



Rainbow Newsletter

from the Rainbow Service Organization RSO
www.rainbowservice.org

Summer 2008

Rainbow Service Organization - Annual General Meeting

Thursday July 10th, 7-9 pm
Peterborough Library, 345 Aylmer St.

Snacks and refreshment will be served

Business Meeting 7-8pm

Guest Speaker 8-9pm



Helen Kennedy, Executive Director, Egale Canada
Gay Rights – Where are we going and are we there yet?



More details at <http://www.rainbowservice.org/archives/000230.html>

Upcoming Events: (event listing on www.rainbowservice.org. to add events email rso@rainbowservice.org)

June 26th 9pm-2am - "GLAMOURPUSS "ultra Dragqueenbingo & ClubNight" at SPLICE Night Club and Lounge (George St.) hosted by Parn***Star/PlanetFabb00licious. Bingo 9-10:30, Dance until 2am, \$5 cover
To see more details and RSVP, follow the link: <http://www.rainbowservice.org/archives/000235.html>

June 28th - Toronto Pride - details at <http://www.pridetoronto.com>

July 2nd 7pm - Film "Stand Together" hosted by OPIRG at Sadleir House, 751 George St. N
For more information go to: <http://www.opirgpeterborough.ca>

September 10th to 14th - Peterborough Pride - Updated information at www.peterboroughpride.ca.
Volunteers Needed!! To get involved please email peterboroughpride@yahoo.ca

September 18th 7pm - Queer Town Hall meeting hosted by the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Liaison Program for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Communities at the Peterborough Public Library.

October 31st – RSO Hosts a Halloween Bash at Market Hall - Details to come!

News in Brief

New Medical Officer of Health Would Consider Fully Anonymous Testing

At the Annual Meeting of PARN(Your Community AIDS Resource Network) guest speaker Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, the new Medical Officer of Health for the City and County of Peterborough Health Unit showed a good depth of knowledge and experience in both rural, city, and global health issues. She indicated that she would consider reestablishing fully anonymous testing for HIV/AIDS if there was a strong interest.

Constructive Town Hall Meeting hosted by Police Liaison Program

The Town Hall meeting on April 7th went well with a good crowd and discussion on safety and related issues. A recent update from Kevin Forrest and Lesley Harries-Jones, Executive Chairs of the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Liaison Program for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Communities indicated that community members identified the following areas of focus for the committee in order to meet its objectives:

- To provide education on GLBT issues to local police to strengthen ties with our community;
- To provide educational workshops and sensitivity training to media organizations on the issues of hate crimes and respectful reporting on these issues;
- Provide education to GLBT community members on reporting and proactive responses to hate motivated crimes; and
- To develop initiatives with school boards to address issues of homophobia/transphobia in our community.

If there are any further issues that you believe the committee should focus on that are not outlined above they want to hear from you.

Activities planned for the committee include once again having a presence in this year's Peterborough Pride festivities on September 13, 2008 and hosting our next Queer Town Hall meeting is scheduled for Thursday September 18th at 7 pm at the Peterborough Public Library.

The committee is looking for your support in the following ways:

1. They are looking to form working groups to complete the identified goals.
2. The committee is also looking to fill 3 upcoming vacant seats on the Liaison Committee. This is a non-paid position and the committee meets monthly from 4-5:30 in the city of Peterborough.

If you have an interest or passion in volunteering to assist the committee or have ideas regarding their focus email Kevin at kevin_forrest@nexicom.net

Egale Canada survey shows Queer students are being bullied

(Egale Canada) Results just released from the first phase of Egale Canada's National Survey on homophobia and transphobia in Canadian Schools reveal that over two-thirds of those students who identified as lesbian, gay, bi, trans and Two-Spirit, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) feel unsafe at school. Almost half have had rumours spread about them at school and close to a third have had rumours spread about them on the internet or through text messages.

"Based on those who self-identified as LGBTQ and who were enrolled in school in the last year, 41 per cent had been sexually harassed compared to 19 per cent of those who identified as straight," said Dr. Catherine Taylor of the University of Winnipeg and the survey's principal investigator. "This figure is shocking. Homophobia and transphobia is linked to poor performance in school, drop-out rates and teen suicides."

The survey was launched in December of last year and so far has heard from over 1,200 participants from cities, small towns, rural areas, reserves, armed forces bases in every province and territory of the country. It is the first survey of its kind in Canada. "We may have human rights for LGBTQ people in Canada, but you'd never know it based on these results," Helen Kennedy, Executive Director of Egale Canada says. For the full story go to: www.egale.ca

Egale Canada advances equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified people and their families across the country. Helen Kennedy is the guest speaker at RSOs Annual General Meeting July 10th.

The **Rainbow Service Organization (RSO)** is committed to promoting, advocating, and celebrating the interests of the Queer, Questioning, Lesbian, Bisexual, Two-Spirited, Transgender, and Gay community. **RSO** is a volunteer-run, non-profit community organization based in Peterborough, Ontario since 1993. For more information go to www.rainbowservice.org

The Gender Project: An Invitation to a Presentation & Discussion

Mysterious Entity Theatre is working towards creating a new original theatre work tentatively called "The Gender Project" slated for production in April, 2009. Artists in the company are currently exploring the theme of gender and we are inviting you for a sneak peek of the early stages of development. You are invited to join them Friday, July 4th at 3:00 p.m. at the Market Hall Performing Arts Centre, 336 George St, for a small, private presentation of this work in progress. For more information visit "mysterious entity" theatre at www.markethall.org

Ontario to Pay for Sexual Reassignment Surgery

The Ontario Government recently announced that it will again cover the cost of Sexual Reassignment surgery (see http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/cbc/080516/canada/toronto_sex_change_1 for CBC coverage).

Kaitlin Acres, Special Advisor to RSO on Transgender Issues cautions against celebrating too soon.

"Smitherman has been in favour for some time, this is the second (at least) attempt to get the funding in place. The Toronto Star asked readers if it should be reinstated, and the result was a 73% NO! Also there will be the question about how one qualifies. If it goes back to the past where CAMH (formerly Clark Institute) is the only approving body it will not be good news. The Clarke was quite draconian in their approach and if there is no change there will be very few surgeries paid for by the Government. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. I will wait a while to get excited. This is a time for Trans people and friends to make some noise." Acres stated.

RSO Continues to Seek Volunteers and Members

Rick Lambert, RSO Chair

I hope everyone is enjoying the start of summer! Best wishes to all those heading to Toronto Pride this weekend. It is always great to run into local folks there and then again at Peterborough Pride in September. For those that are jaded by what Pride in Toronto has become, the simplicity of our local gathering is always a refreshing change. We also hope to see you out at our AGM on July 10th. I look forward to hearing the latest on the activities of Egale Canada from Helen Kennedy and hearing what community members think.

As always, we are seeking volunteers for our working committees and our Board of Directors. As a volunteer you will have the opportunity to get involved in public relations, advocacy, fundraising, and organizing events. You will help shape the role of the organization, and improve the quality of life in your community. Oh ya – and it is fun too! For more on volunteering opportunities email me at rso@rainbowservice.org.

Whether or not you can spare time to volunteer, support of RSO through membership is an important investment in the organization and its future.

To learn more about RSO or apply for membership go to our website or click this link to download our pamphlet: http://www.rainbowservice.org/archives/RSO_Pamphlet.pdf

RSO has a New Email Address and a Facebook page

The email address for RSO is now rso@rainbowservice.org. Please change it on any distribution lists you have. If you forget the new one you can find it by going to our website at www.rainbowservice.org. Our Facebook page is under development and can be found under "Rainbow Service Organization" at facebook.com. We are always looking for "friends" so go for it.

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