

January and February 2009



WOW! It's hard to believe that it is already the middle of February!! Only 6 more weeks of winter according to that over-sized rat. Sorry Sam.

I'm sure most of you noticed that there wasn't a newsletter out for November/December. I do apologize. It was so busy here at the office the time just slip by.

Since the last up-date we have received the funding from the provincial government to hire a needle exchange coordinator. Welcome to Diane McGovern who joined us on December 8th, 2008. Many of you will know Diane from her years on our board, first as the Vice-President then President. I invite you to stop by and say hi.

Mark your calendars!!! AIDS Saint John's Biennial Fundraising Auction is set for Monday, April 20th!!! 5pm at the Saint John Trade and Convention Centre. Please let your friends and family know and encourage them to attend.

Another date to mark on your calendar is September 20th. That is the date for this year's Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life. Remember it's never too early to start asking for those pledges or organizing a team.

In conjunction with the Walk, and in partnership with The Running Room, we will also be holding our first Red Ribbon Run!! The Red Ribbon Run will give all you runners out there a chance to participate in the Walk. I will give you more information as it is available.



It was a cold but sunny day as Mayor Ivan Court raised the AIDS Awareness flag to commemorate the start of AIDS Awareness week, November 24th to December 1st. Thank Mr. Court. Pictured above, from left to right, His Hon. Mayor Ivan Court, Julie Dingwell (ASJ ED), Leslie Jeffrey (ASJ Board President), Judith Meinert-Thomas (volunteer), Margaret Rose Nickerson (Support Coordinator), and Cathy Penny (Board Member and volunteer).

What's happening at AIDS Saint John (from Executive Director, Julie Dingwell)

Swaziland: Steve Baird was recently in Nkamazi and delivered letters from K-Park students and met with several community groups to talk about the Garden project and more. Jane Baird has made several presentations to groups in Rothesay and we will be presenting together at a K-Park assembly in February.

Research with Dr. Barbara Paterson: We have received ethical approval and Cathy Penny and I will be attending the first meeting of the *Team* in early February. This is a research project to identify ways to encourage greater involvement of target populations in small urban and rural settings.

E-Fry Award: I have been asked by the Elizabeth Fry Society to accept an award – “Rebel With A Cause”. The dinner will be on May 7th and I will provide more information as it becomes available. (4 women will be honoured)

For Your Information

10 Facts About AIDS in the World

According to [UNAIDS](http://UNAIDS.org):

- The proportion of people living with HIV/AIDS in developing countries is expected to increase as infection rates continue to rise in countries where poverty, poor health systems and limited resources for prevention and care fuel the spread of the virus.
- HIV is still a challenge in industrialized countries, where safer sex behaviours may be eroding among some groups, perhaps because of complacency now that life-prolonging therapy is available.
- There is evidence that infections are on the rise in Central America and in the Caribbean basin, which has some of the worst HIV epidemics outside Africa.
- Strong prevention programmes seem to have reduced HIV risk and lowered or stabilized HIV rates in some countries such as Thailand and Uganda.
- Life expectancy at birth in some southern African countries, which rose from 44 years in the early 1950s to 59 in the early 1990s, is set to drop to 45 between 2005 and 2010 because of AIDS.
- In the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, the proportion of the population living with HIV doubled between December 1997 and December 1999, mainly due to injection drug use.
- By 2004, AIDS is expected to be the leading cause of death on the entire planet.
- Contemplate the effect of wiping out more than 25% of any given country's adult population. That's precisely what is about to happen in the southern part of the African continent. Estimates show that in countries including Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, between 20% and 26% of people aged 15 to 49 are living with HIV/AIDS.
- Many African nations took a battering in this year's Human Development Index, a ranking published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to reflect health, wealth and education. Almost all of the major downward changes in rank could be ascribed to declining life expectancy - the direct result of AIDS.
- The UNAIDS Secretariat provides direct support to countries undertaking strategic planning.