

# LESBIAN MOTHERS ASSOCIATION

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**VOLUME III No. II**

**NEWSLETTER**

**December 2001**

## **On Becoming a Father By Serge Plamondon**

First of all, I have to tell you, I am the happiest father in the world. I swear. Our story, Ismaël's and mine that is, began on March 26, 2000. On that day I went to the Quebec Secretariat of Adoption with the goal of adopting a little boy. Quebec city is my hometown. That day I was in a state of pure nervousness - butterflies in my stomach. I had finally decided to make a concrete move towards becoming a father. It was now or never. Of course, we don't wake up one morning with the idea of becoming a parent. The idea had been brewing in me for a long time before things started to happen.

I knew at a very early age that I wanted to be a father. It began when my nephew Marc-André was born on December 25, 1988. I was 18 years old and my brother 21. He was already prepared at that age to start a family. For me it was too early. Of course because I had told my whole family that I was gay, many of them assumed that I would never have my own kids. That's why one of my sisters asked me to be the godfather of her child. I gladly accepted. It wasn't right away that I saw myself as a father. It was when Stéphanie was born on January 22, 1994. As godfather I was overjoyed. And then later on Sabrina arrived, March 26, 1997. My sister again asked me to be the godfather of her second daughter. I agreed. She thought that maybe by being a godfather my desire to be a father would be satisfied. Well of course not! It's not the same thing.

Like it or not life takes its course. And it catches hold of us one way or another. At times I was obsessed, according to some of my friends, with the idea of one day becoming a father. I only had eyes for kids - I saw them everywhere. Often I would take care of the kids of one of my colleagues at work. One day when we were at Laser Dome in Laval the older boy said to me: "Why can't you be my father?" I answered him that he already had a father. He said, "I know but you'd make such a great dad." Imagine me there, about to begin a game of bowling at Laser Dome. The little one made me start to cry, so much that I could hardly play. We often say that truth comes from the mouths of babes. He had just placed a mirror in front of me. It was a revelation of my capacity to be a good father.

For me, the idea of becoming a father was always legitimate. Regardless of what family, friends, colleagues, neighbours or surveys said or still say. I wanted to assume the responsibility alone. Without having to wait for anyone else. That's why I'm a young single gay father. I took the necessary steps and all along the way there were people there willing to help me. My mother supported my project 100%. She just kept telling me what a child needs to grow up happy: "love". No matter if you are straight or gay.

Despite what some people might say, in my heart, I know I made the right choice.

When I got the photos of my son, I wanted to show them to everyone. The first time I was in Quebec City sitting at a restaurant-terrace. My mother was very happy with the idea of having a 9<sup>th</sup> grandchild. On top of this, he had beautiful brown eyes according to her. It's not me that said that! For her he was another grandchild, just like the others. We went shopping together for some clothes for Ismaël. My mother's advice: "Buy clothes for an older child, they grow so fast you know." My mother had opinions about so many things it was hard not to follow her advice. She raised us: my two brothers, my two sisters and me. She also said to be careful not to spoil them too much.

One thing lead to another. When I got news about my son, I phoned my mother. I know that she and I will make great partners in this project! Of course there were long waits, but I never doubted that one day I would hold my son in my arms! As soon as I saw the photo it was clear - he was my son!

## **The Trip**

Of course, there has to be a good setting for a family, good resources and a good dose of self-confidence to succeed in adopting a child. I was so looking forward to leaving that I often phoned the adoption agency for news. There were difficulties along the way, many delays, but the agency never let us down, Ismaël and me.

And it was Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup> to be exact at 4:30 in the afternoon that I got the call. I quickly reserved the plane tickets. I arrived in Ismaël's country of origin Friday October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000 for one hour.

An intense hour, on the fly. I had the impression that now nothing could separate us, my son and I. When I saw him sitting beside the woman who ran the orphanage I found him even more beautiful than in the photo. He looked like an angel. I got the papers in order, and went towards my son. It was magic! He gave me his hand and smiled. We took the return flight to Montreal. We were the last two passengers to board. The little one cried a lot. He knew that he would never see the orphanage and his playmates again. I held him close for the whole length of the flight. Despite his tears I was calm and serene. I sang him songs and rocked him and finally he fell asleep. When he woke up I fed him. God was he hungry! I gave him a surprise, a little car that he put in his pocket. After that his tears stopped. When we arrived at Mirabel he was calm. I had warned my friends that I'd most likely be very tired and that I didn't want a crowd at the airport. So two friends were there and it was a really great welcome for us.

Arriving late at home, he started to cry again. I opened all the lights and showed him all the rooms in his new home. I gave him a bath. I had tears in my eyes to see how skinny he was. He played with his toys sitting on papa's bed and then finally he fell asleep. The next morning he ate everything that he got his hands on: a bowl of cereal, toast with peanut butter, a banana and a glass of orange juice. An amazing quantity for a boy not yet three years old. So, confident that he would soon make up for lost time, I served him

good size portions. He grew and put on weight. Enough so that the doctor at the hospital said: “you have nothing to worry about, his state of health is now excellent”. What a relief for a parent!

Ismaël and I follow our path. He loves daycare. He’s discovered snow: “It’s cold Papa!” He loves to have baths and sometimes with all the splashing I have to remind him that it’s not the YMCA here. At the pool, he loves to pretend he’s a fish, diving for a boat and most of all playing catch the ball. He loves snuggling and bedtime stories, but most of all his Caillou and Walt Disney cassettes. He adores popcorn and doesn’t like to share his new discovery. In a nutshell, my son has made me discover the nicest things in life. I love him up to the sky, even if there are sometimes clouds. That must be what they call “unconditional love”. Oh! I forgot, at bedtime, of course, he likes to sleep in papa’s bed. I say “okay”. It does us both good. When the house begins to quiet down at the end of the day he jumps on the bed and says: “Papa are you my friend?” What a surprise! I answer him “Of course, little buddy!”

My dream has become reality. I just wanted to share with you the happiness that I’ve felt since Ismaël came into my life.

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We would like to hear from you! Interested in writing for our newsletter?

Send your articles at any time to [monicole@citenet.net](mailto:monicole@citenet.net) or by post to AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8

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## **News Briefs- September-December 2001**

### **PRIDE WRAP UP**

Looking back on our **Pride festivities**, last August, it’s obvious that the political influence of the gay and lesbian community is stronger than ever. Just look at all the politicians who attended: **Allan Rock** the federal Health Minister came for the parade, while Quebec’s PM **Bernard Landry** was there at community day and made a quick tour of the kiosks and even told a drag-queen who proposed to him that if he ever decided to get married again (he is a widower), his cross-dressing suitor would be his first choice. Then there was **Svend Robinson**, the NDP deputy from BC, always a crowd favorite, as well as Bloc Quebecois deputies **Gilles Duceppe** and **Réal Ménard**. Liberal deputy **Nathalie Rochefort** was there too, as well as provincial minister **Agnes Maltais** (Health and Social Services) and Action Démocratique party chief, **Mario Dumont**. Present as well were PQ deputy **André Boulerice** as well as mayoral candidates **Pierre Bourque** and **Gérald Tremblay**. Even mayor **Pat**

**Stewart** from Plattsburg was there. The presence of all these celebrities shows that progress has been made and that politicians realize that our rights must be respected. We are numerous and we vote!

This year, gay and lesbian organizations took advantage of this accessibility to **lobby for same-sex marriage** and for Landry to designate a **secretariat responsible for the status of gays and lesbians**. Similar government bodies already exist for women, children and the disabled. We are the only minority group left that doesn't have its own exclusive representative in the government. So far the government is not keen on this idea. One gain however: The **health and social services minister will appoint a liaison with the gay community**.

On the municipal level other **promises** were made. Amongst them: Bourque promised us a gay and lesbian community center. Despite the fact that he lost the election the promise is likely to be kept as 4.2 of the 5 million dollar project has already been amassed. Tremblay, for his part, promised a consulting body, to bring gays and lesbians closer to politicians.

## **MONTREAL**

Visitors to the new and larger locale of **L'Androgyne bookstore** may have noticed the new boutique at the back of the store designated for women. **Boutique Sappho** offers a whole inventory of products geared towards women's pleasure, both heterosexual and lesbian. France Desilets, the manager of the store explained, "We started to carry a few **sex toys** at the store on St Laurent and they sold very well. Women don't really have their own space in Montreal for sex toys. If you go into a sex-shop you notice right away that it's more geared toward men. Women feel less at ease in these environments. So it was in thinking about women that we developed the Boutique Sappho." What's on the shelves? "Dildos, maybe a bit smaller than the 16 inchers available at Priape, lube, dental dams for female safe-sex, erotic clothes, leather, a lot of vibrators...a bit of everything and of course erotic books and lesbian sex guides." She adds, "Women can buy all types of products just like men, it's just a bit more geared toward women".

L'Androgyne also now has an expanded variety of Pride items, videos and books as well as an exhibition space. Check it out: **1436 rue Amherst** in the village.

Also for a lesbian audience: **Erotic strip dancers** at the **Candy's bar** at **1830 Ste-Catherine West**. Call for more info: 514-939-9863.

**September 20-30 - Image et Nation held their 14<sup>th</sup> annual gay and lesbian film festival**. This year 260 films, from 25 countries were shown at Le Parisien, the Eaton Center and the Imperial. 70 of the films were feature length. The festival continues to expand from year to year despite the fact that Quebec's ministry of Culture still refuses to provide funding.

## QUEBEC

**Co-parent adoption:** A Quebec lesbian couple went to court in **September** to ask for adoption rights for the non-biological mother. The couple have two sons who were conceived via a sperm bank. The judge concluded that the request is a “societal question” and thus both the **provincial government** and the **Youth Protection Agency** must take a stance in the decision. Hearings are scheduled for March 2002.

**Sherbrooke- August 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Two members of the **Lesbian Mothers' Association** (and LMA political action committee), **Dominique Dubuc and Sylvie Robert** asked and were refused the **right to marry**. The couple presented their request to obtain a marriage license to the Sherbrooke Palais de la Justice. Their gesture was in support of the ongoing battle of Michael Hendricks and René Leboeuf who are fighting the government for the same right. Dubuc and Robert have submitted complaints to the **Provincial and Federal Human Rights Commissions**.

## CANADA

**Toronto - August 10-** For the first time the Canadian government has granted **asylum to a lesbian couple**. The women, both from Mexico, fled to Toronto in 1999. At an immigration board hearing in Toronto, they said they left their homeland because of homophobic persecution and feared it would continue if they returned.

One woman testified they were both attacked by two men in 1998, while visiting a relative in Queretaro, Mexico. The woman's ex-husband had learned about her lesbian relationship and had taken away their child. The board heard that in 1999, the women were beaten, confined and sexually assaulted by Mexican police, hired by the ex-husband.

The board ruled that the violence inflicted on the women amounted to a well-founded fear of persecution and granted refugee status to the couple. The board has granted asylum to single lesbian women in the past, but this is the first time a couple has been given asylum.

**B.C. – August** - Another victory! Both members of same-sex couples are legally entitled to register as parents on a **child's birth certificate**, a B.C. human rights tribunal has ruled. Ruling in the case of two lesbian couples who challenged the current process of registering their newborn infants, the tribunal said that when a lesbian couple conceives a child using sperm from an anonymous donor, both partners can be listed on the child's birth certificate. Before the decision, the non-birth mother had to legally adopt the child before being officially recognized as a parent. The new birth certificates will have co-parent as an option.

**September-** The **political action committee** of the **Lesbian Mothers Association** submitted a brief to the **Standing Committee on Health** in Ottawa regarding the draft legislation for the **New Reproductive Technologies Act** (slated to pass next spring, 2002). We were heard in Ottawa on November 26<sup>th</sup>. Because the recommendations made in this document are important to the women's movement, the *Fédération des femmes du Québec* (FFQ) joined with the Lesbian Mothers Association, one of its members, in support of the document. We also received letters of support from Egale-Canada, The Table de Concertation des gais et lesbiennes du Québec, The Unitarian Church of Montreal, as well as a number of doctors from the Jewish General Hospital. The main purpose of the brief is to ensure that lesbians and single women in general will have **access to fertility services here in Quebec**. We are currently discriminated against and denied access. The LMA political action committee is also working on a **sensitization campaign** for doctors in fertility clinics in **Montreal, Quebec City and in Sherbrooke**.

**Ontario – September** - 96% of the 65,000-strong **Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario** recently voted to lobby school boards to fund gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender material for pupils. Books such as *Asha's Moms and One Dad*, *Two Dads*, *Brown Dads*, *Blue Dads* contain themes introducing different types of families to children at a young age. The idea is to create more inclusive classrooms. The National Post labeled this initiative "sexual propaganda".

Meanwhile, here in Quebec, **GRIS-Montréal** (Groupe de Recherche et d'Intervention Sociale gais et lesbiennes de Montréal) has just launched a French-language 60,000-postcard campaign, funded by gay-glossy *Fugues* magazine, called **"Démystifier l'homosexualité - ça commence à l'école."** The flip side encourages teachers and students to call GRIS for help and guidance.

**October - Vancouver** (CP) - The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear an appeal of an ambiguous court ruling in a case pitting **gay and lesbian educators against the suburban Surrey school board** over three children's books. *Asha's Mums*, *Belinda's Bouquet* and *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads* are aimed at kindergarten and Grade 1 readers and tell the stories of children who live with same-sex parents. The court declined to approve the books as recommended learning resources, but allowed them to be stocked in school libraries and teachers to take them into classrooms and read them. The school board asked for an appeal stating, "Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms are not the right location for these books."

**October 3 –Vancouver** - The **Supreme Court of British Columbia** has rejected a constitutional challenge to Canada's definition of **marriage**. Eight British Columbia gay and lesbian couples had petitioned the province's high court to be allowed to marry. Judge Pitfield ruled that there was discrimination under Article 15 of the charter of rights and freedoms and that it was **allowable discrimination** under article 1. The judgment said, " Any permitted changes to the common law of marriage must be made by legislation." EGALÉ Executive Director John Fisher said, "This is far from

over. The ruling will be appealed to the B.C. Court of Appeals.” Fisher said the issue will ultimately be decided by the Supreme Court of Canada.

The court’s decision is available at Egale’s web site at: [www.egale.ca](http://www.egale.ca)

Two similar challenges were heard in **November**, one in **Ontario**, the other in **Quebec**. **Michael Hendricks and René Leboeuf**, a Montreal gay couple of 28 years, went to court on **November 8<sup>th</sup>** to challenge the government for the right to marry. Lawyers from both the provincial and federal governments had their say, as well as 2 right wing religious groups. The **Coalition pour la reconnaissance des conjoint(e)s de même sexe** intervened as well on the side of Michael and René. The coalition represents many gay and lesbian groups as well as a number of important unions. Four members of the Lesbian Mothers Association political action committee contributed affidavits to the coalition’s legal intervention in the Quebec marriage case with the lawyer **Me Noël St-Pierre**. A decision will be rendered within the next 6 months.

On the second day of the hearing an exclusive article to Le Devoir announced the **provincial government’s plan** to pass a new law that would allow for gays and lesbians to enter into **registered partnerships**. To most of us involved in this fight for equal rights this means nothing more than second-class citizenship. A registered partnership, unlike a real civil marriage would provide absolutely no rights for our families. The community reacted very negatively to this announcement and a meeting with **Justice Minister Paul Bég**in has been scheduled for the end of the November. LMA representatives will be there to speak on behalf of lesbian-headed families.

**November 3<sup>rd</sup>-Vancouver East NDP MP Libby Davies** made Canadian gay and lesbian history by **coming out** in parliament, saying that she is in a same-sex relationship. She told the **House of Commons** about her relationship while speaking in favour of Svend Robinson's private members' bill that would allow formal same-sex marriage. Unfortunately Mr. Robinson's bill died because it didn't get the unanimous consent it needed to be referred to the justice committee. Lemon prize to the Canadian parliament but bravo to Ms. Davies for her courageous act.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

**Miami** (AP) A federal judge ruled in September that **Florida's law banning homosexuals from adopting children** is valid, saying the state has a legitimate interest in only allowing married couples to adopt. The law is considered the nation's toughest ban on gay adoptions, prohibiting adoptions by any gay or lesbian individual or couple. Mississippi and Utah also ban adoptions by same-sex couples.

**South Africa - Sept 30-** A South African court ruled that **gay and lesbian couples could adopt children** in a judgment hailed by gay rights groups as a

victory. The judgment must still be upheld by the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg, which is likely to hear it in a few months' time, a legal source said. South Africa's liberal constitution, adopted after the end of white-minority rule in 1994, says people cannot be discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation. But the constitution does not reflect public opinion in South Africa, where wide swathes of the community, black and white, are deeply religious and conservative.

**India** –(The Washington Blade) - A **Hindu ceremony joining two women** was reported as India's first same-sex wedding, according to the BBC. The marriage is not legal until registered, and local officials refuse to allow that. The two women, Jaya Verma and Tanuja Chauhan, have pledged to fight Indian law, which makes no provision for same-sex couples. But they already are facing a backlash- the women's landlord has reportedly asked them to move.

**England**- A pair of British male senior citizens became the first gay couple to officially **register their partnership** in the United Kingdom.

Story: <http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2001/09/04/3>

**France - Sept 19<sup>th</sup>** — A lesbian was finally allowed to adopt her partner's three children. The only problem is that now the biological mother has no legal rights towards the kids. Progress?

## **SPORTS**

**Montreal** will host the **2006 Gay Games**, the Federation of Gay Games announced on **October 25th**. Voting members of the federation selected Montreal over Atlanta, Chicago and Los Angeles during a meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa. Gene Dermody, the co-president of the Federation of Gay Games, noted in a statement that the delegates from Montreal "demonstrated an overall knowledge and keen understanding of what it takes to make the Gay Games a successful event." One of the delegates representing Montreal was Mark Tewksbury, who won a swimming gold medal in the 1992 Olympics and who will serve as co-president of Montreal's games.

Organizers of the 2006 event, scheduled for **July 29 through Aug. 5**, expect to attract some **19,000 athletes and 5,000 artists**, according to Reuters. An international arts festival and the Divers Cité gay pride celebration will take place at the same time. The 2006 games will be the city's biggest sporting event since the 1976 summer Olympics. The Montreal bidders budget the games at \$20-million, expect a million spectators and over **\$150 million in economic spin-offs (more \$ than the Jazz festival and Grand Prix combined!)**.

The Sydney 2002 Gay Games VI will be held next year, Nov. 2-9, in Australia. Organizers announced that registrations already total 4,000, more than a quarter of the total expected athletes.

Check it out online at [www.montreal2006.org](http://www.montreal2006.org)

## **RESEARCH**

In a paper that is stirring both interest and controversy, two **sociologists** now argue that while there is no evidence that having gay or lesbian parents harms children, the notion that it has no impact on a **child's life** is implausible at best. And, after reviewing two decades of research on the topic, the authors conclude that social scientists in fact have found **provocative differences**, but have played them down for fear that their findings will be misused.

Dr. Stacey and a colleague, Dr. Timothy J. Biblarz, of U.S.C., reviewed 21 studies of the children of gay or lesbian parents published from 1981 through 1998. The sociologists noted that the body of research on such children is still small, and that many findings still need to be confirmed. Nevertheless, in many studies, they said, there are suggestions that both the experience of having two parents of the same sex and of growing up in a home accepting of homosexuality influence children's behavior, self-image and life goals.

Some of the distinctions noted by researchers, Dr. Stacey said, had to do with attitudes toward sexuality and sexual behavior. Others involved how flexibly children interpreted gender roles: several studies, for example, found that the sons and daughters of lesbian mothers were less likely to have stereotyped notions of masculine and feminine behavior, and more likely to aspire to occupations that crossed traditional gender lines.

Still other studies, Dr. Stacey and Dr. Biblarz found, charted differences in how children raised by gay or lesbian parents expressed themselves verbally, how close they were to their biological mothers' partners, and how equally their parents divided parenting duties and household chores.

And while many researchers found that the children of homosexual parents often faced teasing and harassment from their peers, the sociologists wrote, the studies also showed that such children "seem to exhibit impressive psychological strength."

In another study they reviewed, Dr. Stacey and Dr. Biblarz said, the researchers reported a finding that the young adult children of lesbian mothers were more likely to have had, or to have considered having, a homosexual relationship than the children of heterosexual mothers. But the study's authors emphasized data showing that the children of the lesbian mothers were no more likely than other children to identify themselves as gay or lesbian.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Jodie Foster** gave birth to her second child, a boy on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2001. Kit Foster, brother to 3-year-old Charlie, weighed 2.8kg. Foster has chosen to keep the name(s) of the boys' father(s) secret.

### **LGBT domestic violence web sites:**

<http://rainbowdomesticviolence.itgo.com>,

[www.en.com/users/allison/l\\_dv.html](http://www.en.com/users/allison/l_dv.html) (good bibliography)

<http://incestabuse.about.com/cs/gaylessurvivors> (lots of great links)

<http://www.cwhn.ca/chaud/sites/default.html> (Le Groupe d'intervention en violence conjugale chez les lesbiennes (GIVCL))

## **CULTURAL**

At the end of September the founders of sports cable channel The Score launched **Canada's first channel, PrideVision, catering to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered communities.** The new TV station soon encountered difficulties. The Toronto-based station complained to Canada's broadcast regulator, the CRTC, that Shaw Cable, Canada's second largest cable company, was discouraging people from watching a free 90-day preview. Shaw has a cable monopoly in Western Canada. Shaw cable refused to include the new gay channel in its promotional package that offers a 3-month free trial of all the new channels. The Pride channel was only included if viewers called and specifically requested the channel and supplied a credit card number to prove age of majority. On October 3<sup>rd</sup> PrideVision won the discrimination complaint against Shaw. The CRTC has ruled that Shaw had engaged in discriminatory business practices contrary to commission regulations. The company has been ordered to provide the service free without question.

## **News from the Lesbian Mothers Association**

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

#### **DECEMBER**

**For adults and kids : Holiday Potluck Lunch on Saturday December 8th, from 1-4 pm.** It will be held at the **Unitarian Church which is located at 5035 de Maisonneuve O., corner Claremont-(metro Vendome).** If you're planning on attending please contact us before December 1st to let us know what you plan to bring. We suggest bringing enough for approximately 8 people. You can bring something in the categories of either **salad, main dish, dessert or beverage** (e.g. juice or soft-drinks). We have signed a contract not to bring anything with peanuts onto the premises because of allergies. We are asking for a donation of **\$5 per family** (if possible) in order to cover the expenses

which include the rental of the space, the gate-keeper's salary, paper plates, napkins, etc as well as arts and crafts materials that will be provided for the kids. Should there be any extra money at the end it will be reinvested in the group for future activities. **Please call to let us know if you are planning on attending and what you would like to bring at 846-1543 before December 1st.**

**Single Lesbian Moms: An Evening To Socialize & Dance.** Date: **Dec. 15, 2001,**

Time & Places: We will begin by meeting for **9:00pm at Pub Magnolia** (1329 Ste. Catherine Est) to socialize, and we expect to move upstairs to **Sisters** for dancing around **11:00pm.** For more info please call **Lauren: 450-671-4816.**

## **JANUARY**

**For adults and kids: Sunday January 13 at 10 a.m: Jungle Jungle** (indoor playground). At the Decarie Square, **6900 Decarie Blvd. (metro Namur).** Admission: Kids: \$7.95 +tax. Adults: free

**For adults only: Saturday January 26, 2002 at 8 pm: Discussion group.** Topic : **Problem-solving for couples.** A committed relationship has its challenges. We will identify and explore ways of dealing with these challenges in ways which enrich the couple's dynamic and contribute to each person's well being. **Guest speaker: Françoise Susset, psychologist.** 2401 Coursol (metro Lionel Groulx).

## **FEBRUARY**

**For adults and kids: Saturday February 2nd: Fêtes des neiges.** We will give you more information when it is available.

**For adults only: Saturday February 17th at 8 p.m. PARTY!**  
**Where: Bar Le Drugstore at 1366 St Catherine east (metro Beaudry)** and later for those who want to dance, across the street at Sisters (1333 St Catherine)

## **Bulletin Board**

### **Quebec Lesbian Network Video Screenings:**

January 13: Our Herstory - the video "**Memoire de notre hystoire**" which focuses on the herstory of the Montreal lesbian community will be screened. En Français.

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Place: International YMCA, 5550 Park Ave., corner St. Viateur, Room 3D. The 80 bus stops right there.

February 10: In honour of Black History month, screening of the video "**Ruth Ellis: Living with Pride at 100**". This video by Yvonne Welbon features the life of Ruth Ellis, a black lesbian who died last year at the age of 101. In the video, Ruth is 99 years old and talks about her life. English with French subtitles. Time: 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Place: International YMCA, 5550 Park Ave., corner St. Viateur, Room 3D. The 80 bus stops right there.

**THANK-YOU:** Mona and Nicole would like to thank all of you who agreed to support the association. Your membership dues and generous donations are enabling the group to go on with activities throughout the year. Thanks to you we can continue to build a strong community for ourselves and our kids.

**CLOTHES TO GIVE AWAY** -Back to school time can be very difficult for some families, so I would like to give away some clothes that are now too small for Amélia, but that are still in very good condition. The clothes are sizes 8 - 10. Most of them can be worn by boys or girls; I almost always buy her "boys" pants because they are better made and already cost less. Most of the tops are polo shirts or t-shirts so they are not gender specific either, but there are some that are just for girls. Please call **Jean Freed: 514-483-1058**

I am interested in **natural childbirth and breast-feeding**. If there are any women who are pregnant or have recently delivered, I am available for breast-feeding and natural childbirth support. It can be telephone support or home visits depending on the location. **Sylvia (514) 521-9783**

The bulletin board is a free forum for members to communicate amongst each other. If you want to post an announcement in the next issue please send it to us at any time to [monicole@citenet.net](mailto:monicole@citenet.net) or by post to AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8.

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IF you have something to advertise, sell, rent or buy...anything where money must change hands, you can place an ad in the newsletter. Ads cost 20 cents per word.

**Panasonic Electric Key board:** value \$1000, selling for \$450. Louise or Nycol (819) 688-3909

**Room to rent near Mont Blanc and Mont Tremblant.** Call Louise or Nycol (819) 688-3909

**Baby massage classes** offered at your home. Learn simple techniques to improve general health, relieve discomforts, and allow for a moment of touch and bonding with your baby. **Call Sylvia (member of AIMB) for details: (514) 521-9783.**

**Chair massage during pregnancy and childbirth** can offer a comfortable and yet very effective position for labour, while providing a great position for receiving massage between contractions! I am a massage therapist (member of the FQM) and can teach you and your partner or a friend how to use the chair and simple massage techniques for pregnancy and childbirth. **Chair also for rent for home or birth use. Sylvia: (514) 521-9783**

**Heather Mullin, M.S.W. :** Individual, Couple & Group Psychotherapy & Counseling 514-769-7312

**Planning for your family's future can be puzzling**

**J.L. Freed, MBA** (514) 483-5130

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Looking for some **great holiday season gifts** for your friends and family, or for that "special woman" in your life? The **Réseau des lesbiennes du Québec / Quebec Lesbian Network (RLQ / QLN)**, in collaboration with the Centre communautaire des Gais et des Lesbiennes de Montréal, is holding a **Winter 2001 Art & Craft Show/Sale on Thursday, December 13, 2001 from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Centre communautaire des Gais et des Lesbiennes de Montréal 2075 Plessis** (between Sherbrooke and Ontario) Support our lesbian artists and artisans! For more information contact the RLQ/QLN at **514-524-6541**.