

LESBIAN MOTHERS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

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Should the Lesbian Mothers Association Become a Mixed-Group?

By Mona Greenbaum, LMA Coordinator

Over the past 5 years more than 700 women have joined the Lesbian Mothers Association, the majority of whom continue to receive information from us. We currently have about 200 members who, with their children, actively and regularly participate in our twice-monthly activities.

Since October 2001 we are an officially registered non-profit organization. Each year, in April, our members elect 12 women to the executive council. The function of this board is to administer the group, but also to work together as activists to advance the rights and social recognition of lesbian mothers and their children. In 2002 many positive changes for our families occurred here in Quebec. The board's contribution to these advances was considerable.

As the 5th year anniversary of the association approaches, we have begun to discuss the possibility of a major change in the group's structure: opening the association to gay and transgendered fathers and their children.

When the Lesbian Mothers Association began in 1998, we advertised our phone number here and there and set a date for a first meeting. Who, if anyone, would respond? Were there many lesbian mamas out there or very few? We knew very little what to expect and what shape and form the group would assume. We simply took the plunge.

The idea of accepting men into our fold is full of unknowns as well and the board members have discussed and debated this intensely. Some of us feel that it would be a positive change that would enhance our group and bring it into the 21st century. Others are worried that the inclusion of men will completely change the dynamic and functioning of our association in unforeseeable ways that would run counter to the needs of our members.

Because this is an important question we will discuss this in detail at our **annual general assembly on April 5th, 2003**. A couple of women will present a skit that will bring out the positive and negative aspects of the issue. At the end of the evening if enough of us show an interest then we will hold an official vote on this matter in September 2003.

As the coordinator of the group I would like to give you a bit of an insight into what the board member's discussion has revolved around and what we see as the positive and negative aspects of opening our group to men.

The arguments against

One of the first questions that arose was: Who are we doing this for? Are there gay men out there who are actually asking us to open up our group to them? Are there lesbians within our group who are hankering for the inclusion of men? The answer to both these questions is "no." The LMA belongs to us. "Us" right now are lesbian or bi or queer women who are also parents or are considering becoming mothers. This means that right now, AML is the answer to a need in our community. This need is sufficient in itself.

Although the association has had some men call us or join us in our activities over the years, the numbers have been small. The idea of making ourselves a mixed group has only come from within the board itself. What makes us think that there is really a need out there? Maybe there isn't. Biologically speaking there will always be far fewer gay dads than lesbian mothers. It is just simpler for us to become parents. Men must think of adoption, surrogacy or co-parenting. Lesbians just need sperm. Would gay men come to us searching for lesbians to co-parent? One of our members said that she thought that gay men would join our group so that they could "trawl" for lesbians to co-parent with. This could be annoying for our members.

If there truly is a need why don't they start their own group? Montreal already has an association for gay dads. Isn't this enough? Maybe we could occasionally do some activities with this group, when and if it suits us. We could then easily step back if it doesn't work.

Many of us spoke about the special dynamic that occurs in a women-only space. Although few of us identify as separatist lesbians (i.e. those that do not want men at all in their lives), many of us feel that a women-only space is a special place that we rarely have a chance to be part of. As lesbians and mothers there is nowhere else in Quebec where we can be with our own and deal uniquely with our own experiences and needs. A women's only space has a special feel to it and the social aspect of the group will never be the same with men present. One of our board members said "Socially I would be uncomfortable to a certain degree with the inclusion of gay men. The meetings I attend are few and far between due to age appropriateness and the availability of my children, which is the situation for other moms in the association as well. With men in the group I would need to wait even longer for an activity that would include just the women."

Women who have been involved in mixed groups say that the lesbian voice is often eventually drowned out and that there are a lot of power struggles that begin to happen. Men will have different needs from ours and will take up much of our space. We have very different reproductive and health issues. Even if they are less numerous their own needs will become dominant. Some of us have seen and experienced misogyny in the gay community. If we really do want to have interactions with gay and transgendered dads must we make our association mixed to do so?

And conversely, maybe we will be too dominant in our own assertions. It is not our place or our right to dictate our politics to a community of gay fathers. Historically it is never one minority that will activate another. The urge has to come from within. We can be an example to gay dads but we can't lead them. Our ideas will stifle theirs.

The arguments in favour

Part of the reason we have had few calls from men to our association is because of our name. The fact that we have had as many as we have indicates that there is certainly a need. The Montreal Association for Gay Fathers (APGM) exists but it meets the needs only of a certain subset of gay fathers, namely those who have been married to women

and who have decided to come out later in life. Many of these men have older or even adult children and few have custody. The raison d'être behind the APMG is to help these men to come out to their children, their families and themselves.

Gay men who are thinking to have children or who have become fathers in the context of a gay identity find themselves outsiders in the APMG. They see much more in common with the goals and interests of our own group: children, parenting, recognition of our families. Some of us believe that if we changed our name to something more inclusive (like the Rainbow Families Association) and advertised our openness to men we would immediately begin to attract more dads and papa-wannabes.

Although some of our needs would be different, we obviously share common concerns. For example, one of the biggest problems that our community faces is homophobia in the schools. It affects us and it affects our children. Gay men and their kids are in the same boat. If we join forces we will be able to work together. We will be more numerous and more resourceful. When we ask for funding for our projects we will be seen as representing a more diversified community. We will have greater "political credibility".

If we did admit men we all agreed it would be insulting for them to be admitted on anything but an equal basis. We don't want to create second-class citizens. This would mean that they could become board members and help in our activism. One board member said: "I think many of us have had not-so-great experiences with mixed gay and lesbian groups where the women felt silenced. I really think this is not a danger in our particular case, mainly because we (women) were here first and will most likely always have greater numbers".

In order to ensure that lesbian interests continue to be represented we can include in our charter a proviso which would state that the number of men on our administrative council should reflect the number of male members in the group. So if 10% of our members were men then 10% of our board members would be men. A maximum could be set at 50%. As the number of men increased in the association both men and women would begin to define our common and separate needs. We would find ways to work together when appropriate and separate out into subcommittees when our

needs diverged. What will ensure there is no abuse from either gender is that we have a very clear charter/mission statement and that what we do is for our members.

From a social point of view we could maintain an equal number of women-only and men-only events so that each community could maintain its own special dynamic. We could come together for kids' events and for adult activities where shared concerns were evident. Even if our meetings were open to all, there would naturally be some activities (e.g. insemination workshops) where there would be a predominance of women.

Many of us are raising boys. They are apart of us just as much as women are. Gay dads could be positive male role models for our children. We could be positive female role models for their families. One of our members said the following: "My opinion on this is always the same. I am so tired of fragmenting the community. I find it ironic that the lesbian/gay community has chosen the rainbow as a symbol to represent our diversity, but then forgets that when all these colours come together they form one white light. We are not separate, different, yes, but not separate. As parents, whether gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, transgendered, etc. we all have to deal with being parents. We try to teach our children about the diversity in families. When we exclude, our teachings are limited."

Another of us said "I'm always telling my child that there are many different kinds of families out there, including families with two dads, and yet, we don't actually know any! I would love for that to change. We should also think about how the children of both groups could be allies for each other."

A call for your opinions and votes

Many of us have not asked ourselves the question of whether a mixed group could be interesting or beneficial to all involved. We must ask ourselves whether we want to remain a lesbian-only group or if the group can somehow become a group about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered parenting. It is important that this decision be made democratically and with all of our members fully informed.

For this reason we would like you to think about both sides of the argument, discuss it with other lesbian mamas and mama-wannabes. If you can, please send us your comments and insights by **e-mail (info@aml-lma.org) or by letter (AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8)**. We will compile everything you send us and address it all at the **general assembly on April 5th 2003**. We encourage as many of you as possible to attend this meeting so that your voices can be heard. We will decide at this point if a vote should be held and if so, all members will determine this issue at a future date.

We would like to hear from you! Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to info@aml-lma.org or by post to AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8

News Briefs - December 2002 - February 2003

Montreal

November 21st, 2002 - The Concordia University **Q2 Ally Network** held an event to launch the group to the Concordia community and Montreal. The Q2 Ally Network is a group of Concordia students, staff and faculty from a wide variety of backgrounds, who share the common goal of working toward **supporting, embracing and celebrating sexual diversity** as well as engendering equality at Concordia. For more information Contact co-chairs: **Dale Robinson** 514-848-4389 (daler@vax2.concordia.ca) or **Marc Leger** 514-848-4388 (leger@alcor.concordia.ca).

November 26th 2002, **Robert Walker** who was accused of **criminally harassing** his neighbours, the gay Point Claire couple, **Theo Wouters and Roger Thibault**, has walked away **exonerated**. Judge Falardeau said that the couple's testimony lacked credibility and was full of contradictions. Although the judge was not impressed with Walker's testimony either, stating that Walker minimized his own bad behaviour, he said that the couple's accusation was over-exaggerated and did not warrant a criminal

accusation. The truth of the story must lie somewhere in between.

After 17 years of living beside each other as neighbours, relations between the couple and Walker began to deteriorate in 2000. A quarrel about the couple's barking dog degenerated into a series of incidents that culminated in a huge march in support of the couple, in which 2000 members of the gay community walked through the quiet streets of Point Claire. The couple was quickly appropriated as a symbol of the struggle against homophobia.

Canada

December 20, 2002 - 365Gay.com - The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that a British Columbia school board was wrong to have banned three books about same-sex parents. The school board in **Surrey**, B.C., had argued that the books, "*Asha's Mums*," "*Belinda's Bouquet*," and "*One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads*," offended the religions of some parents.

In a 7-2 ruling the court said that the board had violated a requirement in provincial legislation that the public school system be strictly secular and non-sectarian. The court decision emphasized that the board had not taken into account the objectives of the curriculum, which are to sensitize children to the diversity of family models and structures that are found within our society.

The judgment also said " that instead of respecting all types of families, the board chose to follow the lead of certain parents' moral views on homosexual unions, without taking into account the rights of same-sex parents and their children who would benefit from recognition and respect within the school system."

The case began in 1997 when teacher James Chamberlain, who is gay, sought board approval to use the three well known books on children with gay parents in his grade one class. The books initially gained approval when several parents told the board the books were well written.

But, when another group of parents objected on the grounds that their religions are opposed to homosexuality the

school board reversed its stance and banned the books from elementary schools throughout the district.

Chamberlain and others went to court, arguing that the board had no power to ban the books. He also asserted that the book ban violated Canada's Charter of Rights provisions that guarantee equality and bar discrimination against gays and lesbians. A trial judge sided with Chamberlain in 1998, saying public schools must be strictly secular.

The British Columbia Court of Appeal however, reversed the judgment in 2000, saying the books could be banned as classroom learning resources but be made available in the school library.

Gay rights groups praised the newest Supreme Court decision.

"The court today has affirmed the right of children in same-sex parented families to see themselves and their families reflected in the school curriculum," said John Fisher, Egale Canada's executive director.

January 6th 2003 - *Egale list serve* - After a decade of fighting for the rights of gay and lesbians, **John Fisher, the executive director of Egale**, Canada's principle lobbying group, has given in his **resignation**. John plans to pursue his career in international politics and will continue in the struggle for gay and lesbian rights worldwide.

Gilles Marchildon replaces Fisher as the new director general. But to replace Fisher two additional posts needed to be added as well: political director and director of sensitization and research.

Marchildon who is originally from Ontario has been living in Winnipeg for the past seven years. He has worked in marketing and communications and has a degree in political science. He has also been involved in creating gay and lesbian film festivals and writing and editing for GLBT newspapers and magazines.

January 28, 2003 - *Equal Marriage web site* - Similar to the parliamentary commission that preceded the adoption of Quebec's civil union bill, the federal government, has begun **public hearings** on whether to extend **equal marriage**

rights to same-sex couples. Rather than comply with Canada's Charter rights, and despite the direction of four judges from respected courts in Ontario and Quebec, the government continues to defer a decision. Judges in both Ontario and Quebec ruled that our lack of access to the institution of marriage is both discriminatory and unconstitutional. Although the cases will go up to the level of the Supreme Court regardless of these hearings, the government claims to want to hear the views of the Canadian people on this issue.

Where do some of our liberal politicians stand? Well after the Ontario court victory, media from across the country asked that question. Finally, last summer, the *Toronto Star* reported that **Paul Martin**, who will likely lead the liberal party in the coming elections, supported the government's appeal of the same-sex marriage case.

"I think that what we've now got to do is wait for the higher court and take guidance from them," he said.

In January, a potential rival to Martin promised to inject gay marriage as an issue in the Liberal leadership race. **Sheila Copps** promised to use "the pulpit of elected office to push forward full equality for all our citizens" including recognition of gay marriages.

"To me, it is an issue of fundamental human rights. The role of national leaders is to say that you are full members of society."

The first group to testify in the public hearings was **Stats Canada**. The choice was interesting because it shows that the government's preoccupation is with numbers (read: votes) and not necessarily with human rights. At the hearings Stats Canada gave, for the first time, a detailed analysis of the 2001 census :

Across the country 68 400 gays and lesbians in couples stood up and let themselves be counted. This translates to approximately 1 out of every 200 couples. About 45% of the couples were lesbian and 15% of these had kids. In **Quebec 10 360 same-sex couples** declared themselves in the census. The vast majority of these live in urban centers. Of course these numbers are not real, but reflect the number of gays and lesbians who have chosen to divulge their sexual orientati0n to Stats Canada.

On **February 6th 2003**, **Gabriel Pinkstone and Monica Perazzo** presented a brief in the House of Commons at these hearings in the name of the **Lesbian Mothers Association of Quebec**. The **Table de concertation des gais et lesbiennes du Québec** also presented on the same day.

For more information regarding the hearings and the various solutions that the federal government has proposed, you can visit the following web site:

<http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/dept/pub/mar/> (**English**)

For those who are tired of hearing only arguments in favour of same-sex marriage and would like to get the other side of the story please check out this interesting web site:

<http://www.rbebout.com/getfree/index.htm> (**English only**)

INTERNATIONAL

December 4, 2002 - *PlanetOut.com Network and The New York Times* - The **American Law Institute (ALI)** recently released a set of recommendations regarding family law that could alter how the American legal system handles gay and lesbian family cases - by not only defining domestic partnership, but also making **recommendations regarding alimony and child support for domestic partners**.

The report defines domestic partnership as "two persons of the same or opposite sex, not married to one another, who for a significant period of time share a primary residence and a life together as a couple."

It also says that a parent's sexual orientation should not be a factor in decisions on child custody, and that domestic partnerships should be treated like marriage in many important respects. In handling custody disputes, some judges still assume that gays are unfit to be parents. But the American Law Institute declares, "Homosexual conduct, like heterosexual extramarital conduct, should be disregarded unless shown to be harmful to an individual child." Judges, it says, should not be swayed by stereotypes or "prejudicial attitudes."

Alimony for same-sex couples as well is a new concept as few American courts have awarded alimony to domestic partners.

The findings are likely to have a major impact, given the prestige of the institute, a private organization of eminent lawyers, judges and legal scholars that has had immense influence on the development of American law since the group was founded in 1923.

The institute's proposals would expand the number of people who can claim custody of a child or visitation rights. Such claims could be made not only by the legal parents, but also by a "**de facto parent**," defined as an individual who has lived with the child at least two years and "regularly performed a majority of the caretaking functions" without being paid.

According to Elena Cappella, the deputy director of the ALI, most of the current family law still leaves a lot of discretion to the courts. The goal of the recommendations, which the institute spent 10 years preparing, is to put a more fair and efficient system into place that could more easily determine case outcomes, and therefore encourage parties to settle their own disputes outside of court.

December 13, 2002 - *Associated Press* - BUENOS AIRES, **Argentina** - Gay rights activists hailed a new **law extending certain civil rights to same-sex couples** in Buenos Aires, the first Latin American city to adopt such a measure.

Under the law, same-sex couples will receive health insurance and pension rights given to married spouses. The law recognizes the civil union of same-sex couples but does not term the union a marriage.

"For us, the law is the state's recognition of our right to be a couple and will allow us to access social benefits that we were excluded from," said Marcelo Sunthein, an Argentine gay rights activist.

Gay and lesbian groups described the legislation as the most far-reaching in Latin America, despite their disappointment that it does not give gay couples rights to adopt children.

December 30, 2002 - *Gay.com U.K.* - **A Swedish gay rights group is planning to set up an adoption agency for gay clients**, claiming existing agencies won't consider gay couples for international adoptions.

Sweden voted last summer to allow gay adoptions starting Feb. 1. Adoption agencies, however, have said they will not consider gay couples for international adoption because they feel it would destroy relationships with agencies in other countries, many of whom see it as a sensitive issue. The gay rights group RFSL said, however, that this is grossly exaggerated.

"We will work for the establishment of an adoption bureau for homosexuals," Soeren Andersson, chairman of gay rights group RFSL, told the Associated Press.

Iceland and the Netherlands also allow gay couples to adopt children.

December 31, 2002 - *Gay.com / PlanetOut.com* - Finally complying with a 1993 World Health Organization decision, **Thailand** has declared that **homosexuality is neither a mental problem nor a disease**. According to a report last week in the Thai newspaper *Nation*, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) made the declaration in a formal letter. The department's director, Prawate Tantipiwatanasakul, also admitted that the move was 30 years behind the times.

"It is simply a different sexual orientation," he told the newspaper.

The country's leading gay rights group, *Anjaree*, reportedly pressed the DMH to issue the letter as part of the advocates' long-term campaign to gain societal acceptance for same-sex relationships.

December 31, 2002 - *365Gay.com* - The **first gay civil union ceremony in India** has been held under a glare of media attention. Indian fashion designer Wendel Rodricks and his partner, identified in Indian press only as Jerome, a French citizen, exchanged vows at their villa in Goa.

Gay unions are not only illegal in India, but gay sex is punishable by imprisonment.

The couple, who have been together for more than 20 years, spend their time between Paris and Goa. But while the union is recognized in France, it is not in India.

Government officials refused comment, but the public act and the publicity that accompanied it puts increased pressure on the government to strike down the anti-gay laws that date back to the days of the British Empire.

January 27, 2003 - 365Gay.com - In his strongest condemnation yet of same-sex relationships, Pope John Paul II warned against "inauthentic" versions of the family. The pontiff, speaking from his studio window above St. Peter's Square in Rome, said, "A union between a man and woman is the only true one in God's eyes." The pope made the comments to coincide with the ending of the church's world conference on families held in the Philippines - a meeting dominated by exhortations from church officials against divorce, abortion and same-sex marriages. The pope said the meeting reaffirmed that the family based on a union between man and woman was the authentic signal "of life and hope for humanity."

It was the strongest slam at gay families the church has made in what is seen as part of an anti-gay backlash within the faith that includes blaming gay priests for the sex abuse scandal in the American church, which may result in a gay ban in Catholic seminaries.

January 30, 2003 - Gay.com / PlanetOut.com - Belgium has become the second country in the world -- after the Netherlands -- to legally recognize gay marriages. According to the *Associated Press*, lawmakers in the House of Representatives approved the measure by a 91-22 vote, after the bill had already passed in the Senate.

The new law, unlike its counterpart in the Netherlands, **does not allow same-sex married couples to adopt children.**

"It still was a step too far for several parties," said Kristien Grauwels, a Green Party member in the ruling coalition, referring to the other political groups in the government coalition.

MISCELLANEOUS

January 2, 2003 - *Gay.com / PlanetOut.com* - The first baby born in the U.S. capital during 2003 has the added distinction of two lesbian parents. The baby girl was born one minute after midnight on Wednesday to Helen Rubin, 33, and Joanna Bare, 35. The 5-pound, 2-ounce baby arrived two weeks early at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital in Washington, D.C.

Amid the "first-baby" photo sessions and publicity, the parents told reporters that they had just moved to Bethesda, Md., from Vienna, Va., because Virginia laws were less hospitable to alternative families.

Rubin is the biological mother; Bare plans to adopt the child. The couple has been together for 12 years. The child was conceived with the help of a donor who is a family friend but will not act as the father.

January 2, 2003 - The first commercial featuring a same-sex kiss on British television was screened Tuesday night as part of a promotion for sandwich spread.

Story:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/01/02/4>

January 6, 2003 - *Gay.com / PlanetOut.com* - In another interesting birth announcement, representatives of Clonaid, the scientific company affiliated with the Raelian sect, announced that the world's second human clone was born to a Dutch lesbian couple. The group says that the baby girl is a genetic clone of her mother, but the claim has not been independently supported by DNA tests.

Similar tests have not been performed on the first alleged human clone, nicknamed Eve, whose birth was announced by the company on Dec. 27. Brigitte Boisselier, the CEO of Clonaid, told media outlets over the weekend that Eve's parents have grown reluctant to have the infant tested.

The scientific community remains skeptical that the two newborns are actually clones. And Monday's withdrawal by U.S. journalist Michael Guillen from overseeing the DNA testing process raised further speculation that the clone allegations are a hoax. Clonaid was started by the Raelians, an international sect that believes that aliens created life on Earth.

January 13, 2003 - *Gay.com / PlanetOut.com* - French lesbian feminist Monique Wittig, 67, died Jan. 3 of a heart attack

in Tucson, where she taught at the University of Arizona. She is survived by her partner, Sande Zeig. She was eulogized in the *New York Times* as a "theorist whose imaginative, fiercely innovative books tried to create a new mythology for the feminist movement."

Wittig's first book, "*Lopoponax*," won the *Prix Medicis* after it was published in 1964, and started a career that led her to become, as the *Times* put it, possibly "the most discussed, but least read, of all contemporary lesbian authors."

Wittig moved from Paris to the United States in 1977, after publication of "*Le Corps Lesbien*," a novel of women invading each other's bodies, as well as "*Brouillon Pour Un Dictionnaire des Amants*" ("*Material for a Dictionary of Lovers*"). She received her PhD in 1990, and began teaching at Arizona shortly thereafter.

January 21, 2003 - *Gay.com U.K.* - Publisher Macmillan is taking the potentially controversial step of **publishing a picture book for children centered around a gay theme**, according to *the Guardian*, a U.K. newspaper.

"*Hello, Sailor*" tells the story of a lighthouse keeper and his sailor friend. The precise nature of their relationship is not spelled out, but the publisher hopes it will spark debate on same-sex relationships. Matt, the lighthouse keeper keeps watching the seas for his friend Sailor to return. He can think of nothing else. Friends are doubtful, however, that Sailor will ever come back from his travels. But - as readers expect - Sailor returns, they spend the night together, and the next day set sail to see the world.

The publisher said the book, released in time for Valentine's Day, could have "crossover" appeal among adults.

"It's a book, for instance, that you might decide to share with a child to show that relationships between men are OK," Kate Wilson, children's books publisher at Macmillan, told *the Guardian*. "And, we have also had feedback that the book could draw in sales as an alternative Valentine's Day gift."

January 31, 2003 - WASHINGTON - In honor of **Black History Month**, two new online resources were unveiled by the Human

Rights Campaign Foundation. 'African Americans and Coming Out,' a publication of HRC's National Coming Out Project, focuses on the unique experiences of coming out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender in the African-American community. 'Celebrating Diversity,' also a web-based project, spotlights the contributions of GLBT African Americans and will be expanded in future months to highlight the diversity of other cultures within the GLBT community.

To read African Americans and Coming Out, go to:

<http://www.hrc.org/ncop/diversity/aa/index.asp>

To visit Celebrating Diversity, go to:

<http://www.hrc.org/diversity>

News from the Lesbian Mothers Association

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

MARCH

For adults and kids: On **SUNDAY MARCH 30** the **Lesbian Mothers Association** will have a **SUGARING-OFF PARTY** at **CAP-ST-JACQUES (Pierrefonds)**. This is a wonderful small farm, in a beautiful location, on the Island of Montreal. The event will begin at **10:45 a.m.** A full lunch will be served between 11:00 and 12:30 p.m. Following this, there will be a guided tour, horse-drawn sleigh rides of the property, as well as sugar-candy ("tire") preparation and tasting in a giant tee-pee. Our space must be reserved, so we are asking people to pay in advance. If you are interested in participating **please fill out the form that we sent you before March 1st.** For more info call: 514-846-1543.

APRIL

For adults only: The **Lesbian Mothers Association's Annual General Assembly** will be held on **Saturday April 5th 2003** at **8 p.m.** The agenda includes: election of members to the administrative council, the 2002-2003 financial statement, as well as the budget for the year to come. Projects for the year 2003-2004 will be explained and a lively discussion about including fathers into our association

will take place. All members are welcome. Further information will be sent to you in March.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A message for women who are trying to conceive: I (Catherine Derry) have started a web group called "Lesbians trying to get pregnant". Sort of a community online support for those of us who are trying to get pregnant. I thought to share it with the group, as I am sure that my partner and I aren't the only ones trying right now.

I am not sure about the bilingual part, I am the moderator and I could not respond to French posts. But if I had someone who was French that joined we could certainly make it bilingual and people could post in whatever language they feel comfortable in.

To join you must email:

lesbians_trying_to_get_pregnant-subscribe@yahoogroups.ca

Women from Sherbrooke or Magog! I have two places in my car to go to Montreal for AML activities for adults only. If you're interested in car-pooling with me, call me: **Annie (819) 563-2288.**

The bulletin board is a free forum for members to communicate amongst each other. If you want to post an announcement (birth, adoption, birth day wishes, etc.) or any type of note in the next issue please send it to us at any time to info@aml-lma.org or by post to AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8

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.