

# OUTWORDS



**CLGRO**

Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario  
Coalition pour les droits des lesbiennes et des personnes gais en Ontario



## PROVINCIAL ELECTION

With the Provincial election coming in October, CLGRO is getting ready to make sure concerns of our communities are heard and addressed. We expect that the Progressive Conservative Party's proposed tax funding for faith based schools will be an election issue. We will express our opposition to this and to any public funding for faith-based schools of any kind. We will also emphasize the need for more proactive initiatives to reduce homophobia in the schools. We also wish to support efforts to get gender reassignment surgery included under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan again. And we will be joining with the Trans Health Lobby Group to call for an amendment to the Ontario Human Rights Code to include gender identity as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

We will be working on a pamphlet or post cards focussing on these issues, put out a news release, and attempt to raise these issues at all candidates meetings. We are looking at joining a coalition of groups being formed by Egale Canada to host a leader's debate in September.

## HEALTH

### CLGRO-RHN-SHC Proposed Health Resource Centre Supported by Ontario Government

On Wednesday evening June 20th, 2007 at the Pride Toronto Gala & Awards event Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty made an announcement to the assembled audience that the Ontario Government will be supporting the establishment of an Ontario Rainbow Health Resource Centre as a joint

initiative between the Rainbow Health Network (RHN) [a reference group of CLGRO] and the Sherbourne Health Centre (SHC). This elicited a rousing applause from the audience as reported by an SHC board member who was present. The funding amount for the Resource Centre was not announced, as final details are now being worked out. Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care George Smitherman is expected to make a more formal and detailed announcement in the near future. This exciting announcement is in response to a joint proposal first submitted to the Ministry by RHN, SHC and CLGRO in September of 2005.

The Rainbow Health Resource Centre is proposed to provide education and training with regard to professional curricula, licensing standards, continuing education, training workshops, skill development, networking and sharing. It is also proposed to provide resources and consultation that includes web-based tools, searchable databases, interactive listserves, message boards and telephone and e-mail support. Finally, it is proposed to offer research and policy development in the form of researcher databases, portals to research, identification of gaps, researcher/decision maker partnerships, as well as development of practice standards.

We will keep you posted as we find out more about this exciting development.

### Change of CLGRO Office Address

Our new office location is 519 Church Street, Toronto Ontario. Please continue to send all mail to our Post Box #822, Station A, Toronto ON. M5W 1G3

Our telephone number and e-mail remain the same.

**August 2007**

## POLICE

### Police Surveillance

CLGRO participated in a media conference held at the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNTO) on May 23, 2007.

The media conference was called in light of the leaked report of unwarranted police surveillance on the former Chair of the Toronto Police Services Board, Susan Eng in the early 1990's. It has also come to light that gay activists Peter Maloney and George Hislop had been under surveillance for an even longer period of time.

We were invited to participate to emphasize the long history of tension between the police and the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities and that this issue has not gone away. CLGRO has been actively involved in policing issues in collaboration with other groups since the 1980s calling for civilian oversight of the police and improvement of police minority relations.

Also speaking were Avvy Go, Metro Toronto Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic (MTCSALC), Karen Sun of CCNTO, Alan Borovoy, General Counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and Victoria Chin.

The call from the media conference is for a broader 3<sup>rd</sup> party investigation of abuse of power and invasion of privacy that should be done by the government of Ontario not the police which are in a conflict of interest situation. Also that preventative measures should be set up along with an independent audit system

which is on-going for auditing police practices.

Susan Eng sent a letter to the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) on May 16, 2007 asking for an investigation. Avvy Go was at the TPSB meeting where the letter was discussed and they were more concerned about the leak than the intelligence report.

CLGRO supported a call for an independent public inquiry to investigate the extent of these investigations, who did them, why, and what other individuals and communities were investigated.

*Xtra!* was there (see June 7, 2007 issue, page 21) and a number of Chinese and West Asian media but it did not look like many mainstream local media were present. We are to be kept informed on what is happening and next steps.

## Police Checks

Although CLGRO had pulled out of negotiations to form a LGBT Community Consultative Committee in Toronto several years ago because it was indicated Police Checks of elected members would be required, that policy was never implemented. Now the Police are once again saying that checks are mandatory for all elected members of the Community Consultative Committees. A panel on Police Checks attended by CLGRO was held on Monday June 11, 2007 at the Toronto 519 Community Centre

At the panel meeting there was strong opposition to these checks (not including police department representatives who attended and answered questions and one other audience member). The reference checks include not only people who have been convicted of a crime, but also people who have been accused, detained under the mental health act, people of interest (such as suspects) and others. Considering the kinds of contacts the LGBT communities have with the police, this could eliminate some of the most important people to have represented on such a consultative committee. A concern expressed is that once the police dictate who sits on a consultative committee, it becomes seen as an arm of the police. It remains to be seen what will come of this discussion.

## Special Investigations Unit (SIU)

CLGRO was represented in a meeting between the Toronto Police Accountability Coalition (TPAC) and staff of the Ontario Ombudsman, Andre Marin whose office is investigating the SIU, the provincial body which looks into police actions involving serious injury or death. As indicated in the TPAC Bulletin: "TPAC's experience is that SIU seems to be part of the policing hierarchy rather than representing an outside citizen-based voice on policing matters. The SIU provides the appearance of accountability without the substance, and functions as another line of defence for the police. TPAC fears that the focus of the investigation is narrow when what is needed is something which begins to tackle the question of police accountability to the community at large. Without the presence of a general sense of police accountability, it is difficult for any police complaints mechanism to function well."

### IMMIGRATION & REFUGEE ISSUES

The letter included in the last newsletter which CLGRO sent supporting private member's Bill C-280 which would bring into force the appeal provisions in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* has received a reply. A letter was received from the office of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. It indicated, among other things, that the refugee determination system meets Canada's international legal obligations to protect refugees and provides protection to those who need it. The Refugee Appeal Division would add at least another five months to an already long and complicated refugee determination process. The Federal Court provides effective oversight, and is well placed to correct errors of law or unreasonable finding of fact.

It is clear the government has no intention of supporting this Bill which we continue to believe is very important. It appears that this will be a good question to bring up at all candidates meetings

when an election is called. We can ask a question like: "Will you and your party bring into force the appeal provisions in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*?"

We have met with Rachna Contractor who is the Coordinator of *Among Friends* (an initiative which is "designed to support community-based agencies in creating more positive spaces and services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer refugees and immigrants") and provided her with the list of more than 50 interested individuals and agencies which was developed at and since our November 7, 2006 meeting on immigration and refugee issues. One of the suggestions from that meeting was that a list serve be started for this group.

Rachna feels that this effort falls within the mandate of *Among Friends* and has agreed to set up a list serve including the names on this list. If you are interested in being on this list serve, please contact Rachna Contractor at [rcontractor@accessalliance.ca](mailto:rcontractor@accessalliance.ca).

### CLGRO Steering Committee Meeting

September 8, 2007  
Saturday, 12-5 pm

Location:  
519 Church Street Room 34  
Toronto Ontario

Access:  
The 519 Church Street building is accessible.

If you have any queries, please contact the office. We'll be glad to help.

## LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA

A Pride Celebration titled *Mission Accomplished? Is it the End of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Legal Activism?* was put on by the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Section of the Ontario Bar Association. It was well attended and impressive. Speakers were Omo Akintan, Lawyer Legal Services Division City of Toronto; Brent Hawks, MCC; Helen Kennedy, Egale; Martha McCarthy, lawyer; Nicole Nussabum, Lawyer; and chaired by Milé Komlen, Bar Association Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Section Chair.

Just about everything we mentioned in CLGRO's Liberation in the 2000s leaflet was mentioned at this meeting. Greatest emphasis was on marginalized groups, immigrants and trans people, stating there should be "no queer left behind" locally and internationally. It was mentioned that though there may be equality in law it is not necessarily there in practice, particularly with the fundamentalists taking over and immigrants who come with prejudice. We need to make sure there is support for the queers in those communities. Education about access to rights was emphasized. Concern was expressed about outside urban centres and beyond Canada. "We must be willing to fight as hard for their rights as we did for ours."

## MINUTES SUMMARY

### **CLGRO Steering Committee Meeting and Annual General Meeting, Toronto, May 5, 2007**

At the Annual General Meeting the minutes for the May 13, 2006 Annual General Meeting were approved. There was not a quorum at this meeting so the minutes will need to be ratified at the next Steering Committee Meeting. Anyone with concerns or comments about the decisions made at this Annual General Meeting is asked to contact the CLGRO office before the September 8, 2007 Steering Committee Meeting. The Directors remain the same with Brent Southin as Chair, Tom Warner as Treasurer and Nick Mulé as Secretary. Matthew Beeson was elected as a

Member-at-large. We have vacancies for five members-at-large, only two of whom may be male. The proposed budget was approved with minor changes. Meeting dates for the next year's Steering Committee Meetings were established as: September 8, 2007; January 26, 2008 and May 3, 2008 which will also include the Annual General Meeting.

We continue to work on trying to get a new website established. More work has been done about our concerns regarding immigration and refugee issues. Efforts continued to oppose the Age of Consent legislation. A report was received from the MCC London representative who was in attendance. We worked on the Day Against Homophobia, with recognition focusing on educational issues. We continue to monitor changes in the provincial human rights legislation. Things are looking hopeful for a new Ontario Rainbow Health Resource Centre which was proposed by the CLGRO reference group, Rainbow Health Network. We began plans for Pride and the provincial election.

A lot of work went into closing down our office at 310 Danforth Ave. and moving to our new office location, 519 Church Street, Toronto ON M4Y 2C9 where we will have a shared work space. Please continue to send all mail to our Post Box #822, Station A, Toronto ON M5W 1G3. Our telephone number and e-mail remain the same.

## AGE OF CONSENT

Despite an excellent presentation made by the youth lead Age of Consent Committee, Bill C-22, which raises the age of consent from 14 to 16 was sent back to Parliament with no amendments, where it passed third reading and is now in the Senate. Pressure to at least amend the legislation to change the age of consent for anal sex to 16 from 18 was overruled by the Conservative Chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Art Hanger, who indicated that it was not an accident that this adjustment was not made in the legislation. This leaves an inconsistency in law which has been found unconstitutional in at least three jurisdictions and should be subject to a constitutional challenge any time that section of the law is used.

## PLANNED GIVING

Have you considered planned giving to CLGRO? Planned giving means leaving a bequest in your will for a donation to be made from the proceeds of your estate once you have passed on. It's an easy and effective way of ensuring that a group and a cause you have supported during your lifetime can continue to thrive. Including CLGRO in your planned giving would be a tangible way for you to leave a lasting legacy and to ensure that the movement to advance the liberation of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals will continue. The amount you choose to leave as a gift would be up to you - and you should talk to a lawyer or financial advisor about that. As for CLGRO, we would be enormously grateful to receive a bequest of any amount and would be certain to put it to good use!

## International Day Against Homophobia

### **CLGRO Commemorates International Day Against Homophobia with 519**

On May 17th, 2007 CLGRO along with the 519 Church Street Community Centre commemorated this year's International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) with an event at the 519. A community forum was organized to discuss this year's theme being homophobia in early childhood and the education field. A panel of speakers presented to a good turnout to discuss this important issue. The panelists included Nadia Bello (school trustee, TEACH), George Bielmeier (social work professor, Ryerson University), Tim McCaskell (former TDSB equity officer, long-time activist and author) and Steve Solomon (Triangle Program). Each provided the audience with an insightful presentation about the continuing existence of homophobia in our education system and the audience in turn with thought provoking questions and good discussion.

CLGRO is currently looking into calling for province-wide equity policies that specifically names the gender and sexually diverse communities in Ontario.

## LONDON ONTARIO

The London Community Building process has moved ahead. The London Area Rainbow Coalition has been officially named (LARC for short.) A new web site has been set up at <http://www.londonarc.com/>. Visit it for information on the London community if you are heading in that direction. It will highlight London activities, particularly movie nights, which are fundraisers for further growth, held at the Aeolian Hall.

At time of writing London is preparing for Pride London Festival 2007. Pride events start July 19th and climax on Sunday July 29th with the annual parade. We hope many of our readers were able to join in the celebrations. Look up the Pride Guide for a lot of information on activities in the Forest City. It can be downloaded at <http://www.pridelondon.ca/guide.html>. This is London's 25th Pride.

London has a new bar, Buck Wilds (open Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8 pm to 2 am) in the Central Spa building, 722 York Street. This joins the existing Club 181 on King Street downtown.

### Breaking News

I wanted to share with you the landmark decision which was reached by our London City Council last night at their public meeting which I attended along with Eugene Dustin (Pride President) and his partner, Christopher D'Aguilar (Pride Literary Night Chair). These two men had taken steps over the last while to reach out to Council members to demonstrate the need for raising the rainbow flag during our Pride Week celebrations...much like smaller and similar sized cities have done in recent years. For those who were present during the 1995 court battle between HALO and our former Mayor Dianne Haskett, it was around this time when Council decided to no longer make proclamations or raise flags commemorating special "interest" groups or the like.

Thanks to people like Eugene and Christopher, we are fortunate this year, to reap the benefit of celebrating an all-

encompassing "endorsement" of our Pride Festival...from the City of London – well done Eugene and Christopher for finishing the job started in the 1990's by those involved in the HALO Club at that time.

Kathleen Holland

*Kathleen Holland has been chosen to be the Grand Marshall of this year's London Pride Parade – Editor.*

## HUMAN RIGHTS

The Ontario Human Rights commission recently updated its internal guide for processing human rights complaints. To read more please go to [www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/news/ig](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/news/ig)

On an international level, the group

Gays-right.org is asking people to sign a petition to the United Nations asking them to take serious and expedient actions in defence of the LGBT communities and human rights around the planet. For information go to [www.gays-right.org](http://www.gays-right.org).

**Bill 7 Award** The Bill 7 Award gives out bursaries to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer and 2-spirit students in financial need in any post-secondary institution in Ontario. The award is named after the 1986 Ontario legislation that extended the protection of the Human Rights Code to lesbians and gays.

For more information go to [www.bill7award.ca](http://www.bill7award.ca) or phone 416-324-5077. The deadline for applications is August 17, 2007.

Contributors: Richard Hudler, Nick Mulé, David Smith, Tom Warner

#### About the newsletter

*Outwards* is published three times a year by CLGRO, the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario. Except for editorials, the views expressed in *Outwards* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of CLGRO or its member organizations. Articles may be accepted at the discretion of the editor. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep the membership informed about CLGRO activities and other matters of interest.

Newsletters are mailed free to CLGRO members. Join CLGRO by completing the membership form below!

#### About CLGRO

CLGRO is an organization composed of groups and individuals committed to working towards feminism and lesbian, gay, and bisexual liberation by engaging in public struggle for full human rights, by promoting diversity and access within our communities, and by strengthening cooperative networks for feminism and lesbian, gay, and bisexual activism.

CLGRO – the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay rights in Ontario, Box 822, Station A, Toronto Ont. M5W 1G3, Canada, phone (416) 405-8253, e-mail [clgro@web.ca](mailto:clgro@web.ca), website: [www.web.ca/clgro](http://www.web.ca/clgro)

#### I want to be part of CLGRO!

##### Enrol me as a member right away!

- Here's my 40.00 one-year membership fee.  
 I'm a student or unwaged so here's my \$20 membership  
 I'd like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to CLGRO  
 I'd like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to CLGRO's trustfund.\*  
 I'd like to join CLGRO's monthly giving program and donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each month by  postdated cheques (enclosed) or  credit card.  
 Please charge to  visa  mastercard

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/Province/Country \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\*interest only is used for operating expenses.