

Programming and other Key Highlights

A Move to New Offices

“Moving on, is a simple thing, what it leaves behind is hard.” ~ Dave Mustaine. Well the only thing that was hard about our move from Bedford Row to Barrington Street was the packing up! If you’ve moved recently, you’d not be surprised by how much you accumulate over time. Moving an office is a significantly challenging and time consuming job. We had a big space to fill when we moved to Bedford Row; yet the opposite was true when we moved to Barrington Street. With thanks to the staff and a very hard-working Katimavik volunteer. Better still, we got ACNS packed up, moved in and organized in record time! And a WONDERFUL space it is!

Restructuring the Resource Centre

Having moved, we have had to restructure many things as we went from a little over 3,000 square feet to about 2,000 square feet. To that end, it meant having to be a bit more creative with this space. The Resource Centre was located in its own space but now shares the reception area. This helps to promote this program area and allows people to more freely browse the collection. All in all, our Resource Centre volunteer – Pam Flight – deserves the credit. Pam has spent many countless hours keeping the collection up-to-date tracking loans and delinquent books and keeping the area in good order.

Volunteer Successes

What would we do without our volunteers? Being a small organization, we are BIG when it comes to the efforts put out by our volunteers! Longevity of volunteers is a showing great success. Over the years we have developed a strong team of volunteers and we have people who we can trust and can put into leadership positions. They even cross over into other events. As an example, we have a



little over 195 active fund development volunteers. Over the period of a year, they provide over 1,700 hours of service and over \$25,000 of time, in-kind. Better, our volunteers come back year after year. At the last Tour Tech Party, we had eleven (11) people who had provided five (5) or more years volunteering with the Party; eight (8) who were in their fourth year; and ten (10) who had volunteered for the third year in a row.

Key Programming Successes

Through a grant provided by the MAC AIDS Fund we were able to host a PHA Rustic Rejuvenation Retreat which took place at a camping site an hour outside of the city over 2 ½ days. We brought PHAs together from across Nova Scotia and held various activities such as workshops, kayaking, drum circle, crafts and more.



Further on into the fall we distributed materials over AIDS Awareness week and participated in various media events. On December 1st we held our annual AIDS Vigil which was attended by more than 100 community members. As a part of our World AIDS Day activities we also held a conference with Dr. Shafran who provided an update from International AIDS Conference in Vienna sponsored by Abbott.

We launched our new Women’s HIV Prevention Workshop focusing on harm reduction options for women in Truro and at the Yarmouth Sexual Health Conference and we look forward to bringing this program to other areas of Nova Scotia.

As part of a new prevention initiative targeting gay men in Halifax we were able to collaborate with a Gay Men’s Health Centre in Australia to launch an edgy ‘protection’ campaign using ‘scratch’ postcards and posters. In partnership with prideHealth, we were able to offer our Gay Men’s Health HIV Prevention workshop at Capital Health where resident MDs, Public Health staff and Offender Health Services attended. We also able to offer this workshop in Sydney, Cape Breton.

Fund Development Successes

This year was our most challenging year for fundraising initiatives to date. At the beginning of the year, on April 15th we launched our first RBC Amazing Challenge for AIDS in downtown Halifax. Six (6) teams stormed the city completing 18 challenges throughout the city and it certainly was a mind boggling, nerve wracking day for participants. Congratulations were offered to the ‘Coca-Cola Commanders’ who won over the ‘Chester Cheetahs’.



Less than a month later, early in May we held our BMO Financial Group Bid for Life Dinner and Auction which was also a great success. We offer an evening of silent auction, dinner, entertainment and end our night with an exciting live auction.

Our Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life was held on September 25th and was a huge success with many new walkers this year. We want to extend a special thanks to our top walkers; more than 11 people raised over \$1000 on their own! We began 2011 with our Tour Tech East Post Xmas Party event in January and held another BMO Financial Group Bid for Life Dinner & Auction in March at our year-end.

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Audited financial statements available upon request.

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia is a non-profit, charitable organization. Our charitable registration number is: 89875 8768 RR0002

† Author: Richard. First Mention Of AIDS In Print: 30 Years Ago Today. June 5, 2011. Accessed June 23, 2011. <<http://www.sturtle.com/index.php/2011/06/first-mention-of-aids-in-print-30-years-ago-today/>>.

AIDS
COALITION
of Nova Scotia

Annual Report

2010-2011



June 5, 1981 Pneumocystis Pneumonia — Los Angeles

“In the period October 1980-May 1981, 5 young men, all active homosexuals, were treated for biopsy-confirmed *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia at 3 different hospitals in Los Angeles, California. Two of the patients died.”†

Reports

Executive Director's Report

I would say that this past year with ACNS has inspired me and helped to renew my own personal sense of commitment to this cause and the organization. The board, staff and volunteers have played a key role in the success of the organization and new accomplishments this year. In the midst of transitioning staff positions, the addition of two fundraising events, new programs such as our Rustic Retreat and an office move we continued to provide quality programs and services across Nova Scotia. It was the dedication of everyone that helped us to rise up to the challenges of this past year.

We also said good-bye to Cybelle Rieber who held the position of Support Services Coordinator with ACNS for almost 6 years. Her departure was experienced not only at the staff team level but also among our members who have worked with her over the years. I would like to thank the staff team for their ongoing support in working together and their dedication in making a difference in the lives of others. This year, we demonstrated how a small group of skilled individuals can work together to implement what may be perceived as implausible. A special thanks to the many volunteers who helped ACNS in the achievement of our goals as without you we would not have experienced success.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Board of Directors as they have worked tirelessly over the past year making revisions to our By-Laws, Financial Policies and developing a new committee structure for the board. It has been both an honour and exciting for me to work with all of you around this initiative. I would like to thank Mike Sangster and the Executive Committee of the board as they have provided valued guidance over the year to move the organization forward.

This month marks 30 years since we heard the initial reports of young gay men experiencing a rare pneumonia and cancerous lesions in Los Angeles and here at home. We didn't know why, where it came from, how it was contracted or what would happen in the years to come. In response to early reports of a 'disease that only affects gay

men', the AIDS movement began and was built by gay men who were fighting for their rights and their lives. We owe a debt to those who have come and gone before us today. In reflecting upon the history of the movement it has brought me to reflect upon the history of our movement here in Nova Scotia.

In 1982, the same year that the first case of AIDS was reported to the Federal Government, the Gay Men's Health Association (GMHA) was formed here in Halifax in a response to a few gay men who had become ill. The GMHA was modeled after the Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York, becoming the 2nd AIDS service organization in North America. It wasn't until later on that it would be discovered that the virus associated with AIDS would later be understood as HIV. What began as the GMHA, led to the formation of the Metro Area Committee on AIDS (MacAIDS) in 1984. MacAIDS then became AIDS Nova Scotia when they adopted a provincial mandate a year later.

AZT was approved as a treatment for AIDS in 1988 the Nova Scotia Persons with AIDS Coalition (NSPWAC) was formed in response to the need of providing direct support and advocacy for PHAs. This was also the first year an AIDS Vigil was held in Halifax and the first Bid for Life Auction fundraising event. The Quilts were first displayed in Nova Scotia through the Names Project back in 1989 and at the same time other groups across the province were beginning to form around the response to AIDS and HIV such as needle exchanges and other AIDS groups. Then in 1993 the Federal Government announced that only one organization with a provincial mandate will be funded in the province of Nova Scotia. This was the turning point in the formation of the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia (ACNS). The task was set in motion for ANS and NSPWAC to move into the same office and to begin the process of amalgamation. On July 6th, 1995 the two organizations became what we are known as today, ACNS.

The history of AIDS movement in Nova Scotia is extensive and requires further exploration to truly capture the depth of experience, markers for social change and to acknowledge the many battles fought and won in the fight against this virus. Now,

30 years later we are holding a conference that focuses on human rights concerns relevant today such as the criminalization of HIV. We continue to share our personal stories in the fight for human rights, acceptance, respect and dignity in working towards a better world. It is with this in mind that ACNS will move forward as there is much more for us to accomplish. The biggest challenge today is to remain vigilant till we have won the last battle. It is my hope that as we reflect upon the past 30 years that we will gain a renewed sense of purpose in looking forward to the future.

~ *Maria Mac Intosh, Executive Director*

Chairperson's Report

Another year has quickly gone by and it has been a very busy year. A few years ago, the Board began the task of reviewing the policies and by-laws of the organization and realized that there was a great deal of work ahead of us. Specifically examining our committee structure, By-Laws and Financial policies.

To achieve our goal of creating a new structure for the organization we focused on work with three main committees of the board: the Executive, Finance and Policy Committee. The board team and our Executive Director put in countless hours reviewing, making revisions, discussion and more discussion in hopes of creating a new model for the organization that would help to move us forward and further engage our membership in leading the organization. I would like to extend my thanks to Michael Liddell who lead our Policy Committee team this past year as there was a great deal of time, dedication and commitment demonstrated in carrying this work forward. Our Finance Committee lead by Russell Westhaver also took the lead in making significant revisions to our financial policies, reviewing them with the auditor and having them ratified by the board this past February. We hope to hold a Special Meeting with our membership in the fall to review our suggested By-Law changes.

It's timely that the board was engaged in a change process over the past year with our By-

Laws, policies and also beginning our Strategic Planning process as we reach 30 years of AIDS. There is still more for all of us to do, to take action on to believe that we still play a role in creating change.

I want to personally thank all the members of the Board for all their efforts this past year. Your service and assistance is appreciated by me and I hope by our members. Thank you very much for your input, suggestions and your cooperation! I would like to personally thank the Executive Director and the staff team on behalf of the Board of Directors for all that you do, your service to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and to this organization.

~ *Mike Sangster, Board Chairperson*

Policy Committee Report

This year our Policy Planning Committee has undertaken the task of reviewing and updating the bylaws of the society and developing a new Terms of Reference for our board committees. This is a very important process as bylaws are essentially the contract ACNS has made with its members on how we function as an organization. It's been quite some time since this process was initiated and completed and some of the bylaws are quite outdated.

All of our committee members have put a lot of hard work and time into this process and I'm happy to say we have completed this job and our next step is to develop our presentation and to set a special meeting date with our membership to review our proposed changes. Over the next year we will continue to make recommendations to better serve the needs of our members and the community and to improve our capacity to achieve the mission of the organization.

~ *Michael Liddell, Policy Committee Chairperson*