



Coalition des familles homoparentales

LGBT Family Coalition

NEWSLETTER - VOLUME XV - No. 1 – September 2013

LGBT FAMILY COALITION: THE YEAR TO COME!

By Mona Greenbaum, executive director, LGBT Family Coalition

Welcome back!

Fall is almost here, and for many families it's back to the routine of school and extracurricular activities... It's an exciting time of year and it's the beginning of the year for the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual) Family Coalition as well.

At the Coalition it's been 8 months since we've moved into our new offices in Old Montreal, in the Maison Parent-Roback. We have a great space where you can come by and visit us, check out our parenting resources, and share any concerns or questions you might have. Also we are proud to announce that we have a new part-time employee: Kévin Lavoie. Kévin will be working with the Coalition to develop new tools and resources. With his background in social work and research and all his community experience, Kévin is a great asset to our organization.

What's coming up for this year?

We thought to give you a bit of a scoop about just a few of the activities that are coming up. Members will, of course, get all this information through our newsletter and by e-mail every month, but just to give you a sneak preview:

For future parents we are changing our format this year. Instead of carrying out monthly workshops over the course of the year we have decided to try out a "weekend intensive" format. Two full days of information and exchanging between parents and future parents. Our first intensive will be held on October 5th and 6th. Reservations are on a first come first serve basis up to 40 people. This should fill up quickly, but don't worry we will repeat the same gig in February 2014. We will also continue our series for future parents in Quebec City and we're planning some activities in other regions as well.

And for those who already have kids, we have two great conferences planned. In the fall the "Enfin je dors" talk will be about how to get your young child to finally sleep through the night. And then later on in the year we will have a conference about strategies to negotiate our busy lives... "Pour parents débordés et en manque d'énergie" ("For Overwhelmed and Overworked Parents"): sound familiar?

Aside from the usual family activities (Halloween activity, Christmas party, Cabane à sucre, Camping trip, etc.) to start the year right we will be carrying out a fabulous Family Picnic at Jenna and Eby's organic farm in Chatham (near Lachute). This will be a great way for parents and kids to make new friends and to touch base with old ones. Food will be available on site or you can bring your own picnic (see the attached flier).

And what other projects?

As you know, one of the main objectives of the Coalition is to carry out diversity training to help professionals who work youth and families to become more inclusive in their practices and to fight against discrimination.

In connection with this, a few months ago we received a grant from Quebec's Justice Ministry to go into the twelve Education faculties across Quebec. The idea is to promote our training sessions so that an increasing number of future teachers will have followed our session. These young teachers will soon be working in schools with our kids.

This is all part of the general work that we do in daycares, primary schools, high schools and universities. Over the past 4 years, our two teams, based in Montreal and Quebec City, have trained more than 7000 professionals in 13 regions of Quebec and have distributed close to 6000 resource kits.

Right now we are also working to bring these kits up to date. Aside from including a lot of new and innovative resources for teachers, youth workers, social workers and psychologists (amongst other professionals) we will also have new sections on Quebec's recent law about intimidation (loi 56) and special resources to help physical education teachers work against homophobia.

We are also putting the finishing touches on a legal guide for LGBT parents and future parents that we have been working on for the past 2 years with McGill law students. This is sure to be useful for the many people who call us every week with legal questions.

And as usual, we will continue to advocate around all kinds of parenting issues. So far from all the calls we are receiving from journalists, it looks like this year's hot topics will include: assisted procreation, adoption and surrogacy.

How to help out?

Let's face it, what we need most is funding: we are not rich...So, even if you live far away or are too busy to join us for our activities, becoming a member helps us to continue our good work both within and outside of the LGBT community. The cost of renewing your membership is less than going out to a film with the kids. If every family that received this newsletter would renew their membership, we would be able to hire a second full-time employee and double the number of teachers and social workers that we train each year.

But we also need your time. What makes us one of the most successful groups is all our volunteers. The parents and future parents that become involved in the group stay with us because they know that they are part of a movement that is creating social change. By working together we were able to change laws about our families, have access to adoption and fertility clinics, get married. Now we have the chance to work on people's attitudes. This is a big job, but so important for our kids.

Helping us out through your membership, through a donation or by volunteering your time is always appreciated and the only way that we can work towards making the world a kinder place for our kids.

Hope to hear from you or see you soon!

Interested in writing for our newsletter? Send your articles at any time to info@familleshomoparentales.org or by post to CFH, 110, rue Sainte-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6

News Briefs: May - August 2013

Quebec News

May 23 - The Quebec government announced it will keep funding **assisted procreation** for the time being but will review whether to continue offering the program free of charge to couples seeking reproduction treatments. Minister of Health Réjean Hébert noted that the cost of the program has skyrocketed since it was introduced in 2010, costing the province about \$60-million in 2012-2013 for 8045 cycles of in vitro fertilization (IVF).

According to Gaétan Barrette, head of the Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec (FMSQ), the province's assisted procreation program should be restricted to couples with medical infertility problems rather than offered like "an open bar" to anyone who wants a baby.

One month after the provincial Health ministry ordered **public consultations** to review its popular three-year-old government-subsidized in vitro fertilization program, Quebec medical specialists, gynaecologists and paediatricians weighed in with a call for stricter criteria and guidelines, including age limits.

Barrette also cited a case of inadequate screening at a Montreal clinic, which led to a baby being placed in youth protection after the mother was found unfit to keep the child. "Right now, anyone can shop around from clinic to clinic."

In the brief submitted by the FMSQ, Barrette also questioned whether or not the public system should cover treatment when infertility was not caused by biological factors alone. "While single mothers and same-sex couples make wonderful parents, homosexuality is not an illness." Ironically, none of Quebec's 79 fertility specialists were consulted for this brief.

Consultations led by Robert Salois, head of the Quebec Health and Welfare Commission, will look at the clinical, scientific, ethical, social, legal, organizational and economic issues of assisted reproduction. The **LGBT Family Coalition** has filed recommendations for the public consultation and will meet with the commission in early September. The commission is not expected to report on its findings before 2014.

July 9 - Quebec musician **Ariane Moffatt** and her partner Florence Marcil-Denault, are now mothers. In fact, Florence just gave birth to **twins**, two little boys. Ariane announced the news via Twitter.

"It's done! They're with us, the Marcil-Moffatt boys, and in good health! Four little feet made for walking... together. Pure joy. 09/07/13", wrote the singer. The weights and names of the boys are not known for now. The parents, more than accustomed to being in the public eye, most likely want some private time as a new family.

Ariane Moffatt will be on sabbatical for the coming year to assume her new role as mom. She gave her last show during the FrancoFolies in Montréal, on June 13th.

Canada News

June 3 - The Office of the Chief Coroner in Ontario, Canada, has released an annual report in which they highlight the level of **suicide among LGBT teenagers** as a cause for concern.

In the Paediatric Death Review Committee report, it was noted that LGBT teens "experience a high degree of vulnerability to suicidal ideation and behaviour. Approximately half of LGBT youth have thought about suicide, and they are over four times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBT peers."

The Coroner's report urges more research to be done into the subject in order "to develop evidence based prevention and intervention initiatives".

July 4 - An eight-year bid to include **transgender rights in Canadian anti-discrimination and hate laws** is likely to suffer another legislative setback, despite support from a majority in both chambers of Parliament. The proposed legislation appeared poised to pass the Senate but did not make it to a final vote before the summer recess began. If Prime Minister Stephen Harper prorogues Parliament to deliver a new Speech from the Throne as expected in the fall, the bill will get rolled back to first reading in the Senate again.

"The Senate should have passed this, and it's disappointing that the transgender community is going to have to wait months again now unnecessarily for them to do this, but I still expect them to pass the bill," said the bill's sponsor, New Democrat MP Randall Garrison.

Complicating matters even more is an amendment to the bill proposed by Conservative Sen. Nancy Ruth. She complained that gender alone was not included in the Criminal Code section on hate, and she wants women to be specifically protected too. Should Nancy Ruth's amendment pass, the bill would have to go back to the Commons for a vote on the altered version.

"I have no confidence that the members from the Conservative party who voted for it in its previous form would vote for it as amended," said Garrison.

Bill C-279 would protect transgender Canadians against discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act and prohibit the promotion of hatred or the incitement of genocide on the basis of gender identity in the Criminal Code.

July 8 - **Canada** is quietly **financing** a concerted grassroots effort to **aid gay Ugandans' fight against their country's proposed anti-homosexuality bill** — and preparing them in case it passes, says a senior Department of Foreign Affairs source.

Since November, when the Ugandan Parliament renewed its effort to pass the legislation, which Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird has called "abhorrent," Canada has spent \$200,000 to kick-start several gay rights initiatives in the region. The source confirmed that the Canadian involvement was specifically focused on fighting the Ugandan bill.

Homosexuality is already criminalized, but the proposed legislation would renew and reinvigorate efforts to rid Uganda of its gay population, and has attracted sweeping international condemnation.

Rick Roth, a spokesperson for Mr. Baird, told the *National Post* that "Canadian officials have conveyed Canada's concerns with the bill to Uganda's Foreign Ministry," and confirmed that Canada is "working closely with Ugandan civil society."

July 11 - A new study released by Statistics Canada shows a decrease in police-reported **hate crimes** for the second year in a row. From 2010 to 2011, overall reported hate crimes decreased by five per cent. Although hate crimes motivated by race, religion or ethnicity all fell, according to the statistics, the number of hate crimes associated with sexual orientation went up by approximately 10 per cent.

The change in numbers has raised concern for the LGBT community.

But, there is also some uncertainty as to why these numbers are going up and it may not be for all the wrong reasons. "The numbers clearly are concerning to us, to see any upward trend is certainly something we want to pay attention to" said Kevin Kindred of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP).

“But, there are elements of that that could be for good reasons — either that more people are willing to report crimes to the police or that the police are more willing and more able to see crimes as being motivated by hatred, whereas maybe before they would have been ignoring that factor,” Kindred explained.

According to the report, hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation had the highest proportion of accused under the age of 25. Young adults were the most likely to be either the victim or the accused and offenders were predominately male by an overwhelming 92 per cent.

July 22 - A new **blood-donation policy** has come into effect across Canada, officially nixing the lifelong ban that prevented men who have had sex with men from giving blood. Canadian Blood Services (CBS) and HEMA-Quebec - which oversee Canada's blood system - are now allowing men to donate blood if they have not had homosexual sex in the last five years. The five-year rule is non-negotiable, even if a potential donor has had their blood screened and is perfectly healthy.

"We can't make exceptions," said Marc Plante, a CBS spokesperson. "Those policies are there for safety reasons, and unfortunately we can't pick and choose, as much as we'd love to. We can't."

The rules in effect from the 1980s until now excluded a man from giving blood, for the rest of his life, if he had ever had sex with another man since 1977 - cited as the date HIV began spreading in developed countries.

The AIDS Community Centre in Montreal is unsatisfied with the new policy. "We'd like to see the donor model based on behaviour - rather than sexual orientation or gender," said Puelo Deir, a spokesman at the centre. "(The new policy) definitely needs improvement," he said. "This is just a small step in the right direction -- but there is still much work to do."

Gay Marriage News

May 15 - Authorities in **Brazil** rule that marriage licenses should not be denied to same-sex couples. The council that oversees the country's judiciary says it was wrong for some offices just to issue civil union documents when couples wanted full marriage certificates. Correspondents say the decision in effect authorizes gay marriage. However full legalization depends on approval of a bill being examined by the Congress.

May 16 - Ten lawyers from Beijing, Shenzhen and other cities across **China** petition the communist government's National People's Congress (NPC) to legalize same-sex marriage. 'The most effective way to eliminate discrimination against homosexuality is to acknowledge same-sex couples' rights to marriage,' says Huang Yizhi, one of the lawyers behind the campaign.

May 17 - **France** overcomes the final obstacle in efforts to make it the 14th country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, following a decision by the Constitutional Council. Marriage equality opponents had hoped that challenging the bill before the Constitutional Council would jeopardize the bill after months of debate and protest. However, the Council declares: "The law allowing same-sex marriage conforms with the constitution."

May 18 - **French** President Francois Hollande signs into law a bill which allows equal marriage and adoption rights for same-sex couples.

May 22 - A Man shoots himself dead in front of the altar of Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral, apparently in protest against **France** allowing gay marriage. Police confirm the man's identity as Dominique Venner, 78, an essayist and activist linked with France's far-right and nationalist groups. Venner had a long career publishing right-wing essays, military histories and books on weaponry and hunting.

May 29 - **France's** first same-sex wedding ceremony takes place in the city of Montpellier, with the presence of the world's media, and which is described by the city's mayor as "historic". Vincent Autin, a 40-year-old PR

firm head, and his husband Bruno Boileau, a 29-year-old government worker, are married in Montpellier's town hall.

May 30 - A bill to further criminalize same-sex marriages in **Nigeria** with prison terms of up to 14 years is approved by lawmakers in the country's Parliament. Same-sex relationships are already illegal in Nigeria and the new law means gay couples entering into either marriage or cohabitation could face 14 years each in prison. Those "witnessing" or "abetting" such relationships would also face custodial sentences of at least eight years, and groups that advocate for LGBT rights are also set to be penalized by the new bill.

Nigeria's House of Representatives approves the bill, however, it remains unclear if President Goodluck Jonathan will sign the bill into law.

June 20 - Gay or same-sex couples who got married in **Canada** but now want to divorce their partners can heave a sigh of relief. The Canada's House of Commons approves Bill C-32, a legislation that authenticates same-sex marriages under Canadian law while at the same time allowing non-resident gay or same-sex couples to divorce. All that is needed now is senate approval.

June 24 - The **Irish** Deputy Prime Minister Eamon Gilmore, announces that the country will hold a referendum on equal marriage next year.

June 26 The **US** Supreme Court issues its opinions in the challenge to the Defense of Marriage Act. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which federally defined marriage as between one man and one woman, and therefore blocked gay married couples from receiving many benefits, is ruled unconstitutional. As a result of the judgement, Edith Windsor of New York, who was married to her partner, and who sued the government in order to get the federal estate tax deduction previously only available to straight people when their spouses die, will be eligible for a \$363,000 tax refund.

June 26 - The **US** Supreme Court effectively strikes down Proposition 8, the US State of California's ban on same-sex marriages, by voting not to take up the case. This ruling on Proposition 8 means that same-sex weddings can resume in the US state of California. Some had hoped that the court would issue a broader ruling applying to all US states, however this decision only applies to California.

June 27 - A **New York City** immigration judge immediately stops the deportation of a gay Colombian man who is legally married to an American citizen soon after the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act. Sean Brooks and his Colombian husband Steven faced a deportation proceeding, knowing that their marriage did not exist in the eyes of the US Citizenship and Immigration services. Sean and Steven Brooks are one of 28,500 binational same-sex couples who no longer have to fear that DOMA will separate them.

June 27 - A proposed bill to allow same-sex marriage in **Scotland** is published at Holyrood. The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill aims to revise the law, while protecting rights of religious groups not to carry out ceremonies. The plan will now undergo scrutiny before committee members and in the Scottish Parliament chamber.

July 5 - The **Vatican** issues a religious text co-written by Pope Francis and his predecessor Benedict XVI in which the two men restate their opposition to equal marriage.

July 10 - While the **US** Supreme Court has struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, the law that denied same-sex couples federal recognition, the US state of Indiana passes a law that would result in gay couples being jailed for up to 18 months if they attempt to apply for a marriage license.

July 15 - Britain's gay marriage bill clears its last major hurdle, passing through the House of Lords and prompting celebrations from campaigners outside Parliament. The bill will enable gay couples to get married in

both civil and religious ceremonies in **England and Wales**, though the Church of England, which is divided on the issue, is barred from offering same-sex ceremonies.

July 17 - The equal marriage bill for **England and Wales** is given Royal Assent, and is now officially law.

July 22 - More than 1,000 people in **Haiti** participate in a rare street demonstration to protest homosexuality and a proposal to legalize gay marriage in the Caribbean nation. The protest brings together a mix of religious groups, from Protestant to Muslim, who carry anti-gay placards and chant songs, including one in which they threaten to burn down parliament if its members make same-sex marriage legal.

August 5 - Same-sex couples are allowed to marry in **Uruguay**. The country became the twelfth in the world to legalise same-sex marriage in May after President Jose Mujica signed the measure into law.

August 6 - Dozens of gay couples begin getting hitched at the stroke of midnight in **Minnesota**, the largest Midwestern state where it is now legal to do so. In **Rhode Island**, the last New England state to allow same-sex marriage, weddings begin at 8:30 a.m. when municipal offices open. The number of places where same-sex American couples can wed grows to more than a quarter of the country.

International News

May 17 (Reuters) The **Portuguese** Parliament has passed a bill to **allow same-sex married couples to adopt** their partner's biological or adopted children. The bill won with a very narrow majority of just five votes in the Lisbon assembly, but prompted long applause from the assembly. Campaigners in the country celebrated the victory, but held it up as only a partial one, which fell short of full adoption rights, which they had aimed for.

May 24 (Huffington Post) An **18-year-old lesbian** from **Florida** has rejected the plea deal she was offered, after being charged with **felony offences for having a relationship with a girl** four years younger than her. Kaitlyn Hunt faces felony charges after the mother of her girlfriend, aged 14, notified police of the relationship as soon as she turned 18.

She has been charged with two counts of lewd and lascivious battery of a child 12 to 16 years of age and has been expelled from Sebastian River High School, in the town of Sebastian, Florida. If she had chosen to accept the plea deal, she would have been under house arrest for two years, and would have been labeled a sex offender. The state attorney's office now says she will face trial, and could face up to 15 years in prison, if she were to be found guilty of the offences.

Campaigners have condemned the arrest, and have stood by Ms. Hunt, urging authorities to drop the charges. In a written statement, Ms. Hunt's attorneys said, "This is a situation of two teenagers who happen to be of the same sex involved in a relationship. If this case involved a boy and girl, there would be no media attention to this case."

May 26 (Pink News) A film featuring the love story between two women, and which has shocked some critics because of some graphic sex scenes, has been awarded the top prize at the **Cannes** film festival.

The film, *Blue is the Warmest Colour*, directed by Tunisian-born French director Abdellatif Kechiche, and based on a graphic novel, contains some graphic scenes, and some reviewers have noted that it may need to be edited, in order to be widely distributed for cinema showings. It centers on 15-year-old character Adele, played by Adele Exarchopoulos, and her lover Emma, who is played by Lea Seydoux.

June 11 (CBC) Lawmakers in the **Russian** State Duma have given final approval to a **bill to ban "homosexual propoganda"**. The Duma voted 436-0 with one abstention for a law that bans "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" to minors as well as media organizations, punishable by large fines, or imprisonment.

If individuals use media or the Internet for such "propaganda" they can be fined up to 100,000 rubles (\$3,000), while organizations can be fined up to one million rubles and shut down for up to 90 days. The bill also targets foreigners and says foreign nationals who use media or the Internet for "propaganda" can be fined up to 100,000 rubles, held in police cells for up to 15 days and then deported.

Anything considered pro-gay, from gay-affirmative speech, to gays holding hands in public, to even wearing rainbow suspenders is now illegal.

President Putin denied claims that gay citizens are being persecuted in the country. Speaking to reporters in Finland, Mr. Putin said, "Homosexuals are equal citizens enjoying full rights" in Russia. "It's not about imposing some sort of sanctions on homosexuality...It's about protecting children from such information," Mr. Putin said. Similar laws have already been passed regionally in ten different areas of Russia, but this bill imposes the law nationwide.

Human rights group ILGA-Europe condemned the passage of the bill, and Martin Kl Christensen, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe's Executive Board, said: "This is a very sad day for the Russian LGBTI community and for Russian democracy. Today the Russian Parliament cemented its homophobic law at the federal level. Despite strong condemnation by virtually all international and European institutions and human rights organizations, Russian lawmakers have chosen to disregard their international human rights commitments and to ignore their own Constitution. Today the Russian Duma demonstrated that homophobia is an official state policy."

Gabi Calleja, Co-Chair added: "We are deeply concerned by the negative impact of this law. Homophobic rhetoric which accompanied the adoption of this law at the regional and federal level for the last few years already significantly contributed toward a climate of hatred and physical violence against LGBTI people which recently resulted in a number of murders."

June 12 (One News Page) A television drama featuring a **lesbian couple and their family**, on the **US** ABC network has seen a massive surge in ratings for its second episode, despite conservative groups protesting against it airing. The ABC Family drama, **The Fosters**, is executively produced by Jennifer Lopez's production company, and was heavily criticized by adamantly anti-gay conservative campaign group One Million Moms. It features a biracial lesbian couple raising their mix of adopted, fostered, and biological children.

June 15 (Pink News) A change to **Bermuda's** Human Rights Act **prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexuality** has passed, despite concerns that it would override the country's ban on same sex marriage.

Wayne Fubert, the MP who tabled an anti-equal marriage amendment, said the Human Rights Act change was controversial as Bermudians were worried it would lead to the adoption of same-sex marriage. "The majority of Bermudians do not want to be discriminated against based on sexual orientation as far as working and living accommodations," he said. "But there is no doubt that the majority of Bermudians do not support same sex marriages."

June 18 (USA Today) **Russian** lawmakers have voted unanimously to pass **legislation banning the adoption of Russian children by foreign same-sex couples**, as well as single parents who live in countries where same-sex marriage is legal. The Duma voted 443-0 to approve the draft law, as well as related amendments to Russian family law.

In the light of France having passed a bill to legalize equal marriage on May 18, President Putin said he was happy to consider changing agreements to block gay couples from adopting Russian orphans. The *Moscow Times* notes that in a recent television interview, one of the bill's sponsors, Yelena Mizulina suggested introducing legislation to remove children from same-sex couples.

June 28 (Pink News) An **Australian report on the children of same-sex couples** has revealed that they have higher self-esteem, greater family cohesion, and better overall health than the national average. The Australian study of child health in same-sex families is the world's largest attempt to study how children raised by same-sex couples compare to children raised by heterosexual couples.

According to a preliminary report on the study of 500 children across the country of Australia, young people are not only thriving, but they also have higher rates of family cohesion than other families. The study looked at important indicators including self-esteem, emotional behaviour and the amount of time spent with parents. Children of same-sex couples scored higher than the national average for overall health and how well the family gets along.

June 6 - A group of skinheads beat a **French** far-left activist to death in the heart of Paris' shopping district, in an attack that raised fears of **increased far-right violence**. Political tensions are high in France after months of protests against legalizing gay marriage that sometimes ended with troublemakers from the extreme right clashing with police.

Interior Minister Manuel Valls said a fight broke out between two groups of young people in a pedestrian street just steps away from the famous Printemps department store. At one point, the 19-year-old leftist activist was beaten by several skinheads, according to Valls, a widely respected, center-leaning member of President Francois Hollande's Socialist government.

The activist, Clement Meric, was initially hospitalized in grave condition, and then died, said Agnes Thibault-Lecuivre, spokeswoman for the Paris prosecutor's office.

Four suspects, aged 20 to 37 and believed to have links to extreme right movements, were arrested, Thibault-Lecuivre said.

July (ILGA News, Pink News, Human Rights Watch) In reaction to **Russia's** new draconian anti-gay laws activists are calling for everything from a **boycott** of the **Olympic Games** in Sochi, to a boycott of **Russian vodka** worldwide, to the wearing of rainbow flags by participants at the Sochi games in defiance of Russian law.

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) response to the growing threat of violence against gay athletes and gay Olympics fans has been rather anaemic to date. The IOC's response has been so weak that Human Rights Watch recently sent the Olympic Committee a scathing letter demanding that the IOC take action to enforce their own charter, which bans discrimination. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) set a precedent on human rights in sport when it banned South Africa from participating in the Olympics in 1964, because of its Apartheid regime. Activists are questioning why the IOC has not reacted yet to Russian anti-gay laws.

Activists have also demanded that cities like Los Angeles, Quebec and Paris should drop, or suspend, their Sister City relationships with Russian cities.

July 16 (Huffington Post) Eric Ohena Lembembe, who was found **brutally murdered** in his home in Yaoundé, **Cameroon**. Lembembe was the Executive Director of Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS (CAMFAIDS), an organization dedicated to the fight against AIDS and for the human rights of LGBT people in Cameroon. Just two weeks earlier, Mr. Lembembe spoke out against the recent break-ins at the offices of groups advocating for gay rights. The local office of one organization, Alternatives-Cameroun, was set on fire on June 26.

July 12 (Pink News) **Lebanon's Psychiatric Society** has declared that **being gay is not a mental disorder** and does not require treatment, making it the first Arab country in the Middle East to do so. The Society issued the statement in response to allegations of arrest and mistreatment of LGBT people in Lebanon. Article 534 of

the Lebanese Penal Code prohibits having sexual relations that are “contradicting the laws of nature”, which is punishable by up to a year in prison.

July 22 (Washington Blade) Russian authorities have **arrested four Dutch LGBT rights advocates** for violating the country’s anti-gay propaganda law. Police detained the activists in the northwestern part of the country during a human rights seminar. The publication said Kris van der Veen, president of LGBT Groningen, a Dutch LGBT advocacy organization, gave a lecture on gay rights.

van der Veen and the three other Dutch LGBT rights advocates had traveled to the northern city to film a documentary about gay life in Russia. Local media reports indicate van der Veen interviewed a 17-year-old teenager before authorities took him and the three other activists into custody.

Two men in the southern Russia city of Volgograd and on the Kamchatka Peninsula in the country’s Far East have been killed during what local authorities have described as anti-gay attacks in recent months.

Police in St. Petersburg on June 29 arrested 40 LGBT activists and a handful of nationalists who challenged them during a gay rights rally. Authorities in the Russian capital on May 24 arrested 30 LGBT rights advocates who tried to stage a Pride celebration outside Moscow City Hall.

Members of Coming Out, a Russian LGBT advocacy group in St. Petersburg, will go on trial under the country’s “foreign agent” law that came into effect last fall.

July 29 (The Telegraph) In comments made during an impromptu interview aboard the papal plane, **Pope Francis** inspired hope among myriad **LGBT Catholics** that there might be a place for them in the Church. Speaking about allegations that his nominee to head up the Vatican bank might be gay, Pope Francis said it was not his place to pass judgment on gay priests.

"If someone is gay and seeks the Lord with good will, who am I to judge?"

Several organizations representing both LGBT people and Catholics around the world jumped at the chance to welcome the pope’s statements, saying they indicated a more tolerant and accepting tone for the leader of the Catholic Church, which considers homosexuality a sin, and requires gay Catholics to remain celibate.

News from the LGBT Family Coalition

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 2013:

◆ MONDAY SEPTEMBER 2ND FROM 11-3 P.M. FÊTE ARC-EN-CIEL PICNIC (QUÉBEC CITY)

The LGBT Family Coalition and GLBT-Québec, would like to invite all LGBT family members with or without children, as well as all our allies and friends, to a Community Picnic during the Fête arc-en-ciel in Quebec City. Families should bring their lunches and picnic blankets. On the site: clowns, inflatable games, face-painting, arts and crafts and the musical techno-trad trio Soleil de fou.

Place: Parc Berthelot (on rue du Marché Berthelot, near the Delta Hotel)

For all questions about the activity please contact: Olivier Poulin / 418 809-3383 / direction@glbtquebec.org

◆ SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH FROM 11-3 P.M. (RAIN DATE SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 15TH) PICNIC AT EBY AND JENNA’S ORGANIC FARM

The LGBT Family Coalition would like to invite all LGBT family members with or without children, as well as all our allies and friends, to a huge Family Picnic. Join us to relax and exchange with family and friends, at the organic farm of our dear members Eby and Jenna. There will be music, sports and games.

Please bring your own lunch or reserve a lunch prepared by the farm’s chef!

Reservations are necessary only if you'd like to have lunch prepared for you at the farm.

**Place: 398, route du Canton Brownsburg-Chatham
(See attached flier for directions and details)**

**◆ THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26TH AT 7 P.M.
CONFERENCE: "ENFIN JE DORS ET MES PARENTS AUSSI" (IN FRENCH)**

Fruit de plus de dix ans d'intervention auprès de milliers de parents, cette conférence propose, outre des éléments théoriques, des mesures à mettre en place pour faciliter la routine du coucher, diverses techniques qui aideront l'enfant à s'endormir seul et de nombreux moyens visant à faire de l'heure du coucher un moment serein et agréable.

**Guest Speaker: Evelyne Martello (Dans le cadre des soirées parents en tournée de l'Hopital Ste-Justine)
Place: Centre St-Pierre, 1212, rue Panet, Montréal, room 204.**

OCTOBER 2013

**◆ SATURDAY OCTOBER 5TH AND SUNDAY OCTOBER 6TH
INTENSIVE WEEKEND IN MONTREAL FOR FUTURE LGBT PARENTS (IN FRENCH)**

Des formateurs et formatrices chevronnés répondront à vos questions sur différentes facettes des réalités homoparentales : Comment former une famille? Quels sont nos droits et responsabilités en tant que parents LGBT au Québec? Comment expliquer aux enfants leurs origines? Comment est-ce que ça fonctionne dans les cliniques de fertilité, les agences de mères porteuses, les centres jeunesse? Comment répondre aux questions les plus souvent posées, basées sur des stéréotypes? Quelle est l'expérience de nos familles et de nos enfants dans les garderies et à l'école?

**L'inscription à l'avance est obligatoire : (514) 878-7600 ou info@familleshomoparentales.org
Le nombre de places est limité. (please see attached flier for more details)**

**◆ WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 16TH AT 7 PM
FILM, DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION: "TRANSPARENT"**

Pink or blue. Male or Female. Mommy or Daddy. Categories that we all take for granted are broken apart in transparent, a documentary about 19 female-to-male transsexuals living in the United States who have given birth and, in all but a few stories, gone on to raise their biological children. The film will be followed by an open discussion and a short presentation of the latest research results of Marie-Pier Petit, UQAM.

**Guest Speaker: Marie-Pier Petit (UQAM)
NB: The film is in English, the discussion will be bilingual
Place: UQAM. 320 Ste-Catherine East, Room DS-1950**

**◆ SATURDAY OCTOBER 26TH AT 11 A.M.
HALLOWEEN ACTIVITY: PUMPKIN PICKING AT THE LABONTÉ ORCHARDS
(See attached flier for directions and details)**

NOVEMBER 2013

**◆ SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9TH from 10-12
WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS OF BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN**

Place: Maison Parent, Roback, 110, rue Ste-Thérèse, Room 105, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6.

**◆ THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21ST AT 7 P.M.
CONFERENCE BY THE CENTRE JEUNESSE DE MONTREAL ON ADOPTION AND THE MIXED BANK PROGRAM**

Louise Dumais, director of Adoption Services CJM-IU will present the Mixed Bank Program of the Centre jeunesse de Montréal and will speak about how, over the past few years, this program has worked.

Place: Centre St-Pierre, 1212 rue Panet, room 203.

BULLETIN BOARD:

♦ **La Marg'Elle** est un groupe pour femmes homosexuelles et bisexuelles affilié à la Maison des Femmes des Bois-Francis. Briser l'isolement, favoriser l'échange, l'identification et l'affirmation de soi.

Info: margelleboisfrancis@hotmail.com

www.lamargelle.spaces.live.com

819-758-3384

♦ **Dorshei Emet B'nei Mitzvah Program:** Do you have children entering grade 6? We offer a meaningful program in which children discover the relevance of their Jewish heritage. Dorshei Emet is a welcoming Synagogue to individuals and families of all backgrounds, and to interfaith and LGBTQ families. **514-486-9400 (Alys Geiger)**, www.dorsheimet.com, or drop in anytime to Saturday morning Shabbat services, 10h00 to 12h15, and stay for a light lunch and meet some of the members!

♦ **Le Centre des femmes de Rivière-des-Prairies! 514-648-1030** - Nous sommes ouvertes aux lesbiennes! Si vous avez besoin de plus d'informations vous pouvez consulter notre site web : www.cdfrdp.qc.ca ainsi que le site de notre regroupement : www.rcentres.qc.ca/propos.html

♦ **L'Écho des femmes de la Petite Patrie** est un centre de femmes qui offre des rencontres pour lesbiennes. Ces rencontres ont lieu les lundis soirs aux deux semaines de 19h00 à 21h30, et sont animées par une personne ressource. Ces rencontres, qui se veulent un lieu d'échange, de ressourcement et d'information, s'intéressent aux réalités et aux conditions de vie des lesbiennes. Les rencontres sont en français. Un service de halte-garderie est disponible avec réservation faite une semaine à l'avance. Le centre est situé au **6032 St-Hubert (métro Beaubien)**. **Téléphone (514)277-7445, télécopieur (514)277-1689**

MISCELLANEOUS

♦ **Traducteurs, rédacteurs, etc.:** Nous sommes à la recherche de bénévoles pour la traduction française de ce bulletin. Toute contribution (même à raison d'une page ou deux par mois) est la bienvenue. Si vous êtes disponible, veuillez nous contacter : info@familleshomoparentales.org

♦ **Batshaw Youth and Family Centres** is encouraging English speaking and bilingual gay and 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**

♦ The **Open Book Library's** collection includes over 5500 books written by LGBT authors or by authors who write about our communities. Some of these books are for children and adolescents. We are very proud that approximately half of our collection is in French. Much more information as well as online consultation of the book collection is available at our Web site www.ccglm.org/en-b. We are located at **2075 Plessis (CCGLM)** in the Village. Come visit us! Open Wednesdays and Fridays from 1-8 p.m. (514) 528-8424.

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@familleshomoparentales.org or by post to CFH, 110, rue Ste-Thérèse, bureau 405, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1E6. 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.

♦ **THERE IS NO FREEDOM WITHOUT FINANCIAL FREEDOM - LA LIBERTÉ PERSONNELLE PASSE PAR LA LIBERTÉ FINANCIÈRE.** Financial services for individuals and small businesses: budgeting, debt management, investments, future planning, personal taxes, wealth enhancement strategies. 20% of all subsequent fees will be donated to the CFH. **J. Freed**, (514) 489-8633, www.jfreed.ca

♦ Photographe professionnelle pour mariages, maternité, portraits, familles. Membre de la CFH. Contactez-moi pour plus de renseignements. **Marie-Andrée Boivin 514-273-9658**, marieandreeboivin@yahoo.ca