

Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

www.grandriver-rainbowhistory.ca/

celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country

Pride Pages

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PridePages

Serving the greater LGBT communities of Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph

Dec. 05/Jan. 05 Kitchener, Ontario www.tri-pride.ca info@tri-pride.ca

Lila takes the cake as Miss Ren 2006

check out page 5
for the full story

Deck the halls
with Kym Decker
page 7

Out on the Shelf
makes difference
in Guelph
see page 4

(Photo by Shevonce Reigns)

Happy Holidays from *tri*-Pride



Dave Bell
Co-Chair

Dave is easily recognized downtown, as one of the co-owners of Muses. He is currently considering plans for another business enterprise downtown, so keep an eye out. You may spot him on his favourite dance floor at Ren, tossing his limbs about.

Your local Pride committee, *tri*-Pride, is already working on the plans and events leading up to our annual *tri*-Pride festival! This year, the *tri*-Pride committee has a number of new faces, and everyone is hard at work, tasked with growing Pride throughout the region. Each year *tri*-Pride grows a little stronger, becomes a little more well known, and a whole lot more fun! Your *tri*-Pride committee of 2006 is excited for the challenges ahead to make this year's *tri*-Pride celebration on June 4, 2006 even better than the wildly successful *tri*-Pride 2005!

But Pride is more than just a day – every year, *tri*-Pride organizes and helps host a number of fundraising events leading up to the *tri*-Pride festival. Please plan to attend as many of these events as you can and show your support for your local Pride. Many of the previous popular attractions will be returning over the next year, including La Cage 2006. We also hope to introduce one or two new events this year and would value your thoughts.

Some of the other tasks your *tri*-Pride committee plan to work on include increasing new content to the PridePages and updating the website – including photos from last years *tri*-Pride Day. If you have ideas or contributions for either medium, please let us know. Our contact information is at the bottom of this page.

If you have interest in working with the *tri*-Pride committee, or would like to make any suggestions, tell us! Our meetings are open to the public and will be advertised on our website (www.tri-pride.ca). Questions and comments may be made to our email address.

The *tri*-Pride committee is always looking for new members, as well as volunteers for specific events. If you're interested, please email: info@tri-pride.ca

tri-Pride Community Association

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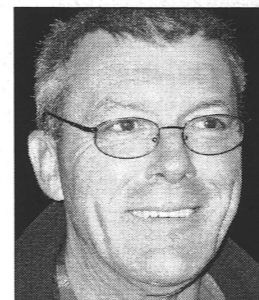
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Board of Directors



Cathy MacLachlan
Co-Chair

Living in the KW area since 1985, Cathy has experienced many great changes in our community. She finds the best way to make changes is to volunteer your time and energy in something you believe in. Cathy is looking forward to working towards the best celebration possible for 2006.



Dave Watt
Treasurer

Dave became involved with the *tri*-Pride Community Association some three years ago. His involvement within the community, with his work at ACCKWA has placed him in the forefront of the community. Dave truly is looking forward to working with each and every one of his new colleagues this year, as together they fulfill a mission to bring other successful Pride events to the community.

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Rainbow Chorus to hold concert in January

By **DIANE KILBY**

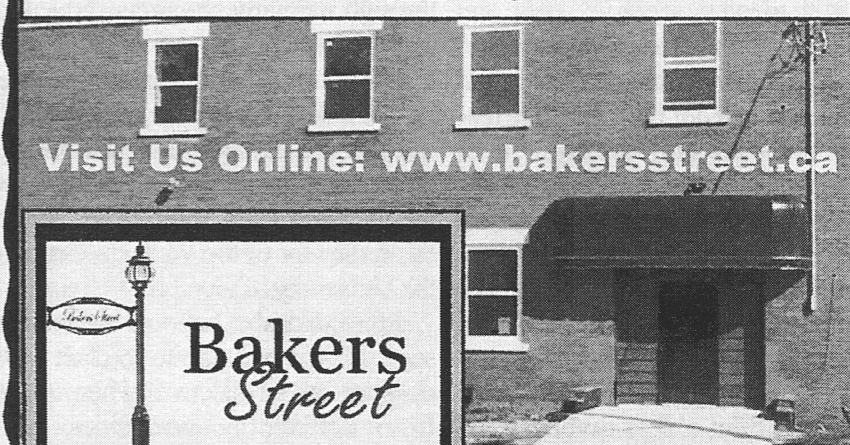
Rainbow Chorus, the Waterloo-Wellington chorus of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and friends, is proud to host its first concert of the 11th season of "singing out" on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2006 at 8 p.m. The concert will be held at Harcourt United Church, 87 Dean Ave. in Guelph.

This concert will be of special interest to those who want to see and hear the full staging of the AIDS requiem, *When We No Longer Touch*, before its Carnegie Hall debut on Sunday, Feb. 19, 2006. Members of the chorus are singing at the Carnegie Hall debut as members of a mass chorale group and hope to enjoy this with you.


For ticket information please contact Margie at 836-██████ or visit the website at www.rainbowchorusww.com.

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Queer library makes difference

By **DAVE VERVOORT, M.Sc.**

GUELPH, ON – Truly there is no one face of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, two-spirited, intersex, queer, questioning (LGBTTTTSIQQ) and allied communities in Guelph, but there is a resource centre right downtown.

Out on the Shelf, which opened its doors in August, is located on the third floor of 147 Wyndham St. N.

Dave Mitchell, Guelph Queer Equality event co-ordinator, said the library is a progressive achievement and a compliment to the endeavours of those who have been working towards similar goals.

"If Out on the Shelf was just a plank in organizing resources about queer issues, then it might as well be another unassuming bookcase in any library," Mitchell said. "It isn't. It's accessible and political space written into Wyndham Street for the LGBTTTTSIQQ community to interact with."

Mitchell goes on to say having a LGBTTTTSIQQ centre visible and on a main street is politically important for the community.

Out on the Shelf is a not-for-profit queer resource centre and library for the LGBTTTTSIQQ and allied communities.

Scott Clarke, a librarian for Out of the Shelf, said there's a definite need for this information to be shared.

"It's inspiring to know that over 800 books about a real diversity of issues that queer folk deal with everyday were donated from our communities and those who support us," said Clarke, also an active member of the queer community.

Barb Butters, a co-facilitator of

tri-cities Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) chapter, offers support, education, and resources on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity from a family perspective.

"PFLAG has always believed in providing reading material through our small lending library to the community and it is good that there is a wider library that can be used," Butters said. "It is not just a library but a clearing house of information, events, resources and services."

The library strives to meet the needs of the local LGBTTTTSIQQ communities and their allies by gathering and making available resources with the goal of creating a supportive, positive space and to be responsive to the dynamic needs of the communities.

"I feel free to be myself without condemnation or feeling odd here," said Mary, a volunteer of the centre.

The centre fosters community through its many resources, education and networking with local LGBTTTTSIQQ groups and initiatives.

"I think it is very important for the queer communities and the Guelph community that there be a resource centre like Out on the Shelf," said Marlene Pfaff, director of the Wellness Centre of the University of Guelph.

Pfaff said she believes the centre's success is in part due to the fact that it operates as a collective, where people from different communities come together to support the local queer members of Guelph and surrounding area.

For more information, contact Out on the Shelf at (519) 821-1789 or info@outontheshelf.ca or through www.outontheshelf.ca

About the OQWN

By **CATHIE PARSONS**

The Ontario Queer Women's Network is a fun online and offline interactive social group primarily for the exchange of information, resources, events, support and friendship of interest to queer identified women who reside in Ontario.

Topics of discussion vary and range from political views to sex and sexuality. Its widely diverse membership includes women from all walks of life who are seeking social interaction with other like-minded queer women.

Queer-identified means no one is judged and all queer women are welcome, including women who identify as gay, lesbian, dyke, queer, bisexual, queer women of color, MTF, FTM, butch, femme, boi, stone, tom boys, andro-women and any other queer identity in between. The bottom line is, women are not discriminated against at the network.

The objective of this group is to bring women together in fun and friendship, creating and strengthening that bond which is unique to all women who love women. By promoting social interaction within our greater Queer Women's Community, the network hopes to lessen the feelings of loneliness and isolation that women sometimes feel.

Live chats (nightly from 8:30 p.m.), the large and diverse chat forum, the e-mail discussion group and the OQWN events newsletter can all be found at <http://www.oqwn.com>.

The OQWN hosts weekly Coffee Social Gatherings throughout Ontario. If you are interested in starting a chapter or want more information, please contact Cathie at ontario-queerwomen@hotmail.com or call her at (416) 925-9872 ext. 2280.

OQWN WEEKLY COFFEE SOCIALS - TRI-PRIDE AREA CHAPTER:

PLACE: Williams Coffee Pub - 620 Hespeler Rd., Cambridge

TIME: Thursday, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Look for the table with a OQWN table marker.

Nine queens, one goal

By **MISS DREW**

As entertainers gathered from across Ontario, to compete in the city's 4th-annual Miss Club Renaissance pageant, anticipation was high and the excitement brewing.

The contestants completed the interview portion of the contest earlier in that evening. Each contestant sat through a gruelling 10-minute interview with a panel of 10 celebrity judges.

Contestants were evaluated on their knowledge of the community, rhetoric, and attire. It was no surprise that contestant no. 9, Robyn Michaels, received highest marks in the interview category, since interviewing is part of her professional career.

At 10:30 p.m., it was time! The first stage portion of the contest began with the presentation category. All the ladies strutted to the stage in their finest white outfit, and gave the crowd a little introduction on the mike. London diva and contestant no. 3, Kirstyn Glass, took the trophy for best presentation. Each lady was scored out of 15.

While the girls were given some time to change into their swimwear, the spotlight turned to a few of our much-loved guests. Christina Dior worked the room with her newly appointed Empress XI of Hamilton crown, followed by the sites and sounds of Kienna Dior, and Toronto's leading act, the incomparable Chris Edwards.

The ladies tucked, taped and god knows what else for the swimwear category. From Lila's cheek revealing swimsuit, to Noir's two-piece black number, they were all fierce! The judges decided Kirstyn's orange two-

piece would be the conqueror in that category.

After intermission, it was my turn to take the stage. I decided to throw the crowd a little of my Shania-Reba-Madonna medley.

The talent portion was marked out of 20 and was based on the contestants' ability to communicate with the audience, design concept, confidence and overall emotion for the song they picked. These girls let it all out.

From Kelly's supermodel back-up dancers to Tracey's rendition of Deeper Love, Rasha almost had me convinced I was in church with her power-packed As Long as I Have King Jesus, and Marla's club moves and grooves set the house on fire and gained her the highest score, with perfect marks. You go girl! Queen Victory then took the stage with a dynamic dress and song to match (once a diva, always a diva).

Both evening gown and question-and-answer were judged concurrently. Feathers, rhinestones, sequins and about 12 bottles of hairspray let the ladies light up the stage with beauty, elegance and a sense of excellence. They were all stunning.

The atmosphere shifted to seriousness for the question-and-answer category. As nervous as they may have been, they each responded to the questions with confidence, poise and honesty. When Lila was asked what the statement, "I am what I am" means to her, she smiled, winked and took the house down with her inspiring answer.

"Don't pass judgement on anyone because you are who you are and I am what I am," she said, as she gestured to herself, a female impersonator.

It was no wonder she seized the highest question-and-answer marks. She also claimed the evening gown award with her black-sequined original gown.

During intermission, the audience voted on who they thought should be crowned Miss Club Renaissance. Miss Lila Hart stole that category and 150 people voted.

It was my honour and privilege to do a Vanessa Williams Over the Years performance dedicated to my 10th year as a female illusionist entertainer. As I looked into the audience, I was reminded why I adore our community so much and will be around for another decade or two.

It was time for a teary-eyed Madison to say good-bye and pass the crown to another praiseworthy queen. With her fair well song, Kelly Clarkson's A Moment Like This, we were all reminded of what a wonderful performer and person Madison really is. She has done an outstanding job representing not only Club Ren but also the city of Kitchener at numerous pride events. Madison will be a tough act to follow.

The time had come. Behind me stood nine amazing performers who gave it their all. Second runner-up was contestant no. 3, Kirstyn Glass. First runner-up, was contestant no. 8, Marla. The new Miss Club Renaissance was contestant no. 5, Lila Hart.

It was the club's most triumphant pageant to date, and couldn't have been made possible without the support of Lori Karaba, the program editor, Fred Drexler, flowers, and Ray Savage, the stage manager, Noir, Kelly, Kirstyn, Margareta, Lila, Rasha, Tracey, Marla, Robyn Michaels and of course the audience.

RENT film gets standing ovation

By DAN DESROSIERS

I first heard of RENT in 1997 while living in Windsor. A friend of mine informed me that he was going to drive to Toronto to audition for this musical that was opening at the Royal Alexandra Theatre.

The first time I heard a song from that musical was while a group of friends were rehearsing to sing it at that same friend's funeral, a short three weeks later. Taken out of the context of the musical, Seasons of Love carries with it a special meaning still. The lesson that the song and the entire production teaches, is that life is comprised of a series of experiences, made special by the love and acceptance shown by you and those around you.

RENT opened off Broadway in February of 1996 and quickly moved to Broadway within three months of its premiere. A modern remake of Giacomo Puccini's La Boheme, set in late 20th century New York, it tells a tale of a group of young bohemians struggling to live and make ends meet in East Village. With themes of homosexuality, AIDS, heroin addiction and poverty, it tells a poignant tale of how a struggle can be made worthwhile by the people that we have supporting us along the way.

I first saw RENT in the spring of 1998, and was so taken by the music and the story that I was there again on closing night in Toronto. I, like many others, ran out, bought the CD, proceeded to listen to it on repeat and memorized the lyrics. I know my

tone-deaf recitations of the songs annoyed many of my friends, but I couldn't help myself.

When I heard that it was going to be on the big screen, I had mixed feelings. I was overjoyed to be given a chance to see it again, but how were they going to put this story and its music into a movie and keep the energy that it had on stage?

After seeing the preview, I did some research. The preview looked good and I recognized some of the faces. They had been able to get many of the original Broadway performers back for the movie, with some exceptions, and they were adding in some new content to keep it updated. I checked back in periodically for more information and bided my time for its Nov. 23 release in theatres.

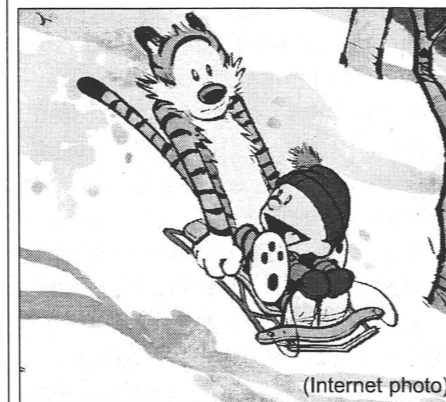
I was there for the premiere on the big screen, only to be turned away from a sold out show. I was disappointed to say the least, but I was nevertheless able to see it two nights later at a different theatre.

It was an amazing stage show and an excellent screenplay. The medium allows for more of the back-story to be told in imagery, allowing for the removal of some of the more superfluous songs, and some of the songs are made more contextual by their setting than is afforded by the stage. The timeline is changed slightly to make a bit more sense, which may confuse some die-hards, as it rearranges the placement of a few songs. The topic of gay marriage is also addressed, bringing a relevant current topic into the 1989 setting. The numbers are

masterfully arranged and the cinematography leaves little to be desired. All in all, a worthwhile movie, I can't wait to buy it on DVD.

For those of you familiar with the story, bring a box of tissue, for those who aren't, bring two!

PRIDE SLIDE



(Internet photo)

We all loved doing it as children, so why not do it now?

This year's tri-Pride Committee would like to invite members of the community out to a free event: **PRIDE SLIDE Tobogganing at Trashmore** Sunday, Jan. 29 at 2:00 p.m.

Bring out your toboggan, GT, crazy carpet or any other means of sliding down a snowy slope and have some fun. This all-ages event promises fun and excitement for everyone as long as there's snow on the ground. There will be prizes and giveaways, along with a free mug of steaming cider for all participants. So come out and meet this year's tri-Pride Committee in a fun and friendly atmosphere.

For more information please contact us at events@tri-pride.ca

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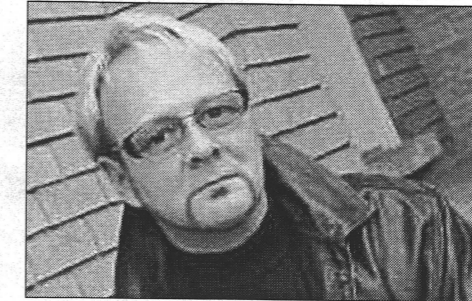
Good food, good times, good friends

By DAN DESROSIERS

How do you know Kym Decker? Did you meet him behind the bar at Timothy Stephens? Did he help you pick the perfect paint colour for your living room? Perhaps you just know him by reputation? Whether old friend or casual acquaintance, I encourage you to take some time from your busy holiday schedule to visit him at his Annual Christmas Eve Gala.

Since 1994, Decker has held a Christmas Eve party at the Walper Terrace Hotel. While preparing the 10th anniversary party in 2003 and with the previous success of the event, he decided it was a perfect vehicle to raise some money for local charity. For the special anniversary event he moved the party from its usual venue of Barristers Lounge to the larger and more elegant Crystal Ballroom. From the 25 guests at the first party to the 220 attendees and over \$800 donated to ACCKWA at the 10th anniversary, the decision to turn his annual party into a fundraising event was a wise one.

When asked why he takes so much time and puts so much money into an event, with no monetary return Decker said, "Those that know me well also know that this is something that I just do. There are no expectations, no fanfares, no speeches. It is my gift to my peers. We gather, we laugh, we enjoy and we draw good from the people we meet and the friendships we create. It's a silent networking of goodwill. The one time of year that magically transports each and every one of us to a better place if



(Photo by Highlander)

Putting time and money into an event is something Kym Decker just does.

even just for a few short hours."

Many members of our community were dismayed to not receive an invitation last year to what had become a yearly event. With the time and effort required to run the event, Decker just decided he needed a break for a year, but he's back this year. After an outpouring of feedback from supporters he decided to continue the event and has moved it back to the Barristers Lounge as he felt that the Crystal Ballroom lacked the intimacy and closeness of the previous years.

Kelly Shea, a well-known member of our community and attendee of many yearly parties said she finds it so refreshing to see a person going the extra mile to make a difference for others at such a special time of year.

"Hats off to Kym and I hope we can all support it," Shea said.

Please come out between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 24 to enjoy SPARKLE: Celebrating the Resplendency of Camaraderie. Tickets for this year's gala are \$5 in advance, \$7 at the door, and are available by contacting Kym at augustpaul@canada.com, or at the front desk of the Walper Terrace Hotel. Ticket sale proceeds go directly to ACCKWA.

UW needs speakers

By JEREMY STEFFLER

The University of Waterloo federation of students, Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo (GLOW) and the University of Waterloo student life office, are organizing the UW Pride in Diversity Conference, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 4, 2006 at UW.

The conference is being held as part of UW's continued efforts to promote campus diversity (www.diversity.uwaterloo.ca) and in celebration of the 35th anniversary of Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo (www.glow.uwaterloo.ca), one of the oldest campus-based queer organizations in Canada.

The goals of the conference include building bridges between queer communities and other administrative bodies on university campuses as well as fostering links between queer organizations operating at different campuses.

The conference organizers are currently looking for speakers and/or individuals willing to sit on a panel related to several different topics.

The conference will be primarily aimed at undergraduate students at Canadian universities, although the broad scope of the conference is likely to also make it of interest to graduate students, faculty, university administrators, secondary school teachers and administrators, and members of the community in general.

If you feel that you might be able to speak or know of people who may be able to, please send the name(s) and contact information (if available) to UWPride@uwaterloo.ca. Committee members will do their best to contact potential speakers as soon as possible.


For more information and a list of topics to be discussed, please visit www.alterheros.com/english/community/.

www.tri-pride.ca

info@tri-pride.ca

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