71 min) Sponsored by LIX and the Senior Pride Network

Free Admission, \$5 suggested donation.

Club SAW, 67 Nicholas Street. Open 7pm, Movie at 7:30pm



Xtra! OTTAWA'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS



For more info: <http://DivergenceMovieNight.com>



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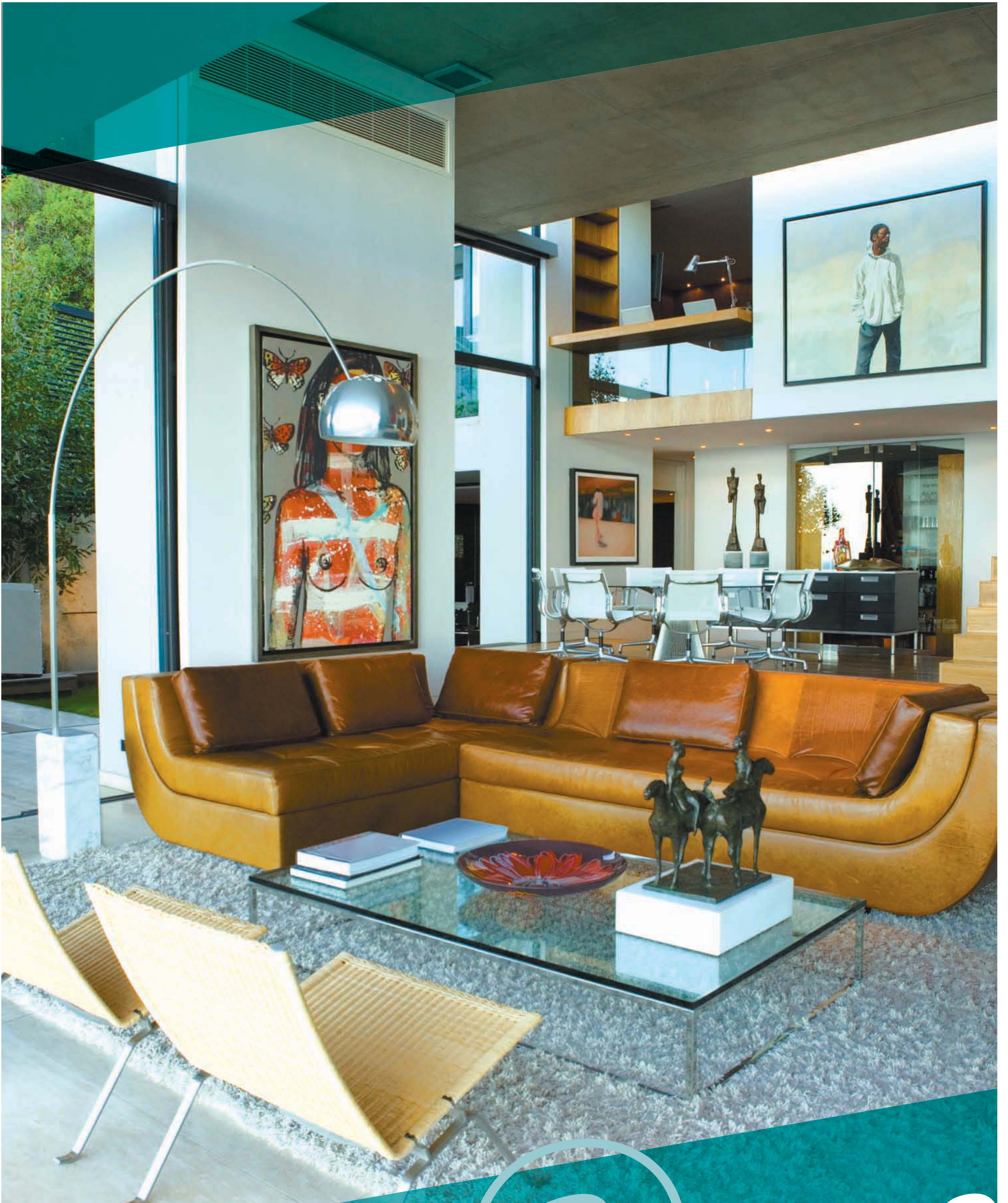
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THE new retro

Marcus McCann

Seven touchstones of the '80s home design renaissance

Forget teak and earthenware. Today's retro is all about glass and mirrors. As the prices of genuine mid-century memorabilia climb, home fashionistas have taken to late-century looks to fuel a new nostalgia for the past. And, as vintage '80s swag increases in value and prestige, mid-level mass-market furniture shops are catching the dusty-rose-coloured wave and producing new takes on our favourite trends.

1 White leather

The stark simplicity of white leather is back for a new decade. The lines are cleaner and simpler, as in this white leather Chelsea armchair and white leather loveseat (\$799–\$1,099, Structube).



2 Glass

Glass is making a big comeback, especially when paired with chrome. Today's looks usually update the popular '80s trend with silver (rather than golden) details, as in this Circa chrome sidetable (\$199, Urban Barn) and its simpler brethren from Visio (\$399, Structube).

And don't forget about the creative possibilities of vintage rose-tinted glass, such as this bowl (asking \$199, eBay).



3 Ruffles

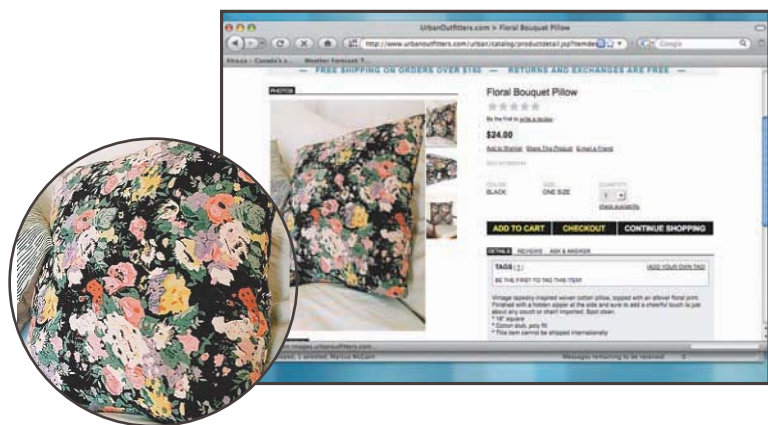
Nothing says '80s like ruffled bedding. Updated in more subdued colours, ruffling can add texture, whether in the bedroom (waterfall ruffle sham, \$38, Urban Outfitters) or in the living room (rose organza pillow, \$29, Urban Barn).



Xtra@Home CONSUMER GUIDE

4 Florals

Floral is back. But unlike its previous incarnation, it's being kept mostly to throws rather than upholstery (floral bouquet pillow, \$24, Urban Outfitters, available online).



6 Mirrors

Retail stores are all over this peacock-pleasing, fingerprint-smearing trend, with mirrors showing up on a variety of tables this year (reflection accent table, \$379).



5 Neon

Neon has been creeping back into housewares for a couple of years now. So if you were waiting for permission to pick up fabulous, punky accent pieces (rhino toss cushions, \$20, Urban Barn), consider it granted.




7 Grey

For a half decade, we've been cutting our beiges with grey. Now that beiges are becoming warmer in tone, we're once again free to decorate with grey (contemporary charcoal vase, \$17, eBay; seltzer sofa chaise, \$1,299, Urban Barn).



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Xtra @ Home

CONSUMER GUIDE

HOME GYM?

Nuts to that. Your home is already a gym

Neil McKinnon

HOME EXERCISE IS GREAT for people having trouble fitting a gym visit into their day, says personal trainer Mike Tattersall.

Tattersall helps people get motivated at the gym, but his main client base is the people he helps work out at home. Convenience and low cost are the attractions.

"Gyms and exercise facilities close for one reason or another. A home gym is always there when you need it. At home you can always spare a few minutes to do a few exercises. Home workouts on top of gym workouts are mostly done by professional and recreational athletes and those who are

driven to be in a particular condition or shape. Most people need one or the other, and not both, for general fitness," says Tattersall.

Until working out becomes routine, he recommends people not buy any fitness equipment. He says simple household items can be used for the same effect, like putting two chairs together for bar dips, picking up heavy bags to work the back or using a stiff piece of furniture to do biceps curls.

"It's better if people create exercise habits and then buy the equipment. Otherwise, you're buying expensive equipment and it ends up collecting dust or being sold at a garage sale," says Tattersall.

He tells people to look around their homes to find ways to keep in shape. Roll up a mat and do Pilates or yoga

while watching the evening news. Household chores like cleaning and scrubbing floors keep activity levels high.

"The benefits of a regular routine go beyond mere physical health and well-being; it is psychological, spiritual and physical," says Tattersall.

He points to how children are naturally fit through play. If you have children, he advises you to play with them more often to bring out your inner child.

"Do what the kids do: climbing and running and jumping and crawling through stuff. It's fun!"

Tattersall also recommends video gaming technology for working out at home because "electronics make it fun. It's better than just sitting there using your thumb and finger to burn calories."



POLKA DOT IMAGES

SAMPLE HOME WORKOUT

Neil McKinnon

The total number of repetitions is more important than the number of sets. Do anywhere from 10 to 40 repetitions, and you've got a good workout.

SQUATS. Stand with feet wider than shoulder width, body tall, and weight on your heels. Stick out your rear end and sit, keeping your weight off your toes.

Stand and squeeze your butt muscles. Keep your chest up throughout, to keep your lower back safe. If weight is needed, hold a piece of luggage in your hands, or your laptop, or the hotel chair.

PUSH-UPS. Do as many as you can from your toes, and then keep going from the knees for as many as you can.

PULL-OVERS. Lie on your back on the floor, knees bent at a 90-degree angle, feet flat on the floor. Look at the ceiling above your forehead. Hold a laptop or a piece of luggage in the air over your face, arms almost fully extended. Lower your hands like a giant hammer, in an arc, toward the floor while keeping your arms extended. Do not touch the floor unless you are used to the range of motion with weight in your hands.

HAMSTRING AND BUTT LIFTS. From the same

position as the pull-over, press your hips up so your shoulders and feet are on the floor and the rest of your body is raised and supported by your glutes. Do not press your head and neck into the floor. Relax the neck completely so you do not hurt yourself.

DIPS. Sit on the bed, then lower your rear end toward the floor, but keep your back against the side of the bed. Lower only as far as your shoulders will let you without pain.



FURNITURE AS WORKOUT EQUIPMENT. Use a bench or chair. Lifting one leg is the same as doing triceps dips at the gym.

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CONSUMER GUIDE

SINGLE

AND IN THE MARKET

Getting on the property ladder can be an intimidating prospect for singletons

Nigel Smith

HOOKING ONTO THE DOWNTOWN property ladder is a difficult and intimidating prospect for the average new home or apartment buyer. For single gay and lesbian urbanites, getting onto that ladder is even more elusive.

With moderately habitable lodging going for no less than \$250,000 in most urban markets – a number staggering to many first-time single buyers – it's common for singletons to rent places they can't afford to own.

For most housing professionals, single people are a bit of an oddity, accounting for less than a quarter of their client base. Most singles simply don't have the means to buy downtown in today's competitive market. Two incomes are always better than one.

"Single people don't necessarily need less space than a couple, so they need to make their money stretch a lot further," explains Ottawa Royal LePage broker Jennifer Stewart.

"It can definitely be challenging, but it's not impossible."

Sales representative Geoff Hartle agrees, saying that if you can afford to pay \$1,400 in rent each month, chances are you can afford to buy. The problem is, many can't.

"When sitting in your parents' basement at 22 and dreaming that you'll be living in a downtown loft, well it's not going to be like that," says Hartle.

Compromise is key.

"I've never had a client that wasn't able to buy something in the area they rent in," Hartle says. "If you want to be downtown, you're going to be downtown. You're not going to buy a loft in the suburbs just because you want to be in a loft."

To give potential buyers an idea of what they can afford, Hartle offers this simple equation:

"The average square foot price runs from \$400 to \$600 a foot. Do the math of how big a place that gets you."

Compared to what you are accustomed to, this may not amount to much space. It's this issue that irks most of Hartle's single potential buyers.

"For example, a common concern I get is 'Where do I put my dining-room table?'" he says. "Well, you're not going to be able to fit a dining-room table. Again, you have to compromise."

Stewart has a similar experience with her single clients in Ottawa.

"A lot of people are renting apartments that are bigger and more comfortable than the ones they're buying, so sometimes they feel like psychologically it can be a step down," she says.

Both realtors suggest single buyers create a wish list in terms of location and type of building, and work from there in tandem with a broker. While the list must have sway room, Hartle warns that departing from the list too much will lead only to a negative outcome.

"It's important that the first condo they buy is saleable down the road," Hartle explains. "When you get to a low price point, it's easy to buy something in a cheap building that seems like better value, but three years down the road, when there's newer product on the market, it makes it harder to sell."

There are creative ways to stay within the confines of a wish list. One idea Stewart suggests to her single clients is purchasing a duplex and renting out one of the apartments. And for those without cars, she suggests buying a condo with parking and renting out the parking spot.

"All the extra income will help," Stewart offers. "There's other solutions than the suburbs."

For single people, there are ways to get on the property ladder, including co-buying property with friends. Find out how at xtra.ca.

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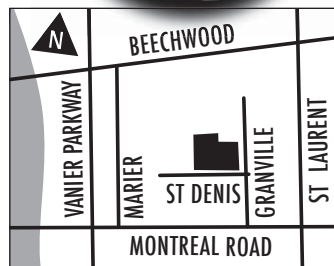
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Butches' guide to getting over her

Loose End
Ivan E Coyote



LAST MONTH, I WROTE A column for my (mostly) straight lady friends, listing 10 steps to getting over your ex.

It was an entirely communal endeavour. I had solicited ideas through an open call on my Facebook page, so much of the advice came from recently single women themselves.

This is a relatively new method of research for me, and a fascinating one, because like many folks who work in the public eye, quite a few of my Facebook friends are people I have never actually met in real life. With some, I have developed online friendships of a sort; others not so much. So a lot of the tips I gathered for last month's column came from people I don't really know.

This made me wonder: when it comes to human, heart-related stuff like community, or support, or advice, or friendship, is the quality of the connection forged between people any less real if it happens online? Is the advice given by one stranger to another online any less helpful than that delivered by a neighbour, or an old friend? Is face-to-face consolation somehow more tangible and takeable than that of Facebook, or a phone call?

All this got me thinking. I haven't come up with any brilliant insights really, but still, there was a bit of thinking happening.

After the advice to recently single ladies came out, I received quite a few requests for a butch version, so I put out another call on Facebook. I am going to pass on the most-repeated tips, and the steps that general consensus revealed to be helpful. But given the nature of some of the comments I received after last month's column hit the cyberwaves, I guess I need to include a disclaimer.

When I say going to the gym and getting some exercise will make you feel better, both physically and mentally, I am not insisting that everyone conform to mainstream advertising's ideal body type, nor am I espousing any kind of height/weight-specific standards of what is sexy. I mean that going to the gym or getting some exercise will make you feel better.

And when I say going out for libations with your pals can help you renew old friendships that might have gone to fallow while you were in an unhappy relationship, I am in no way making light of the seriousness of substance abuse, nor am I maligning anyone in recovery. I simply mean that going out for a beverage of your choice with other consenting adults whose company you enjoy could be a pleasurable alternative to staying home by yourself and staring at the dents in the

rug where the furniture used to be.

So, here are some of the tips to getting over a breakup — butch style.

Get a haircut. A fresh three-pack of white T-shirts and new boxers were also popular suggestions. Other butch accoutrements can help, too: vintage cufflinks, a pocketknife or a fountain pen can put a little bounce in your step and a sparkle in your eye.

Go on a road trip. This one is a must. There was some debate over solo versus with the buddies. I think this is a personal choice. Whether it is a train ride through the prairies alone or five fellows piling into the van for a three-day, mostly naked camping trip, everyone agreed that a change of scenery is in order.

Eat messy food. Barbecue, crab, lobster, corn on the cob, fondue, fried things in general. Food that gets on you while you are getting it in you. Food that involves fingerbowl, rolls of paper towels, bibs or even a hot shower afterward.

Go places with your dog in your truck. To the hardware store to buy building supplies is a great idea.

This is also the precursor to one of the most important steps of all: **Build something awesome.** Shelves. A woodshed. A loft bed. A combination couch and bench-press station. Doesn't matter what it is; it just matters that you build it. Nails should be pounded. Things should be sawed. Small amounts of blood need

to be shed. This is a rite of passage, a vital ritual.

Building something is also an excuse for another important step, which is: **Buy something pretty.** Such as anything made by Bosch or Snap-on. This is where the discussion got a little heated: Milwaukee and DeWalt fans had to get a word in. Again, I believe decisions like this are a personal choice, and I for one would never get in between a brother and his or her tool preference. Some things are just too sacred.

Listen to music. The stuff you want, and loud. Set up the sub-woofer you found in the alley or at that garage sale and crank it. For me, this step is all about classic rock, but that is just me. The same guidelines stated above for tool preference also apply here. What is important is that you create a new soundtrack for your life, starring you.

Singing in the truck is also necessary. When the teenagers at the stoplight point and laugh, roll the window down and explain that your stereo is in fact

yours, not borrowed from your mother, so you are inherently cooler, even if you are rocking out to Fleetwood Mac.

Manage what you say about your ex. This will affect the way things go for you. Be a gentleman, no matter how hard she makes it for you. This will pay off in the long run.

The most important step, in my opinion, is also the hardest. **Build the brotherhood of butches.** Reach out to your butch and trans male friends, and consciously seek out new ones.

This is not a tired and sexist bro-before-hos thing — not at all. I am talking about building a strong, healthy community that can be there for each other. We have been taught to see each other as competition for too long, and we have suffered for it.

We need to learn to stick together better. Because single is not such a bad thing to be, when you are not so alone.

Ivan E Coyote is the author of five books, most recently The Slow Fix.

comment

“Let me also suggest: Get a new tattoo. I just got a turquoise butch star on my forearm — on a whim — and didn't tell anyone ahead of time.”

—Robin Gordon, Toronto, ON

[To comment on this story, go to xtra.ca.](#)

Funerals are made for coming out

Fingerprinted
Daniel
Allen Cox



THE OLDEST KEEPSAKE I have is a beige audio cassette labelled “January 1979.” I routinely dust it off and listen to my three-year-old voice through the warble and static, singing You Are My Sunshine while beating a Fisher Price piano to its tinkly death.

Then comes the enigma that has baffled me for years.

“Do you go to school?” my aunt says on the tape.

“I go to school with Lulu's kids,” I answer. “Lulu's kids has a broken foot.”

“Tell me about Lulu.”

“She looks like Uncle Morris.”

Lulu was what I called my mom's cousin Louise. I figured out there was something different about her by how my family pronounced her name. “Loueeeeze.” Somehow, I knew that drawn-out syllable meant she was a dangerous character. Later, I understood that my cuz Lulu, who I thought looked like Uncle Morris, was in fact the family dyke: outspoken, proud and taking shit from nobody.

Louise and I saw each other only a handful of times in my adult life, on the rare occasions we attended a family gathering together. We exchanged hellos under watchful eyes. She told me about her job as a social worker and always gave me a big bear hug.

But I never disclosed my sexuality to her.

Then came a family funeral that changed things. Death does stuff to me, makes me think about renewal. I was sick of a lifetime of missed opportunities to get closer to my Big Cuz. So, in a crowded knot of great aunts and uncles, amnesiacs, unknowns and likely closet cases, I came out to Louise. This was years after I had come out to everybody else.

Lulu's not the type to bottle emotion. Not two feet from the corpse, she yelled, “Welcome to the family, Danny boy!”

She was referring to a different kind of family, of course.

Recently, Big Cuz and her wife, Dolores, invited my partner, Mark, and me over for dinner. On the drive to their house in the country, we saw hundreds of people windsurfing on a frozen but thawing lake, manoeuvring around holes that had melted in the ice.

After we had settled in the living room and wrestled with the dogs for a while, Big Cuz lost it. She was pissed.

“Why did it take decades for me to find out you were queer? I asked the family about you every few months and always got the same evasive answers. ‘How's Danny?’ ‘Fine.’ ‘What's he doing?’ ‘He's a journalist.’ ‘Is he seeing anyone?’ ‘He has a girlfriend.’”

“But I *did* have a girlfriend,” I said.

“Ok, but why couldn't they tell me the truth about you?”

She was right. Our family had been keeping us apart for years, if not expressly, then by omitting information they knew was important. Were they afraid that two queers were stronger

than one? But it wasn't just them. I could've made contact with Louise a long time ago, to show her she wasn't the only fag in the family. To break her isolation.

Either way, it should never have taken that long.

We had a fabulous afternoon, pigging out on homemade lemon pie (Dolores is a mean cook) and catching up on the decades we were apart.

Big Cuz told us about Jilly's, a Montreal dyke bar she called a “speakeasy.” She went pawing at the door when she was 16, wearing a baseball cap to try

LATER, I UNDERSTOOD THAT MY CUZ LULU, WHO I THOUGHT LOOKED LIKE UNCLE MORRIS, WAS IN FACT THE FAMILY DYKE: OUTSPOKEN, PROUD AND TAKING SHIT FROM NOBODY.

to look older. The bouncer let her in, on the condition she drink only Coke and stand beside the secret back door, in case they had to throw her out during a police raid.

“I'll never forget the time a 35-year-old woman propositioned me at Jilly's. I was terrified, so I excused myself to the bathroom and then disappeared out the window. How embarrassing to see her there again the following night!”

As reported in Xtra, police later raided Jilly's, in 1976, as part of a pre-Olympics morality sweep, toting sub-machine guns and searching patrons.

This was around the time I was born.

Back at Louise's house, I slipped the beige cassette into my Walkman and pressed play.

“There's something I want you to listen to.”

She pressed the buds into her ear and listened intently. Her face lit up, and I could see the resurrection of a 30-year-old memory.

“I need to know who Lulu's kids are,” I said.

Louise explained she used to take care of physically disabled and hearing-impaired teens. I used to come over to her apartment to play with them, and, because most used wheelchairs, I assumed they had “broken feet.” I thought they were her kids.

“You sat in their laps and made them wheel you around the house. You were a real brat back then.”

“Only back then?”

Then she pointed out the big bay window and sadness came over her face. “One of Lulu's kids was killed not far from here. On her birthday.”

Anee Khudaverdian came to Canada from Lebanon in 1963, when she was two years old, for polio treatment. A drunk driver hit and killed her in 2008. I had read about Anee, but had no way of knowing she was one of Lulu's kids. She had probably even given me wheelchair rides.

Another death linking me to Louise.

But if tragedy is going to result in amazing things like reuniting me with my Big Cuz, then I'll accept these bitter moments without complaint.

Daniel Allen Cox is the author of Shuck.

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OUTSIDE, INSIDE AND BEYOND

Your guide to the new Xtra

Xtra!

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New charges laid >8

CITIZENSHIP WITHOUT GAYS
Jason Kenney's blunders >9

WHITE LEATHER & RUFFLES
'80s interiors return >inside

OTTAWA'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

#217 MARCH 18, 2010

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COMMENTARY 5 XCETERA 6 NEWS 7 OUT IN THE CITY 17 XPOSED 21 MORE AT XTRA.CA

Xtra!

CANADA'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

< The front door

A cleaner and updated cover design allows Xtra to present rich illustration and photography without the limitations of standing elements. Retired is the familiar Xtra logo, formerly in the top left corner of each cover. This allows for cover illustrations and photography unmarred by the logo position.

^ A new brand, a bright future

Formerly, each of the Xtra publications and Xtra.ca bore a separate, distinct logo. The new, simplified and iconic logo will mark all of Xtra's work, in your neighbourhood, across Canada and around the world. Also, look for Xtra's mark on promotional material for sponsored community events and organizations nationwide.

> Navigation

Roundup is Xtra's front foyer. It's your guide to all things Xtra, inside the publication and beyond. Roundup not only outlines the selection of news, analysis and arts coverage waiting in the pages of your print edition, it also directs you to great video, audio, photographic and additional print features online at Xtra.ca.

> Join the discussion

Comment is home to analysis by Xtra staff writers and editors. It's also your place to have your say. Whether you leave a comment on Xtra.ca, email your ideas directly to an Xtra editor or write your thoughts out longhand for delivery by snail mail, your comments are critically important. You're not just a consumer of information; you're an active participant in the storyline.

Roundup

Comment

You might live in Centretown if...

A Canadian in LA

INBOX

Anglicans & Ugandans

Sexual violence & community shaming

Whispers in your ear

Queer youth

Sweet but racist?

The evolution of Xtra



1984

A star is born
Xtra got its start in January 1984 as a spinoff from the late, great institution of sexual liberation, *The Body Politic*. Xtra was conceived as a marketable and free back-pocket entertainment guide, distributed mainly through Toronto's bar scene.

1987

A sister falls
In February 1987, *The Body Politic* suspended publication. Xtra changed considerably in a short period of time. It remained true to its roots as a light bar-and-culture read, but began also to fill the news and analysis vacuum left by its predecessor.

Curiosities abound

Xcetera is Xtra's new showcase of compact news-and-culture imagery and pop-cultural tidbits. Sometimes a picture really is worth a thousand words, and Xcetera offers a way to tell stories more visually. Each installment of Xcetera will look and read differently. Get to know your neighbours and neighbourhood, enter an Xtra contest, learn about your history; Xcetera will guide you there.

XTRA! MARCH 18, 2010

DEADLINES
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Upfront

IF WE CAN'T GET KENNEY TO CHANGE JOBS, PERHAPS WE CAN GET HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND.

BANK ST BIA THAWS

Blue banners to get a rethink this spring

Noreen Fagan

TWO GROUPS THAT WERE ONCE AT LOGGERSHEADS OVER THE branding of Bank St appear to be patching their relationship, after the Bank St Business Improvement Area (Bank St BIA) extended an olive branch to the Village Initiative on Feb 18.

The blue banners hanging from lampposts along Bank St will be replaced this spring, and Crawford, a professional graphic designer, says he is eager to help figure out what should replace them.

Banners are not only an aesthetic landmark but are used in cities as marketing tools to highlight urban renewal, market designated areas and promote businesses within those areas.

LePage invited two other people who have publicly supported the Village initiative and the BIA's Gay LePage (pictured) are thaws.

It appears that relations between the Village initiative and the BIA's Gay LePage (pictured) are thaws.

Menard, president of the Centretown Citizens Community Association, has spoken publicly about how gay-friendly branding would "revitalize" the neighbourhood.

Cobb has confirmed he will sit on the committee. Denis Schrybort, Vice-President of the Centretown Citizens Community Association, has confirmed he will sit on the committee for Menard.

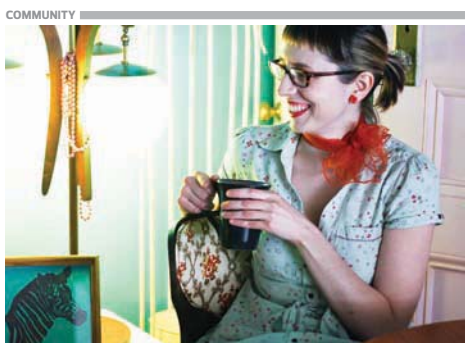
The project to get more rainbows onto Bank St faced two major setbacks — city plans for the new streetcape omitted anything about the Village.

Since 2008, there has been little help or recognition from the city or the BIA. Instead, the volunteer-run Village committee raised money to buy rainbow flags and decals for interested businesses, including Bridgehead, Second Cup, Venus Envy, After Stonewall, Wicked Wand's and the Youth Services Bureau's young men's shelter. That work now appears to be paying dividends.

"I think our community can take pride in everything we have done because certainly, it hasn't been about just six or seven people on a committee doing the work. It's the community behind us supporting it and the businesses and organizations that have agreed to it," says Crawford.

Xtra contacted LePage to confirm the role of the banner committee and the BIA's decision to identify Crawford as a stakeholder. LePage declined to speak with the paper, and, through his secretary, said he would never sit for an interview with Xtra again.

Find more stories about the Bank St BIA's troubled relationship with the Village at xtra.ca.



FEMME FRATERNITY

In the fall of 2009, Fiona Mantha started Femme Family, a discussion group for queer, femme-identified folks of all genders. They meet on the first Saturday of each month.

GAY PRISON GUARD VINDICATED

Ontario Grievance Settlement Board sides with former Corrections officer

Neil McKinnon

A FORMER OTTAWA PRISON GUARD experienced homophobic and "poisonous" work atmosphere, Ontario's Grievance Settlement Board has found.

Robert Ranger has been on long-term disability since 2002, has felt suicidal and has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, the Ottawa Citizen reported.

A Jan 18 decision upheld a complaint filed against the Corrections Ministry that allowed harassment against Ranger to continue unchecked from 1998 to 2002. During that time, Ranger worked at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. When he left, it took 18 months for prison officials to begin investigating his complaints.

A recent 72-page conclusion named guard Mark Grady who was president of the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre's Correctional Services' OPEU Local 411, as Ranger's chief bully.

"The investigator examined three complaints against Mr Grady of alleged discrimination, harassment and poisoned work environment on the grounds of sexual orientation. Specific allegations included that the respondent 1) simulated sex acts to taunt the grievor, 2) repeated the word 'cock sucker' in a manner that was not part of a conversation, and 3) made sexual jokes during a training session on Feb 11, 2002, at the expense of the grievor," says the report.

And "in his opinion, it is clear that Mr Ranger suffered harassment and discrimination based on his sexual orientation, which was condoned by the employer... The employer did almost nothing to change the environment. The union claims that even when Mr Ranger made a complaint after an incident on Feb 11, 2002, which led to the grievor taking sick leave, the employer failed to investigate until 18 months after the event. When the report of the investigation substantiated some of the allegations made by the grievor, the employer did nothing to address the workplace environment. The union submits that because of the harassment and discrimination, the grievor became ill and was away from work from February 2002 until March 2003."

In a phone interview from his home, Ranger claims the ministry minimized what happened to him.

"The process diminishes what happened because it's taken so long to get settled. I remember hoping I'd get hit by a bus. I complained to my employer and they turned their backs. They did nothing about it. I felt sick. They still didn't do anything about it until a year and a half after I left," says Ranger.

On his lawyer's advice, Ranger says he cannot comment until the appeals process is complete.

"If you read the decision, everything you want to know is there. My lawyer said this is not final. There may come a time in the near future I want to speak with you. I will contact you whenever the day comes," says Ranger.

Read the full findings at xtra.ca.

Xcetera

I'd like to do a movie about men on the DL. I think that's such an interesting subculture that has not been explored.

— Jeff Gault, *Sexual Pleasure* (pictured) is the author of "I'd like to do a movie about men on the DL. I think that's such an interesting subculture that has not been explored."

Thruple (thru-ple) is a new gay dating app that lets you find a date or hook up with someone nearby. It's available on the App Store and Google Play.

Anti-porn feminists battle lezzie sluts. A group of feminists in Ottawa is protesting against a new website called "lezzie sluts" that they say is promoting pornography and objectification of women.

Survey says... A new survey of Ottawa's gay and lesbian community shows that many people are still facing discrimination in the workplace and housing.

Tongue Lashing. A collection of witty and humorous commentary on current events and local news.

Wordle. A word cloud generator that takes text from a website and creates a visual representation of the most common words.

Online. A list of online resources for the Ottawa community, including support groups and information services.

Out in the City

Actor, dancer & beefcake

Small-town Ontario boy makes good on Timsetown's promise

When the DVD of *Act of Valor* hit shelves, it was a surprise to many who knew the actor as Michael Bay. The director of *Transformers* and *The Bourne Supremacy* is also a talented actor and dancer. In a new feature, we explore his journey from a small town in Ontario to Hollywood.



YOU'VE BEEN AWAY TOO LONG, KYLE FLEMING. A feature on the actor's return to his hometown and his work on the set of *Act of Valor*.

HYPONOTIC BRASS ENSEMBLE. A review of a local music group's performance at a recent event.

ROCK CLIMBING. A guide to the best climbing spots in the Ottawa area.

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THE SYMBOLS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

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CHAT This is what people are already saying about this story on Xtra.ca.

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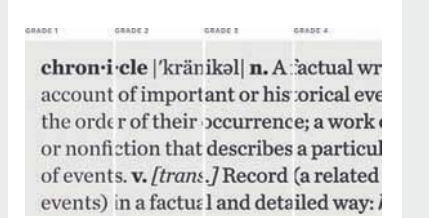
DESIGNED BY The new look of Xtra was designed and art directed by Lucinda Wallace of Wallace Creative (lucindawallace.com).

Easy on the eyes

Xtra's new body font, Chronicle Text, designed by Jonathan Hoefler and Tobias Frere-Jones, is far more space efficient than Xtra's previous font. This improvement allows us to pack more news and analysis into smaller packages. But just because the new font is a touch smaller doesn't mean you'll need a jeweller's loupe to read it. Chronicle Text is easy to read and appropriate to virtually any application, on any paper stock, in the new Xtra. Also, body copy in the new Xtra is fully justified and presented on a more sophisticated column grid. This gives an orderly and contemporary look to every page.

The display copy is set in Prelo and Prelo Slab, companion typefaces that provide a wide variety of weights, designed by Dino dos Santos.

You'll also notice more and larger photos and illustrations, which make the new Xtra not only easy to read but easy on the eyes, too.



Chronicle text was designed in four grades, each optimized for different paper stocks and printing presses

NEWSPAPERS

El Periódico

NEWS

Zaoberá sa tiež dizajnom písma, výberom ilustrácií, zalamovaním textu do odstavcov

today

Fränkischer Nachrichten

Bolsa

Art and Culture

Prelo Slab (top) and Prelo Sans

1993

Then there were three

By 1993, Pink Triangle Press, Xtra's publisher, was flourishing, and Xtra prospered along with it. Inaugural issues of Xtra West hit the streets in Vancouver that year, and a few months later, Capital Xtra premiered in Ottawa.

1996 1997 1998

1999

Into cyberspace

By 1999, Xtra had already made its first furtive steps online. Evolving steadily over most of the next decade, Xtra.ca roared to life in 2008 as an integral component of Xtra's work.



1999 2000 2001

2010


A new look for a brighter future

The next step in Xtra's evolution represents a more contemporary look and reader experience in print, greater integration with Xtra's online incarnation, and a clear commitment to readers that Xtra will maintain the highest standard in gay and lesbian news, analysis, arts and culture coverage for many years to come.



1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010

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Rainbow Health Ontario

RAINBOW HEALTH ONTARIO IS RECRUITING

Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) is a province-wide program designed to improve access to services and to promote the health of Ontario's lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities. It acts as a hub for the dissemination of information, education, training and public policy related to LGBT health and wellness. RHO is based at Toronto's Sherbourne Health Centre, a free-standing health centre that provides innovative health care with a special focus on homeless people, the LGBT community and newcomers to Canada. Now in its third year, RHO is expanding to offer services in French to better meet the linguistic and cultural needs of Ontario's LGBT Francophone communities.

Rainbow Health Ontario is seeking applicants for two full-time positions:

French Services Coordinator: Provides leadership in serving Ontario's LGBT Francophone communities. Works closely with the Communications Coordinator to develop communications materials and campaigns in both official languages. Duties include creating materials in French, commissioning translation, and providing consultation and training on LGBT health issues as well as providing guidance to RHO outreach workers.

Communications Coordinator: Provides leadership in developing health communications strategies and materials. Duties include maintaining RHO website, developing print materials and educational campaigns, and creative use of other media. Works closely with the French Services Coordinator and provides consultation and training services as well as guidance to RHO outreach workers.

We are committed to working within an anti-oppression framework and welcome applicants who bring experience and knowledge of the geographic, ethno-racial and social diversity of Ontario.

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY MARCH 29TH AT 9AM.

For complete job descriptions and application instructions, please visit www.sherbourne.on.ca.

For more information on Rainbow Health Ontario, please visit www.RainbowHealthOntario.ca.

LE RAINBOW HEALTH ONTARIO RECRUTE

Le Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) est un programme à l'échelle provinciale visant à améliorer l'accès aux services et à promouvoir la santé des communautés gaies, lesbiennes, bisexuelles et trans (GLBT) ontarienne. Il agit d'ailleurs comme carrefour dans la dissémination d'information, d'éducation, de formation et de politiques publiques relativement à la santé et au bien-être des communautés GLBT. Le RHO est situé à l'intérieur du Sherbourne Health Centre (SHC) à Toronto, un centre de santé indépendant fournissant des soins de santé novateurs aux diverses rejoignant surtout les personnes sans-abri, les communautés GLBT et les nouveaux arrivants au Canada. Maintenant dans sa troisième année, le RHO a élargi son mandat afin d'offrir ses services en français pour mieux répondre aux besoins linguistiques et culturels de la communauté GLBT franco-ontarienne.

Le Rainbow Health Ontario recherche des candidats pour deux postes à temps plein :

Coordonnateur/trice des Services français : Fournit un leadership en matière des services pour les communautés GLBT franco-ontariennes. Collabore étroitement avec le Coordonnateur/trice des communications sur l'élaboration de campagnes et des communications dans les deux langues officielles. Sommaire des responsabilités : assurer la création de communications en français, la coordination de la traduction, et la consultation et formation sur les enjeux de santé GLBT, en plus de fournir l'encadrement auprès des travailleurs d'approche du RHO.


Coordonnateur/trice des communications : Fournit un leadership en matière de communication santé et de stratégies. Sommaire des responsabilités : assurer le maintien du site web du RHO, la création de communications imprimées et de campagnes éducatives, en plus de l'utilisation des autres outils de diffusion. Collabore étroitement avec le coordonnateur/trice des Services français et fournit un service de conseil, formation et encadrement auprès des travailleurs d'approche du RHO.

Nous œuvrons dans un environnement anti-oppressif et encourageons les candidats possédant des connaissances et expériences de la diversité géographique, ethnoculturelle et sociale de l'Ontario.

LA DATE LIMITE POUR POSTULER EST LE 29E MARS À 9 H.

Pour une description complète du poste et comment postuler, veuillez visiter www.sherbourne.on.ca.

Pour de plus amples renseignements sur le Rainbow Health Ontario, veuillez visiter www.RainbowHealthOntario.ca.

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Gays throw second Bank St love-in >19

STAGE & SCREEN

Actor, dancer & beefcake

Small-town Ontario boy makes good on Tinseltown promise

Michael Rowe

WHEN THE DVD OF *AN Englishman in New York* hits stores, Blockbuster patrons in the small town of Harrow, Ontario (even the straight ones, who might otherwise be disinclined to rent this sequel to the 1975 Quentin Crisp biopic *The Naked Civil Servant*) will be watching for the scene in which a muscular bouncer ejects Crisp (John Hurt) from a late-1970s Manhattan leather bar. The bouncer is played by Craig Ramsay, an out Canadian actor and dancer who, like Crisp, left the strictures of his homeland behind to pursue fame and fortune in the US.

"Where I grew up, I didn't know much about the world beyond it," he says, laughing.

"I saw *Miami Vice* and *Beverly Hills 90210*," he says, "but it never really occurred to me that those places were real."

He played "lots of hockey" and competed in track and field, volleyball and badminton. Ramsay later trained with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, after getting his start doing *Anne of Green Gables* at the Charlottetown Festival as a teenager.

By 2000, he was part of the original North American touring company of *Mamma Mia*.

"That year I was also a Sunshine Boy," he adds wryly, "which embarrassed my grandmother more than me being naked in *Hair*."

Mamma Mia took Ramsay to the US. When the tour ended, armed with his green card, he remained.

"I just kept auditioning and booking gig after gig," he says, "and before I knew it, my career and life were established in the US."

In the years since, he's worked with Stephen Sondheim and Hal Prince in *Bounce* at Chicago's Goodman Theater; played Boris in *Fiddler on the Roof*; and

most recently played Rocky in the Universal Studios production of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Off-Broadway audiences will remember his sexy turn as Alexander the Great in *A Kiss From Alexander*.

Ramsay was a visible protester at the demonstrations against Proposition 8 in California, the amendment banning gay marriage in that state. While recognizing that as a Canadian (albeit a green card-holding "alien of exceptionable ability," in the colourful parlance of US immigration law) he had no vote, he felt it was important to make his voice heard.

To Ramsay, who came out to his parents early, it's likewise important to be an out actor, adding, "I'm not going to be a good actor, or be able to help other people, if I'm not secure in my own life. That goes for my training, and it goes for what I communicate as an actor. It's going to come from a place of reality if it's real in me."

"My first year in the US, I attended the Pride parade in San Francisco," Ramsay says. He recalls being uncomfortable with some of the extremes he saw at the parade, wondering aloud how the display of so many stereotypes was advancing gay rights.

"Someone verbally slapped me across the face," he says ruefully. "They told me, 'This isn't just about fighting for the rights of gay people who fit neatly into the straight world. The fact that you can pass as straight means that you need to have a much louder voice in this struggle.'"

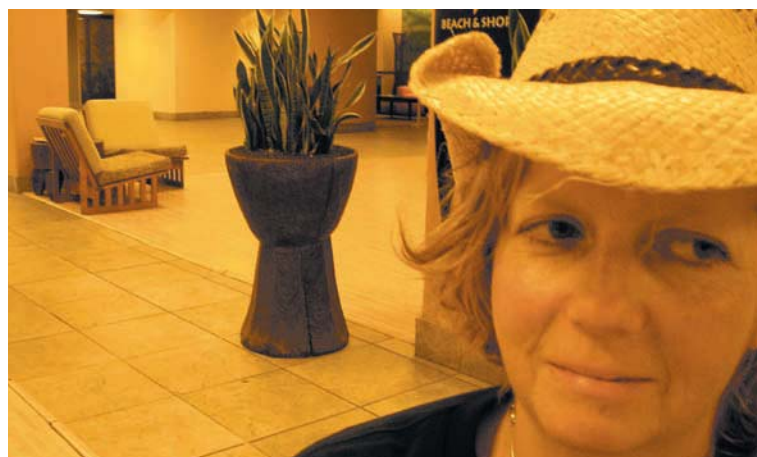
The reprimand served as a clarion call to his activism.

"It's important for queer people to come out, for the sake of gay youth. I can't tell you how many gay kids have reached out to me for support through my website, on Facebook or at a performance, because they're not getting it at home. When people don't live their lives openly," he says, "there's no one to look up to."



Craig Ramsay of Harrow, Ontario, toured the continent with musicals and now lives in LA. PHOTO BY LESLEY PEDRAZA FOR FAB MAGAZINE

ROCK CLIMBING



YOU'VE BEEN AWAY TOO LONG, KELE FLEMING

REMEMBER THE EARLY '90S? Brian Mulroney, *You Can't Do That on Television* and a wave of serious, crafty Canadian indie pop. Lesbians might also remember a powerful little pop outfit called Hazel Motes, fronted by a righteous dyke. Kele (that's pronounced "Kelly") Fleming gave up on the artist's life in 1998, but now she is back with a straight-up rock album, *World in Reverse*, and a tour that lands at Ottawa's Rainbow Bistro on April 7.

listings >

For more listings go to xtra.ca.

music


GIRL PARTY

A night of femme-fuelled hip hop, electro-thrash and more. Featuring East Coaster Jenocide with local celebs Kool Kryss and Jas Nasty. Thurs, March 18, 8pm. \$6. 19+. Zaphod Beeblebrox, 27 York St.

HYPNOTIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

Blending the better parts of jazz, hip hop, reggae, rock and soul, the Hypnotic Brass Ensemble weaves walls of massive, bouncy harmonies. With The Recipe and DJ Memetic. Sat, March 20, 9pm. \$20 in advance at End Hits, Compact Music, Reap & Sew. Ritual Nightclub, 137 Besserer. >18

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Xtra! CANADA'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

Sweetest Taboo
Memoirs of a Queer Child in the Eighties



In a world where horniness felt like an inexplicable itch and masturbation seemed to be something that I'd invented, the elastic, unpredictable, permissive, shapeless, romantic world of the Barbapapas and Barbamamas made it seem like nothing could be "wrong," and anything could be "right".

elisha lim

listings > ↗ For more listings go to xtra.ca.

- music**
- GLENN NUOTIO**
Ottawa darling Glenn Nuotio plays with Vancouver's Brasstronaut and the Pelts. Sun, March 25, 8:30pm. \$7 advance at Compact Music, the Ottawa Folklore Centre, the Black Sheep Inn and ticketweb.ca. theblacksheepinn.com
- JAM NIGHT**
Every month, artists gather at the Shanghai for a few hours to create memorable and fun jams. Come out and see what all the fuss is about! All welcome, event is free, materials provided. Wed, March 31, 7-10pm. Shanghai Restaurant, 651 Somerset.
- DRAGONETTE**
Enjoy Canadian glam electropop group Dragonette. Thurs, April 1, 9pm. \$20 at Compact Music, Top of the World and Norml. 19+. Babylon, 317 Bank.
- MEGHAN TONJES**
With her newly released LP, *Be in Want*, YouTube sensation Meghan Tonjes fuses her addictive melodies and honest words with a stirring and soulful sound. With Amanda Cottreau. 19+. Sat, April 10, 8pm. \$8/door. Avant-Garde Bar, 135 1/2 Besserer.
- LIX HOLLYWOOD GLAM TEA DANCE**
This year, the LIX dance has a Hollywood glam theme. With coffee, tea, non-alcoholic beverages and desserts. Sun, March 21, 2-5pm. \$10 at Mother Tongue Books and
- After Stonewall Books. Glebe Community Centre, 175 Third. girlswanttoknow.com
- LOG ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**
Let's Get Intimate concert presented by the Lesbian Outdoor Group, an all-female event celebrating the LOG/OPALE 15th anniversary. Featuring Jill Zmud and Claudie Larouche. Sat, April 10, 7pm. \$5 at Venus Envy, Mother Tongue Books and After Stonewall. St Brigid's Centre, 310 St Patrick. lesbianoutdoorgroup.ca
- theatre**
- BLOOD.CLAAT**
Fusing theatre and dub poetry, the extraordinary artist d'bi young of anitafrika! portrays Mudgu with wit, charisma and power. Until Sun, March 21. \$32-\$43. Great Canadian Theatre Company, 1233 Wellington. gctc.ca
- ENCHANTED APRIL**
Four English women break free of their rain-drenched everyday life by renting a rundown castle in Italy. There they discover romance, secrets and redemption. A play by Matthew Barber, based on a novel by Elizabeth von Arnim. Until Sat, April 10. 8pm.
- health**
- YOGATHON 2010**
Radha Yoga Youth Outreach is hosting a weeklong Yogathon to raise funds for their program. Donate at ryyo.org or join a class that week. Until Sat, March 20. Radha Yoga, 617 Cooper.
- for the ladies**
- >19**

GOINGS ON

RADICAL!

Campus group mixes up weekend of radical fun

Luna Allison

MARCH 26-28 MARKS THE FIRST Radical Queer Weekend in Ottawa's history, when queer activists and agitators from Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal will converge to pass along knowledge and strategies to further social action.

OPIRG (the Ontario Public Interest Research Group) Toronto and its counterpart in Montreal have put on similar events for the last few years, and workers at OPIRG at the University of Ottawa thought it was time to try their own.

"We've done alternative radical queer events in the past, but it's always been in partnership with other organizations," says Zaheen, the campus relations coordinator at OPIRG's Ottawa chapter and a principle organizer of Radical Queer Weekend.

"There are a lot of people doing activism in areas that aren't strictly queer: anti-war stuff, migrant justice work, reproductive rights, feminist areas, anti-violence work, environmental work, labour rights. It's been cool to see queers building links to other struggles, and I thought it would be nice to showcase that in a weekend of events."

Zaheen hopes Radical Queer

Weekend will be an opportunity to showcase what local organizations and individuals are doing – and for queer people to get involved in other causes.

"It's about making sure that the queer voice is not isolated and seeing the relevance of a queer voice and queer perspective on issues in other struggles," says Zaheen. "I'll use Palestinian solidarity work as an example. It's fairly new to [have] so many workshops and events out there... where we're seeing clear links to how the queer voice has been co-opted. We have to set the record straight, so to speak!

"It's good to look at how queers can fight back in various struggles and not just be isolated in our queer struggles," she says. "For example, we're bringing in people from Prisoner Correspondence in Montreal, and it would be awesome if we could set something like that up here in Ottawa."

Radical Queer Weekend, which may become an annual event, has the overall goal of building capacity at the local level to address broader issues and boost the work being done by queer allies in Ottawa.

Go to opirg-gripo.ca for information on workshop locations.

SHINDIG



GAYS THROW SECOND BANK ST LOVE-IN

In what's becoming an annual tradition, the folks from the Village Initiative will host a swank party to raise funds for rainbow flags on Bank St. While organizers are tightlipped about the surprises they have in store, expect food, fun and roller skates. In their first outing, they added \$2,000 to the Initiative's bottom line (which sits at nearly \$10,000, for the record). The money is used to buy rainbow decals, flags and other gay-friendly identifiers for the neighbourhood, says board member Ian Capstick (pictured with a preview of the dessert table). PHOTO BY PAT CROTEAU

Join the neighbours at Build Our Bank, April 15, 7pm. Café Paradiso, 199 Bank St. Tickets are \$50 (2/\$90, 5/\$195) at various Village locations.

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listings >

radical queer events

DECOLONIZING QUEER

This workshop will build on the current situation of queer Palestinians to address the intersections between identities often thought to be contradictory. In French, translation available. Email gripocampus@gmail.com. Sat, March 27, 12pm. Free. Morriset Hall, 65 University.

BREAKING SCALES

Join Chelsey Lichtawoman of the Fat Femme Mafia in an interactive workshop that will explore new ways of celebrating our bodies just as they are. Part of Radical Queer Weekend. Sat, March 27, 1:30pm. Free. Morriset Hall, 65 University.

QPOC HERO GAMESHOW

Join Agitate in exploring all your favourite (in)famous queer people of colour. Celebrate our strength and history. Part of Radical Queer Weekend. Sat, March 27, 1:30pm. Free. Morriset Hall, 65 University.

TRANS LIVES

Workshop followed by a screening of *Access Denied: Trans Lives on the Margins*. Second workshop followed by a screening of *Cruel and Unusual*, with Nora Butler Burke. Presented by opirg-gripo and Venus Envy. Part of Radical Queer Weekend. Free. Sun, March 28, 6:30pm. Venus Envy, 320 Lisgar.

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The golden Rule

Lesbian novelist stands the test of time

Suggestive Reading
Anne Fleming

In each issue, a prominent literary Canadian recommends a queer-authored book. In this installment, novelist Anne Fleming recommends Jane Rule's Contract with the World (Insomniac).

CONTRACT WITH THE WORLD, now in a handsome Insomniac reissue, was first published in 1980. I read it in 1983 or so. I was 19, newly out, and my lover had stolen Jane Rule's terrific study *Lesbian Images* from the library.

While we made our way through Radclyffe Hall, Djuna Barnes and the gang, it was Jane Rule whose work we enjoyed most. Chris loved *Desert of the Heart*. I preferred *Contract with the World*. I loved that it was about not just a couple but a community. I loved its structure: six sections about people doing stuff: "Joseph Walking," "Mike Hanging," "Alma Writing," "Roxanne Recording," "Allen Mourning," "Carlotta Painting." I liked that it was not about being lesbian or gay, but integrated gayness. I think I liked, too, that it was about a group of grownups who were largely artists, who comprised the kind of community Chris and I imagined we might one day be part of.

After Jane Rule died in 2007, I decided to reread it, as a sort of private tribute. I was nervous after its having occupied a privileged place in my mental library so long. (Timothy Findley's *Not Wanted on the Voyage* dropped from number one on my list to about 105, twelve years later.) My main reaction was, Holy crap! Have things ever changed! But yes, *Contract with the World* holds up better than *Not Wanted on the Voyage*.

Joseph is a sweet, gentle man who happens to be manic, and whose doctor prescribes walking 10 miles a day as a preventive measure. In this way he meets Allen, the gay photographer, out taking pictures early one morning and in need of a figure for a shot. Joseph's photo lands on the cover of an art magazine that Joseph's former schoolmate Mike sees, and Mike gets in touch with Joseph. Through Mike we meet Alma, his statuesque and distant wife; and through Allen we meet Roxanne, the lesbian sound artist who is friends with Allen's lover, Pierre; and through Mike and Alma, we meet Carlotta, the bi-curious painter.

All of them turn 30 that year, and we follow them for another four or five years as chance, social forces and their own personalities shake them up. Macho Mike, crazy with a kind of impotence in his marriage, hangs himself in effigy. Alma, meantime, falls hard for Roxanne. Joseph marries newly

bereaved Ann and finds himself the slightly bewildered stepfather of two daughters but doesn't tell any of his friends. Carlotta has an affair with Mike.

If you step back from it, it's a novel about the politicization of private lives (as you might expect from a novel that ends with all its main characters in a paddy wagon). It's a marker of a hinge time between, say, Trudeau's bedrooms of the nation (1967) and gay marriage (2005), a time just shy of the Charter of Human Rights (1982), a time when most people, including those in the book, don't feel like they can be out, a time when being queer meant their children could be taken away.

Up close, it's about a great deal more than that: art, ambition, lust, class, happiness, '70s fashions, Vancouver. And less: just getting on, day by day. Just living.

Anne Fleming is the author of Anomaly, a novel, and Pool-Hopping and Other Stories. She splits her time between Vancouver and Kelowna, BC, where she teaches creative writing at UBC Okanagan.

listings >

words

KYMERAS

Travel to the era of steam power with the Kymeras as they open their third season together. Featuring Sean Zio, Kathryn Hunt, Ruthanne Edward and Marie Bilodeau. Steampunk dress encouraged. Tues, March 20, 7-9pm. By donation. **>21**
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April 12, 2010

Koprowski
Elegia
Maria Knapik, soprano

Lutoslawski
Concerto for Orchestra

Górecki
Symphony No. 3;
Symphony of Sorrowful Songs
Maria Knapik, soprano

In April we make a musical visit to Poland. Our soloist is the well-known Ottawa soprano, Maria Knapik. She will sing the deeply moving *Elegia* written for her by the Canadian-Polish composer, Peter Paul Koprowski. She will also sing the very haunting soprano solo in Górecki's Third Symphony (*Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*). The orchestra gets to shine, too, in Lutoslawski's powerful Concerto for Orchestra.



XPOSED

Erik Faure



▲ Stephen Reid, Andrew Manziuk and Eric DeMarbre (left to right) at the Ottawa-Gatineau Gay Hockey Association Ice Challenge, Jack Purcell rink, Feb 20.



◀ Glen Hartle, Michel Germain and Stephen Rowe (left to right) at the afterparty for the OGGHA Ice Challenge Tournament, Feb 20.



▲ Marion Steele (left) and Victoria Burnnam at Walkley Lanes, March 6.



▶ Shushan Araya participating in the Ten Oaks Bowl-a-thon, Walkley Lanes, March 6.



▲ Hershel Kagan (left), Jerry Ritt and their daughter, Miriam, bowling in the Ten Oaks fundraiser, March 6.

WORK IT



THE SWIM TEAM WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR

The Rideau Speedeaus, Ottawa's gayest swim team, is offering spring swimming lessons. The Speedeaus are a fun, mixed-level alternative to dour hetero swim clubs. The eight-week course will be taught Wednesdays from 6-7pm at the University of Ottawa pool (Montpetit Hall) starting April 7. Those interested can visit rideauspeedeaus.com.

listings >

For more listings go to xtra.ca.

words

THE SPOKEN WORD PLOT

Jessica Ruano and award-winning playwright Nadine Thornhill perform together for the Valley crowd. Sun, April 4, 6pm. Jr's Downstairs Pub, 385 Ottawa, Almonte. Ottawa Little Theatre, 400 King Edward. ottawalittletheatre.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSICA RUANO

mark your calendar

THE GIRLS WANT TO KNOW SHOW

Ottawa's Lesbian Information Xchange (LIX) will be hosting the Girls Want to Know Show, a way for LIX Chicks and other women to network, promote their businesses and community organizations and have fun! Sun, April 18, 12-4pm. Free entry. Table rental \$30. Glebe Community Centre, 175 Third. Register at dorothyscloset.com.

TASTE FOR LIFE

Join hundreds of supporters at four dozen restaurants as they raise money for local HIV/AIDS groups. Eat a good meal, have a bottle of wine and feel good about helping your community. Wed, April 28, various locations, including Lago, les Fougères, Murray St, Oz and Benitz. atasteforlife.org

RAVENSWING GAMES NIGHT

Raise some money for one of Ottawa's most vibrant art fairs. Games Night is a tournament of *Settlers of Catan*, *Cranium* and *DanceDanceRevolution* with great prizes. Sign up a team at ravenswingottawa.ca. Fri, April 30, Royal Legion, 359 Kent.

SO THE STORY GOES

Queer performance troupe SwELL includes Anna Camilleri, Ivan E Coyote, Lyndell Montgomery, with video artist Leslie Peters. So the Story Goes is a multidisciplinary performance about queerness, gender, desire, class, rural versus city life and kinship. Fri, April 30. Club Saw, 67 Nicholas.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS >

Notices

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or Adoptive Parent for a child or youth. Call 613-742-1620

FEM-AIDE
FRANCOPHONE WOMEN across the province: victims of violence can dial one number and receive support and obtain information on the services available in their community: 1-877-Fem-Aide

HAVE YOU EVER
had unprotected sex or shared needles for drug use? Are you unsure about your partner's sexual activity or drug use? To find out where to get an anonymous HIV test, call 613-563-AIDS (2437)

Groups

OUT DIVERS PROMOTES recreational scuba diving for GLBT individuals of all skill levels. We provide a safe and accepting environment in which to learn and enjoy scuba diving.
www.gayottawa.com/scuba or email scuba@gayottawa.com

EMPLOYMENT >

Volunteers

ARE YOU A woman with a feminist or womanist commitment to bettering women's lives? If you would like to volunteer with Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre, call us at 613-563-0363

CONNEXIONS, A HIV buddy program, matches volunteers with people living with HIV. If you are interested in having a buddy, please contact Diana at 613-521-6721

PINK TRIANGLE SERVICES is looking for volunteers on an ongoing basis to continue to offer services to the GLBTQ community. We have opportunities in the library, the Gay line, the office and on the Board of Directors. Please contact 613-563-4818

THE AIDS COMMITTEE OF OTTAWA needs volunteers for Safer Sex Outreach and Massage Therapy (RMTs). Connect and make a difference! Contact 613-238-5014 xt228 or volunteer@aco-cso.ca for more information

THE OTTAWA RAPE CRISIS CENTRE is looking for volunteers for Board of Directors, Public Education and Crisis Line. For info, visit www.orcc.net or call 613-562-2334 xt24

Help wanted

FREELANCE JOURNALISTS NEEDED
News and feature writing skill required. Familiarity with local gay community and/or gay and lesbian issues an asset but not essential. Mail or drop off resume and writing samples to, Marcus McCann, Associate Publisher & Managing Editor, Pink Triangle Press, PO Box 70063 - Place Bell R.P.O. 160 Elgin St, Ottawa, ON K2P 2M3

Book your line classified online! Visit Xtra.ca for more information.

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Groups



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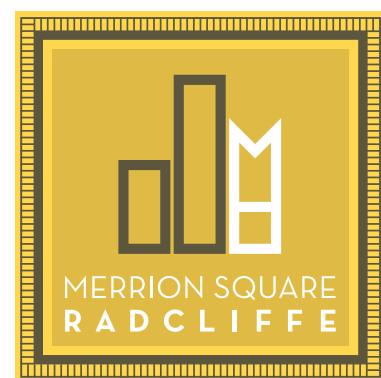
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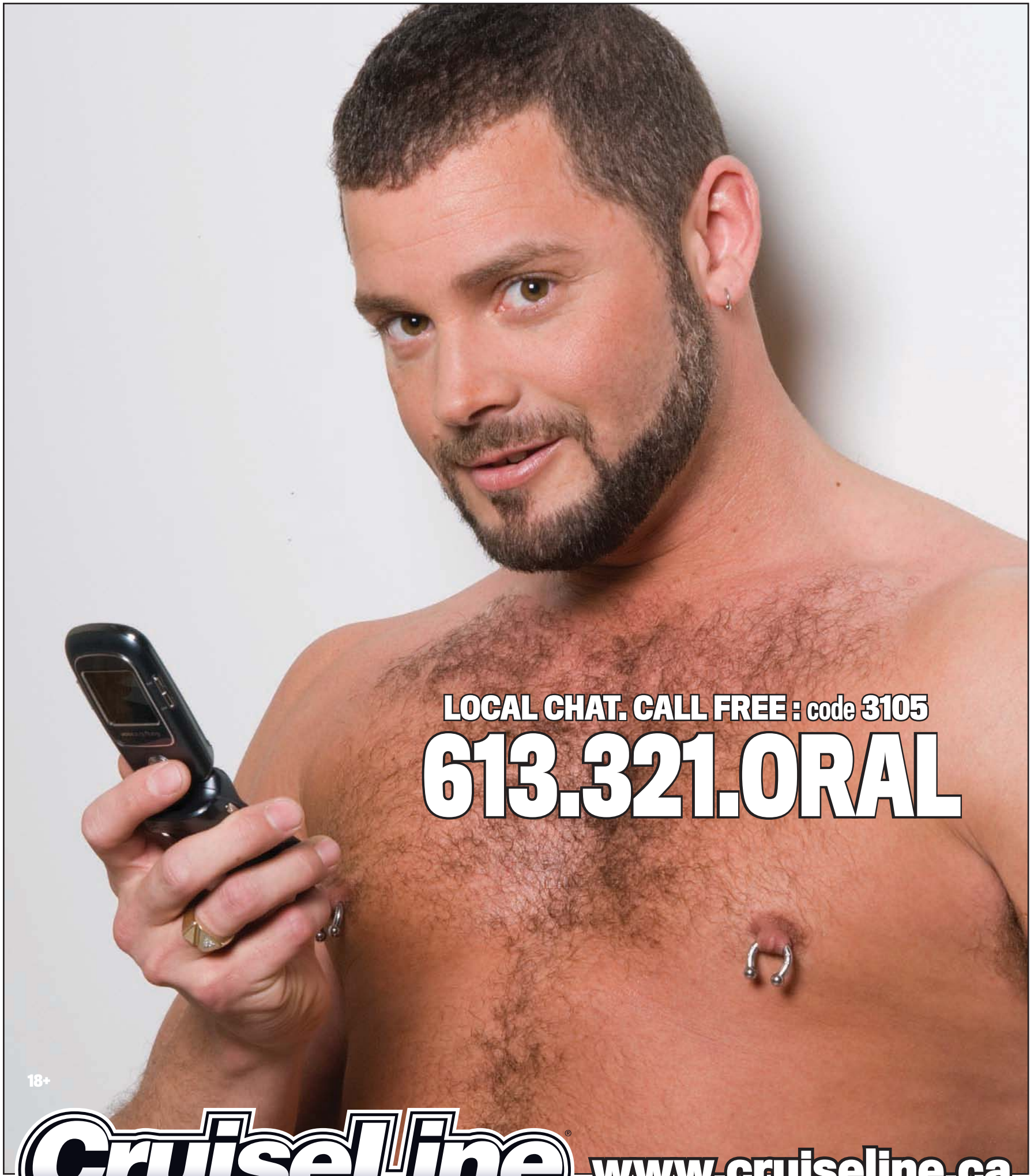


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