

Are you a bloody homophobic?

By Mireille Smith
Intercamp (Grant MacEwan College)

EDMONTON (CUP) — Canadian Blood Services promotes the idea that if you donate 15 minutes of your time and a pint of blood, you'll save lives.

You may feel a bit light-headed afterwards, but you can take pride in knowing you've done something to help others — so long as you're not gay.

If you're a gay male who's had sex in the last 30 years, your blood isn't wanted.

This suggests we'd rather die

than have gay blood pumping through our veins. To make matters worse, Canadians don't have a choice in the matter. Canadian Blood Services considers gay male sex a behaviour putting people at risk for contracting HIV and AIDS. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, 1,232 cases of HIV were reported in the first six months of 2006. Among these, 47 per cent were gay males, and 33.5 per cent were of the heterosexual persuasion. The difference between these numbers is relatively small.

Canadian Blood Services should differentiate between risky behaviour in general and a person's sex-

ual orientation. On the Record of Donation questionnaire, potential donors are asked, "In the past six months, have you had sex with someone whose sexual background you don't know?" Heterosexual indiscretions performed before this time frame aren't an issue. Gay men, however sexually responsible, are automatically branded a threat to the blood supply.

Meanwhile, Promiscuous Patty can waltz in under the radar. If all donations are properly tested, only tainted blood should be a reason to turn gay donors away.

Apparently there is a blood shortage in Canada. The Edmonton Sun reported last week that the short-

age in this city led to the cancellation of some elective surgeries. Still, healthy gay men are prevented from helping, which also does nothing to squash homophobia by continuing to view AIDS as a gay disease.

It's unfair to fault the blood donor system when it's supposed to guard our health and safety. But speaking as one of those protected Canadians, if I'm on my deathbed in line for a transfusion I don't want to die waiting for clinically approved, heterosexual blood.

CSJ Funded Project: PEI Literacy Alliance

Charlottetown, P.E.I. -

Susan Gillespie's summer job with the PEI Literacy Alliance is helping to prepare her for the challenges she will face when she becomes a teacher.

Susan is going into her second year as an education student at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown.

She was hired by the PEI Literacy Alliance along with 22 other students as Literacy Tutors. For Susan, this is her third consecutive summer working as a Literacy Tutor.

Susan's job was made possible through funding provided by the Canada Summer Jobs initiative.

She is enthusiastic about her job and really enjoys helping the kids.

This opportunity is providing her with work experience that will help her when she finishes her degree and starts work in the classroom.

This tutoring position provides Susan with the opportunity to use what she is learning at school and make decisions that will benefit the children.

"This job is fantastic", said Susan. "I love working with the kids and enjoy their excitement when they get to that next reading level or accomplish something for which they have been working so hard."

Most of Susan's work with the

children involves helping them develop their reading skills and maintain a reading level suitable for their return to school in the fall.

She tries to challenge each student and make the summer tutoring program exciting and fun.

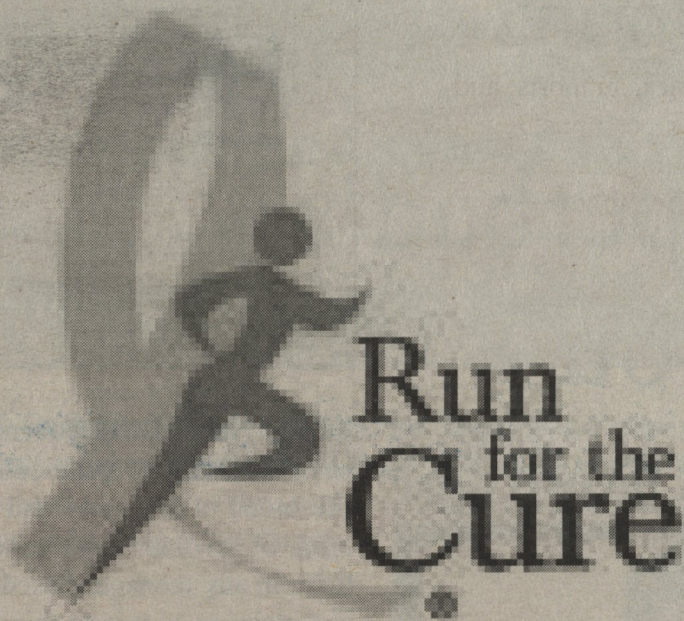


Gillespie

She doesn't want the students to feel like they are in school so playing games and participating in activities that relate to reading are ways by which Susan challenges the children.

"Since this is my third year working for the Literacy Alliance, I try to develop new learning tools and activities for the children and make the tutoring program as exciting and enjoyable as possible", said Susan.

Thanks to her experience, Susan is looking forward to completing her Bachelor of Education degree and moving into the classroom full time.



Time to "Think Pink"

By Martha MacIntyre

Breast Cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian women. Every year hundreds of Canadians come together to help raise money for the cure at the CIBC Run for the Cure.

This year marks the eleventh anniversary of the CIBC Run for the Cure on P.E.I.. Cecil Villard, the chair of the Run for the Cure committee, has been working with the program for the last 6 years despite having only a two year commitment initially. Villard encourages anyone who has not attended a run to "come out for a day, [and] see how many people can come together to help find a cure," noting that most first time participants return the following year.

Although P.E.I. is a small province, in this year alone 110 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 25 of them will die.

The P.E.I. chapter raised \$172,000 last year for breast cancer research. Although Villard says his committee always hopes to raise more than last year, he says he isn't focused solely on raising money. "At the end of the day as long as everyone can say 'I had fun, I helped to find a cure and make a difference,' then I am happy," Villard stated.

Villard also believes a cure is on the horizon. "This is a disease that seems to have affected everyone in one way or another," he said.

"Thanks to the Run for the Cure, and technology being where it is today, I know one day we will finally find a cure for this disease that affects so many people."