

# LESBIAN MOTHERS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2003

## Same-Sex Marriage: A Personal View of the News

In the Western world, marriage has been the hottest gay and lesbian issue for the past decade. In reality however, I know that our members do not all hold the same level of interest in this subject. There are some amongst us who have devoted much of our free time and energy to this cause that has become emblematic of freedom of choice and equal treatment under the law. Others, who are already satisfied with the full protections for our families that we received under Quebec's Bill 84 may understand the symbolic importance of the issue, but just can't seem to muster up the energy to fight in the same way that we did when it was a question of our children being able to have two legally recognized parents. And then there are those of us who are downright against marriage. We have been through sticky divorces, we are schooled in feminism and feel that marriage has always been a patriarchal institution or we just simply find it unappealing or unhip to buy into the same package that our parents did 40 years ago. Sometimes this fight just feels like a lot of work with less of a personal edge to it.

At the beginning of the July, happily riding the wave of a number of extremely positive news articles on same-sex marriage, I sat down to pen a story on the international parenting conference that we will be holding in conjunction with Montreal's Gay Games in 2006. I promise you will see that article later this year!

The Ontario Court of Appeal had just passed a decision stating that to deny gays and lesbians access to the institution of marriage was unconstitutional and that marriage should be open to any two consenting adults regardless of their gender. This decision was effective immediately. Champagne bottles were popped. A rash of marriages quickly followed and there are now quite a few Canadian and even some American gay and lesbian couples that are legally wedded. Toronto's city hall was unusually busy this summer. The provincial government decided not to

appeal the case to the Supreme Court (they knew they would lose) and then, the cherry on the sundae, Jean Chretien himself, as well as Martin Cauchon, the minister of Justice, actually publicly and clearly stated that they supported same sex marriage. So it was in the bag.

Later on in the month I even found myself sporting a smug attitude toward my American friends. Not only did we have birth certificates with both moms names on them, but now, like the Netherlands and Belgium we would be getting our own queer version of "something borrowed something blue". Meanwhile in a nervous backlash, American Republicans were drafting bills to ensure that the same sort of shenanigans wouldn't come to pass south of the border.

Then in mid July, after celebrating what seemed like the inevitable adoption of gay marriage, the backlash here in Canada began in earnest. First of all: the Vatican. I am sure that if I were tested on my ability to control my own physiological response I would excel. Here's my trick. When I want to raise my blood pressure, quicken my pulse and set into motion all the classic fight-or-flight mechanisms I just have to think of all the heinous messages that come out of the Vatican with respect to gays and lesbians. From the people who brought us the idea of renouncing condoms in the age of AIDS (and continue to preach this), who took hundreds of years to apologize for the Spanish Inquisition and are still not admitting to their guilt during the Holocaust (this may not be diplomatic, but I told you it was a personal point of view), we now have the Pope calling us "deviant" and "harmful to the common good" and making, despite vast scientific evidence to the contrary, statements like the following: "allowing children to be adopted by persons living in such unions would actually mean doing violence to these children ... (placing) them in an environment that is not conducive to their full human development."

Representatives of the Vatican have actually threatened major politicians, like Chretien and Paul Martin (who is supposedly a devout Catholic) saying that their souls will go to hell if they allow the institution of marriage to be altered. This is a move that reminds me of tactics that I use when I'm literally at wit's end with my own kids: when you run out of logical arguments, resort to threats.... Good.

[To be fair, a number of Catholic clerics in Quebec did, to their credit, either remain silent on the issue of same-sex marriage or BRAVO, actually decided not to tow the Vatican party-line and have publicly supported same-sex marriage despite the potential risk to their careers and future promotions.]

Then on top of this, I am sitting under a pile of newspaper clippings telling me that federal MPs are currently in the process of mounting a rebellion against the Chretien government because they are being "forced" by the courts, against the will of the people who elected them, to allow gays and lesbians to actually commit to their spouses in a public and legally binding manner through the institution of marriage. Once again we are being touted as the destroyers of the fabric of society...

I knew that it wasn't quite party time when liberal MP Marlene Jennings, a friend and ally, approached our kiosk on community day and begged us to barrage our local MPs with letters asking for the right to marry. Apparently, since the first wave of positive news in June the politicians' offices have been flooded by thousands of letters from folks on the religious right who are determined to keep us down. They are complaining that their constituents do not want heterosexual marriage to be tampered with. And because the marriage bill will be a free vote of conscience (individual MPs will not have to tow the party line) we stand a chance that the bill will not pass.

As it stands now apparently 114 MPs support same-sex legislation, 123 oppose it and 64 are on the fence. So we have some work to do. As the English newspaper *The Gazette* proudly blared on their front page the day of the hugest pride parade in Quebec history (yes 800,000 people actually attended): "Le Party's Over."

Okay, they were referring to the Francofolie Festival, but let's be honest, even the stupidest editor wouldn't have failed to realize the smack in the face effect that this would have for gays and lesbians on the day of their biggest bash of the year... Are people really beginning to think that we have lost this fight?

Now let me tell you what I think about to lower my pulse and heart rate, calm my system. Okay, take a deep breath...

First of all, Canada is a secular not religious state. Second, Canada is a constitutional democracy not a parliamentary democracy. What this means in simple terms is that the average person trusts the wisdom and ability of a Supreme Court judge far above that of the average crowd-pleasing politician, when it comes to making the right decisions and doing the right thing. And so, for better or worse, that is how our country is structured. When a law is challenged in the highest courts, if the judges decide that it does not comply with our constitution and charter of rights then their decision must be accepted. Like it or not, when the courts say that marriage should be opened to gays and lesbians the government must comply. The famous "notwithstanding clause" which gives the government supposed power to opt out of an unpopular court decision actually endangers the very essence of what Canada and our charter of rights and freedoms is about. So it is a clause that the government will simply not use.

Let's face it. Our government cannot just pull out the carpet on a major Court decision. Because the court has decided in our favour it is really not a question of whether or not we will be allowed to marry, *but when*. How many bills will the government have to put forward before the wording actually pleases a majority and complies with the fact that gays and lesbians must be allowed to marry. How long will it take for a majority of MPs to understand that there really is no choice here. The smarter ones have already come to that conclusion.

So at this point let me tell you where I personally stand. Nicole and I will be celebrating our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary next May and we (with a bit of a push from our kids) have decided that we really do want to tie the knot in the old fashioned way. We're decidedly in love...but that was never in question...marriage won't change that for us. But we do want to do it as a gesture for our families and especially for our kids.

So once again I'm getting out the envelopes and I'm going to write some letters (granted they'll be short) to a few MPs asking for the right to be recognized as an equal citizen. I'm also doing it because I'm sick and tired of hearing the voices of the religious and conservative right belittling my family and rejecting Nicole and me as being inferior to the rest of Canadians.

If you want to do the same and don't know who your local MP is check out the following web-site:  
**[www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/house/PostalCode.asp](http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/house/PostalCode.asp)**  
and enter your postal code.  
Don't forget the confetti!!!

**Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to [info@aml-lma.org](mailto:info@aml-lma.org) or by post to AML, 2401 Coursol, Montreal, Quebec, H3J 1C8**

## **News Briefs- May 2003-August 2003**

### **Montreal News**

**May 10 - Police arrested 34 people** in a raid at a strip bar in the city's Gay Village. Witnesses said more than a dozen officers swarmed into the **Taboo club**. A Montreal police spokesman said the raid was the result of a five-month investigation that had been prompted by a complaint that underage teens were working as strippers in the bar and that strippers were engaging in sex with customers. Those detained included four customers and 23 dancers, one of whom was described as a minor.

Although representatives from the village's police station 22 came to answer questions at the June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the *Table de concertation des lesbiennes et gais du Québec*, the arrests have created a rift within the community. Denis Daniel Boulé of *Fugues* magazine, a gay and lesbian publication, as well as Louis Godbout, of the *Archives gais du Québec* have started a public petition to denounce the lack of action in this dossier on the part of the TCLGQ. According to them, the police did not deal with this case in a sensitive manner. Bar owners were not sufficiently warned that laws were being broken and that a raid would take place.

**Diane Labelle**, Co-president of the *Table* said: "My personal position is that we are no different than others. In respect to illegal activity, it is clear to me that the law is to be applied to us as to all. This whole situation is another indication of wanting to create separate and distinct laws for gays, rather than equality".

Labelle however expressed concern about "how the police seek to intervene in our bars, and the consequences on innocent people who happen to frequent these bars. Bad publicity in respect to what happens in the village and our bars is often used differently than it would be used were it to happen in a heterosexual situation". Police retained none of the clients who were not engaged in illegal activities.

**July 5-** In another loss to Montreal's lesbian community, the lesbian group **Les Ex-Entre-Elles** advised us that they will no longer function. A social group who's stated role was "for breaking the isolation of lesbians and making new friends" closed its doors due to personal reasons.

**July 7- Two Arabic Druze lesbians from Israel** who have been residing in Montreal for the past few months have finally been **granted refugee status**. They were accepted from the bench, with very strong reasons stressing the credibility of their testimony and the intersection of gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity to explain the absence of State protection.

The **Lesbian Mothers Association** was actively involved in their case in terms of providing lodging, help and support. Immigration **lawyer Noel St-Pierre**, impressed with this collective gesture of solidarity, stated that the work of our members should be "an inspiration for people to want to get involved in protection issues for lesbians internationally.»

**July 29- August 3-** Montreal celebrated its **11<sup>th</sup> annual Gay Pride week**. The week opened with the **Gala Prix Arc-en-ciel**, which is an awards ceremony to honour individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to Quebec's LGBT communities. A number of AML members were actively involved in this year's gala: **Gabriel Pinkstone** acted as artistic director of the event that featured a number of excellent performances including lesbian acrobats from the *Cirque du Soleil*. **Marie-France Bureau** co-hosted the event and **Mona Greenbaum**, AML coordinator, was president of the jury that chose this year's awards.

The evening was filled with highlights. The *Prix culture* went to **Steve Galluccio** for his play and screen-play *Mambo Italiano*. **Miriam Ginestier** who had been nominated in this

category was awarded the "prix Hommage" in honour of her 10 years of work in Montreal's underground lesbian cultural scene. This year on June 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at *Le Lion d'Or*, Miriam's show, *Le Boudoir*, brought together, once again an amazing array of professional lesbian talent in a cabaret like atmosphere. Miriam is also known for her involvement in the Meow Mix and Studio 303. Montreal's lesbian entertainment scene would be much different if it wasn't for her.

The *Prix Sportif* went to **Les Amazones des grands espaces**, a huge lesbian group that holds all types of sporting events from hiking and skiing to kayaking and mountain climbing.

Positive advances made this year by our community in terms fighting homophobia in the schools were also honoured through the *Prix Organisme* given to **GRIS Montreal** for having carried out workshops with over 10,000 high school students and the *Prix Action Sociale* which was awarded to **Martine Fortier and Paul Trottier** who work respectively for the the **Public Health Department** and the **Montreal School Commission**. Fortier and Trottier were instrumental in putting together a tool-box for teachers to help them deal with homophobia.

The grand prize this year went to **Laurent McCutcheon**, president of **Gai-écoute** (the telephone help line) and the **Fondation Emergence** for his activism over the years and especially this year for creating the Journée de lutte contre l'homophobie (Day to fight against homophobia).

Two special awards were created this year. A new Prix Education was given to **Michel Dorais** for his work relating to gay teen suicide at the Université de Laval à Québec and a Prix International given to **Roberto Jovel** of the **LGBT rights division of Amnesty International**.

**Viviane Namaste** was given a special mention award for her activism in transgender issues and the Arc-en-ciel jury formally adopted a motion to henceforth include at least one jury member who is either transgendered or has in-depth knowledge of the transgendered community.

The following **Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>**, the **Journée communautaire** took place. The event was a big success with 20% more kiosks than usual. A combination of the cooler weather, an arts and crafts activity put together by **Lauren Beauchamp** and a giant inflatable Unicorn trampoline, brought more people to

our kiosk than in any other year. The trampoline was graciously donated by *Divers-Cité* who are increasingly aware that kids are as much a part of gay pride as adults!

On Sunday an estimated **800.000 spectators watched the parade**. We were 2nd in line, right after ***Divers-Cité*** who warmed up the crowd for us with their great music. This was probably the best pride we've had since the good old days on St-Denis. Many thanks to all whose hard work and continuous devotion to our group made the journée communautaire and the parade a huge success.

## **Provincial news**

**June 17** - Although the **federal government** has decided to drop out of the appeal of the **same sex marriage case** which they initiated in **Quebec**, the **Evangelical Fellowship and the Catholic League for Human Rights** are still solidly opposed to gay and lesbian access to civil marriage. Because of this **Michael Hendricks and René Leboeuf** will continue their fight, arguing the justice and equality of same-sex marriage on **September 25th** at Le Palais de justice de Montréal (while lots of couples are happily married in Ontario and in BC). Michael and René extend an open invitation to anyone who is interested in coming to hear the shenanigans.

## **Canadian News**

**June 13 - SURREY, B.C.** - The school board in Surrey, B.C., says it has **banned three books about same-sex parents** not because of anti-gay sentiment, but for other reasons, including poor grammar.

Six years ago, the school board had banned the three books *Belinda's Bouquet*, *Asha's Mums* and *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads* because they dealt with same-sex parents. The Supreme Court of Canada later told the board to review its decision and look at the books using the criteria they'd use to approve any other books.

The board came to the same conclusion, but for different reasons this time. "This story has problems with punctuation and grammar throughout. The spelling of 'favourite' is inconsistent, switching from the Canadian to the American," said board chair Mary Polak about *Asha's Mums*.

Joe Arvay, the lawyer for the petitioners, called this outcome predictable. "It's a most regrettable decision. The reasons struck me as entirely phoney," Arvay said. He said he'll consult his clients to determine where to proceed.

**July 30** - *Associated Press* - **VANCOUVER, British Columbia** - A 19-year-old man **pleaded guilty to manslaughter** in the beating death of a gay man that shocked and galvanized Vancouver's GLBT community. The defendant, who cannot be identified under Canadian law because he was under 18 when the crime occurred, confirmed he understood the charge in his only comments in court.

Aaron Webster, 41, died in the arms of his friend on Nov. 17, 2001, in Vancouver's Stanley Park, an area frequented by gay men seeking sex.

**August 1** - **Egale Canada's** Executive Director, Gilles Marchildon, is pleased to announce that **Laurie Arron** has been hired as the new **Director of Advocacy**. Egale is Canada's national organization committed to advancing equality and justice for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people (LGBT), and their families.

"Laurie brings a deep knowledge of the legal and political struggles that Canada's LGBT communities have faced," declared Marchildon. His hiring comes at a critical time for Egale. The organization is in the midst of an intense advocacy campaign to convince Canada's parliamentarians to support equal marriage for same-sex couples. At the same time, Egale is engaged in amending hate propaganda laws, making gender identity a prohibited ground of discrimination, reforming antiquated bawdy house laws, making schools safe for LGBT youth, parenting and reproductive issues, and fighting censorship and unfair targeting of LGBT book stores.

## **Gay marriage - Canada - A Time Line**

**May 1** - The British Columbia Court of Appeal says that the government should recognize gay marriage when it overturns a British Columbia Supreme Court ruling that said marriage should be restricted to heterosexuals. It gives Ottawa until July 12, 2004 to change the law preventing gays and lesbians from marrying.

**May 8** - During a debate in parliament on the same sex marriage issue, New Brunswick Progressive Conservative MP Elsie Wayne tells the House it is time for gays to get back in the closet "where they belong." "If they are going to live together, they can go live together and shut up about it," Wayne says.

**Late May** - The parliamentary commission on Justice and Human Rights submits a report based on cross-Canada public hearings on the subject of same-sex marriage. The report recommends ending the prohibition on same-sex marriage.

**June 10** - The Ontario Appeal Court rules in favour of same-sex marriage in a decision that effectively deems Canadian law on traditional marriage unconstitutional. The three-person court rules that the federal law limiting marriage to heterosexuals violates the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of the Canadian Constitution. The decision is made effective immediately.

At a Parliament Hill news conference, representatives of the Liberals, Tories, New Democrats and Bloc Quebecois release statements supporting marriage. Only the opposition Canadian Alliance Party refuses to endorse legalizing gay marriage.

Polls indicate a slight majority of Canadians favour legalization of same-sex marriages.

Within hours of the ruling plaintiffs Michael Leshner and Michael Stark are married in a civil ceremony in front of a group of about fifty friends. Several other couples are issued marriage licenses.

**June 13** - 89 licences have been issued to same-sex couples in the greater Toronto area, 70 of them at Toronto City Hall. 49 of these were issued to "male couples" and 40 to "female couples." Applicants include individuals and couples from New Brunswick, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Cayman Islands, England and China.

**June 17** - After a lengthy cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Jean Chretien makes the announcement that the government will not appeal the June 10 ruling of the Ontario Court of Appeals and will drop similar appeals in BC and QC. The Canadian government will rewrite the federal definition of

marriage to include same-sex couples, and put the bill to a parliamentary vote.

"We'll be proposing legislation that will protect the right of churches and religious organizations to sanctify marriage as they define it," says Chretien. "At the same time, we will ensure that our legislation includes and legally recognizes the union of same-sex marriage."

Chretien also says that legislation to legalize civil marriage for same-sex couples will be referred to the Canadian Supreme Court for an advisory ruling to ensure its constitutionality, before being submitted to the House of Commons for a free vote. This will ensure that the new law cannot be avoided or challenged in court.

**June 24** - On the eve of Toronto's Gay Pride celebrations, the city announces it will extend the hours at the City Hall marriage license office to better accommodate the expected onslaught of same-sex couples looking to legally marry.

**June 30** - A proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage in the United States gets support from the Senate majority leader. Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn, says he feels marriage is a sacrament and should only include a union of a man and a woman.

An American federal law already defines marriage for purposes of all federal rights and programs. The Defense of Marriage Act was signed into law in 1996 and defines marriage as the legal union of one man and one woman.

**July 5** - Canada's Minister of Justice puts the finishing touches on legislation to grant marriage to same-sex couples across Canada.

**July 8** - The high court of British Columbia lifts its moratorium on same-sex marriage, making a two-month-old ruling in favor of legal marriage effective immediately. B.C. plaintiffs Anthony Porcino and Tom Graff are married in Vancouver within minutes of the announcement.

**July 17** - The Canadian government proposes a new law that would guarantee gay marriage rights throughout the country. In it, the government revises the legal definition of marriage and submits the draft bill, known as the *Act Respecting Certain Aspects of Legal Capacity for Marriage*,

to the Supreme Court for review. If the justices find the bill is constitutional, it will go to Parliament for a vote.

"Marriage for civil purposes is the lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others," the draft bill states.

The government asks the Supreme Court to consider three specific issues: Parliament's legal authority to define marriage, the proposed bill's compatibility with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and constitutional protection for religious leaders who refuse to sanctify same-sex marriages.

**July 29** - A CNN/USA Today poll that seems to show growing intolerance against gays. According to the survey, support for legalizing adult consensual homosexual relations actually dropped significantly, from 60% in May to 48% in July.

**July 31** - As expected, the Vatican releases guidelines on condemning the legal recognition of same-sex unions, urging Catholic politicians to stop "the approval of deviant behavior." Directed to Roman Catholic bishops and legislators worldwide, the guidelines declare that lawmakers have a "moral duty" to oppose laws that grant legal status to gay couples.

"To vote in favor of a law so harmful to the common good is gravely immoral," the document says.

**August 2** - With an already overloaded schedule the Supreme Court refuses to "fast track" the same-sex marriage bill. This effectively ensures that the bill will not be voted on in the fall of 2003.

**Mid August** - Resentment and dissent amongst liberal MP backbenchers mounts over the gay marriage issue.

**August 19** - Prime Minister Jean Chretien makes an impassioned speech to the liberal caucus in defense of same-sex marriage at their annual retreat in North Bay Ontario.

## **International News**

**June 11** - *Gay.com UK* - **Jerusalem's second Gay Pride parade**, "Love without Borders," scheduled for June 13, was postponed after the city experienced one of its worst suicide bomb attacks. The **bomb** killed 16 people aboard a packed bus during the city's rush hour and injured up to 100 others.

**June 26** - *Planet Out and HRC News* - The **U.S. Supreme Court** delivered the most powerful gay rights opinion in American history, overturning a Texas law that led to the arrest of two men for having consensual sex at home.

Written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, the 6-3 decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* **strikes down sodomy laws** in 13 states and overturns the infamous 1986 opinion in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. In *Bowers*, a 5-4 majority upheld Georgia's sodomy law on the basis of traditional morality.

Human Rights Campaign Executive Director Elizabeth Birch said, "We are elated and gratified that the Supreme Court, in its wisdom, has seen discriminatory state sodomy laws for what they are - divisive, mean-spirited laws that were designed to single out and marginalize an entire group of Americans for unequal treatment."

"There is no realm of lesbian or gay life -- public or private -- that has not been devastated by the existence of laws that criminalize adult, consensual, private sexual activity," said Kate Kendell, executive director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "These laws have been used to justify discrimination in employment, adoption, custody, immigration and virtually every other arena of daily life. This ruling will forever change the lives of every lesbian and gay man in this country."

The decision is based on the privacy rights embedded in the 14th Amendment's order that no state "shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Further, the opinion also clearly articulated in no uncertain terms the basic equality and humanity owed to gay men and lesbians under the Constitution.

Ruth Harlow, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund's lead attorney in the case, called the opinion "magnificent." She said the opinion will have strong repercussions for the future of gay rights litigation in other areas.

The Lawrence v. Texas case stemmed from the 1998 arrest of two Houston men who were having sex in their own bedroom when the police entered their home on a false emergency call. The two men, John Lawrence and Tyron Garner, were arrested and jailed for a night.

In a press release, Lambda Legal Defense said the high court ruling "starts an entirely new chapter in our fight for equality for lesbians and gay men."

**June 29** - *Hindustan Times* - **India** saw its **first ever gay pride march**, christened 'Walk on the Rainbow.' Organised by Integration Society, an organisation that has been working with lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT) for several decades, the march in **Kolkata (formerly Calcutta)** commenced from the Park Circus Maidan and made its way to Dhakuria Lake.

The march was also supported by **LGBT India**, a network of more than a hundred organisations working for sexual minorities in the country.

**July 4** - *BBC News* - **Singapore** has begun **employing homosexuals within the government**, in a reversal of its previous policy. Gay people are now allowed to work in "certain positions in government", Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said in an interview with *Time magazine*, excerpts of which were released by his office.

"In the past, if we know you're gay, we would not employ you but we just changed this quietly," he told the magazine. Mr Goh also said that, although the government had relaxed its stance with regard to government jobs, Singapore would still not consider decriminalising homosexuality.

Gay rights groups have responded with cautious optimism to the announcement.

**July 7** - Dr. Jeffrey John -- who would have been the first openly gay Anglican bishop -- has stepped down as bishop-elect of Reading.

For more information:

**<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/07/07/4>**

**July 22** - Two Argentine men were united in a civil union on Friday in Buenos Aires, becoming the first pair to take

advantage of the city's new law recognizing same-sex couples.

For more information:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/07/22/4>

**July 23** - *Gay.com U.K.* - A **shopping mall** dedicated to gay consumers opened last week in **Brazil**. The Victor and Victoria shopping center is in Sao Paulo and has a rainbow painted on its ceiling. There are 34 shops in the complex, selling clothes, underwear, home furnishings, wigs and sex toys, among other items. The center also houses a travel agency that works exclusively with gay people.

Creator of the project, Vitoria Cury, told *Jornal da Tarde* online: "I am against any kind of prejudice and will not exploit the gay image. I really adore them."

**August 5** - GLBT leaders told a United Nations panel that all international human rights treaties should include gay rights.

For more information:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/08/05/4>

**August 5** - The Episcopal Church made history confirming the nomination of the church's first openly gay bishop, the Rev. Gene Robinson.

For more information:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/08/05/1>

**August 6** - Immediate threats of schism in the worldwide Anglican Church were the result of the U.S. vote to confirm openly gay Rev. Gene Robinson as bishop coadjutor of the diocese of New Hampshire.

For more information:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/08/06/2>

**August 12** - The American Bar Association (ABA) passed a resolution in support of joint and second-parent adoptions on a voice vote, during the organization's annual convention in San Francisco.

For more information:

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2003/08/12/2>

## **RESEARCH**

According to a new report from **Save the Children**, a global relief and development organization. The top ten best

countries in the world in which to be a mother are Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Finland, Canada, Netherlands, Australia, Austria and the United Kingdom, To read the report "State of the World's Mothers 2003" check out:  
<http://www.cwhn.ca/hot/news/default.html#swm03>

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

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

#### **SEPTEMBER:**

**Adults only: Saturday September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. Welcoming Party!!!** A chance for old and new members of the group to get to know each other and catch up after summer holidays. We will meet on the **3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Drugstore at 1366 Ste-Catherine Est (metro Beaudry) in the gay village.** Bring some pizza, natchos or drinks on your way up!

#### **OCTOBER: (2 good events on the same day!)**

**For adults only: Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 pm. Workshop: Big Life Choices: (see enclosed flier) Discussion Group and Hors d'œuvres** (Mexican and Indian food). Insemination? Adoption? Who carries the baby? What type of donor? Now or later? There are so many choices to be made... Come hear from some of the mothers in the group who have started their families in many different ways. Open discussion for us all to obsess about choices.

**Place: 6642A Christophe Colomb (metro Beaubien)**

**Kids and Adults: Saturday October 25th, 11 a.m.-3p.m. Halloween party!!**

What to wear: A Halloween costume!

Activities: Pumpkin decorating and crafts and entertainment for the kids. Potluck lunch. If you can: please bring something good to eat or drink (no peanut products please because of allergies). **Call us for suggestions at 514-846-1543.**

**Place: Unitarian Church 5035 de Maisonneuve West, corner Claremont (metro Vendome)**

Suggested price: \$5 / family.

#### **NOVEMBER**

**For adults only: Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 p.m. Workshop: The Roller Coaster (see enclosed flier). Discussion Group and Hors d'œuvres (Italian food).** Trying to Get Pregnant? Planning to use a friend's sperm or doing inseminations with a clinic? Whether you are

fertile or not, this can be one of the most frustrating and stressful times of your life. Come and vent with us and share the wisdom of those who have been through the process.

**Place: 4734 St André (métro Mont Royal)**

## **BULLETIN BOARD**

### **MISCELLANEOUS :**

**Are there any new moms out there who want to get together for coffee and conversation? If interested, call Suzie at 514-842-6884.**

**Bonjour à toutes ! Nous venons tout récemment d'emménager dans la ville de Québec et nous trouverions enrichissant de rencontrer d'autres mères et futurs mères lesbiennes comme que nous. Alors si ça vous intéresse, écrivez-nous ! À bientôt! Marie-Christyne Élie & Mélanie Lambert [Mariechristyne@hotmail.com](mailto:Mariechristyne@hotmail.com)**

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**Batshaw Youth and Family Centres** is encouraging English speaking and bilingual lesbian couples, and singles, to consider becoming **foster parents**. There are babies, pre-schoolers and older children who are waiting for a foster home. For some the plan will be to help them return to their families. For other children, the plan will be to work toward **adoption**. What a remarkable feeling it is to know you have made a difference in the life of a child by providing a stable, safe and loving environment. For more information, please call, **Rena Rubin, Foster Care Recruiter, at 932-7161, local 416, or send an e-mail to [rena\\_rubin@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:rena_rubin@ssss.gouv.qc.ca).**

**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 [info@aml-lma.org](mailto: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.**

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