

waynes

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April 2012



An Afternoon With Drake Jensen
Win Drake's Album!
Queer Youth Theatre in Halifax
Rainbow Refugees: Official!

Wayves

Drake Jensen: On His Way To Finding Him

By Randall Perry

Watching the video of Drake Jensen's single, "On My Way to Finding You," one can sense this is a guy who takes great satisfaction from the simple pleasures of life: good home, good music, special someone. Country music has always been made from this stuff.

all performing artists. Songs with great musical hooks and heart-tugging lyrics are only the beginning. Drop some smoky sex appeal into the mix, fire up a guitar and light the whole package into flame. Stars are born that way.

The person behind the Jensen brand is robust and smiling, a man comfortable with himself

moment of nostalgia is held for a couple of beats as we get our coffee and settle into comfortable padded chairs around a small table.

The first time I listened to the album I noticed there was a distinct lack of the feminine in much of the lyrics. I'm curious why this is so. "Who are you singing for? Who does your music speak to?" I ask.

"I've said this from the beginning, from the time I started recording the album. I wanted the music to speak to anybody who'll listen," Drake answers. "[I wanted] to leave it open enough by removing the gender as much as possible from the lyrics, which is hard to do in country music."

The album's lyrics are open for interpretation. It doesn't matter your gender, you feel that Drake is singing directly to you, exploring your story through the individual songs.

We joke a bit that they could be country music's newest power couple, given the attention of late. I look at Sean, whom I've only met a few hours before, who ponders, "It hasn't really sunk in yet. It's a lot of fun, but even though the attention has really only started a short time ago, it comes as a big responsibility, one that we don't take lightly."

The album's titular song, "On My Way To Finding You," was released on January 16. The video came out the week afterward on Drake's YouTube channel. Some radio stations began promoting the video on their websites and with the added promotion from Drake's media appearances the numbers began increasing. The first week of the video release it got around 1,500 views and after Drake's media appearances the floodgates opened and the views took off. Within a couple of weeks the number had surpassed 10,000.

Drake dismisses the idea that by dedicating the video to the memory of Jamie Hubley and taking up the cause of bullying he's being an opportunist. "I've got the track record in therapy to prove that it's not a bandwagon: four years of my life in therapy, once a week, dealing with these issues. I left school at 14, a very early age. I went down a number of different paths and eventually gained my education but I lost my childhood. I grieved that loss for a very long time."

He describes how, after reading about Jamie's suicide, he shut down for a week, doing

...continued on page 11



Sean and Drake.

Drake waits in front of the house and the special someone arrives, steps out of the vehicle, approaches, embraces. As they head toward the house, Drake's smile says it all. A good man is also a great satisfaction.

I'd not seen Drake in a few years. By happy coincidence I ran into him in Toronto the day the single hit the airwaves. He was busy making media rounds to talk about his coming out, bullying advocacy, music and what the future holds.

Drake Jensen is busy building a brand. There's the outfit—cowboy hat, boots, sunglasses, well-trimmed beard. There's the backstory—boy from Glace Bay finds love and follows his singing dreams. And there's the music—the debut album a polished Nashville country sparkler shot through with laid-back East Coast sensibility, a great record for behind the wheel or for kicking back on the couch.

There's a part of the Drake Jensen brand that is inherently sexual. It's a requirement for

and where his life is going. It's a little strange for me, being his fan and asking about his work, while at the same time catching up with an old friend, discussing what's been going on since we last talked.

We're at a Bridgehead café, Ottawa's indie coffee chain. Ironically, this location is Drake's old workplace. When we enter he points to a corner. "My chair was over there." His husband, the equally robust and smiling Sean Michael Morin adds, "And I was over there." The shared

Drake Jensen will perform in Moncton during the East Coast Music Awards week.

- Thursday, April 12, 9:00 p.m. Acoustic show \$5.00 at the door Triangles 234 Saint George Street www.trianglesbar.com
- Friday, April 13, 10:30 p.m. Showcase at East Coast Music Week - Country Stage Manhattan Club 125 Westmorland Street Tickets available at www.ecma.com

Acting Out! Halifax's Queer Youth Theatre Intensive

by Garry Williams

DaPoPo Theatre is looking forward to hosting Acting Out!, its two-week intensive Queer Youth Theatre Training Program from June 8-10, and 15-17, 2012. This is the second year we will be offering this program. The program is open to queer-identifying youth who are theatre-lovers or theatre-curious. With a roster of queer productions such as *The Sex Play* (2006), *Café DaPoPo* at Menz Bar (2007), *Julius Caesar* (2010), and the annual DaPoPo Academy Youth Ensemble, DaPoPo is no stranger to queer theatre.

But what is queer theatre? Who is queer? What are the new frontiers for queer activism? These are just a few of the questions we asked of the workshop participants, as they worked with last year's instructors Kym Butler, Richie Wilcox and DaPoPo Theatre's artistic director Garry Williams on Voice, Body, Movement, Political Theatre, Acting and Dramaturgy.

Guest speakers Kevin Kindred, Megan Leslie, Lee-Anne Poole, Bryden MacDonald and Daniel MacIvor visited the workshop participants in the bright and colourful lobby of the Cultural Federations Nova Scotia building on Marginal Road, donated by theatre Nova Scotia, to discuss some of these issues and share their passion and expertise.

This year, Williams and Wilcox will again offer intensive, hands-on theatre training for motivated youth. Participants will explore their own stories and identities through exercises, games, scene work, writing, musical improvisation, clowning and movement. Discussions and activities will also focus on queer theory, and explore what it means to "act out."

Williams is the founding member and Artistic Director of DaPoPo Theatre. Last year he appeared in the original musical *So... What About Love?* at the SuperNova festival, Hello, Sailor Café! at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, co-directed *The Magic Flute* for the Halifax Summer Opera Workshop (HSOW), toured Café DaPoPo in Berlin and Potsdam,

and wrote and performed in *A Very Cratchit Christmas* for Alderney Landing. Williams holds a degree in Vocal Performance from Mt. Allison University. He is currently working on a Collective Creation project at the Halifax Grammar School, and is a guest Drama instructor at Kingsview Academy.

Originally from Cape Breton, Wilcox divides his time between Halifax and Toronto. This past summer Wilcox co-directed and performed in Opera Nova Scotia's double bill of *The Beggar's Opera* and *Threepenny Opera*, directed Forerunner Playwright Theatre's *Naked* for Queer Acts Theatre Festival, assistant directed Daniel MacIvor on the world premiere of the touring production of *Bingo!* for Mulgrave Road Theatre. Wilcox trained under Stephen Cross, Ker Wells and Zuppa Theatre and holds a Master's in Directing from Texas State University. Wilcox will be directing the world premiere of Daniel MacIvor's *I, Animal* in Halifax in the spring of 2012.

Wilcox and Williams are currently in talks with Adam Reid, Festival Co-Ordinator for QUEER ACTS Theatre Festival, about a collaboration on this project. QUEER ACTS, now in its third year, is a week-long LGBTQ theatre event held every during Pride. The festival has presented local productions such as The Doppler Effect's *Logan and I*, *El Camino* or *The Field of Stars*, Forerunner Playwrights' Theatre's *Naked*, and Café DaPoPo.

Generously supported by the Cultural Opportunities for Youth (COY) program, Acting Out! is now seeking applicants to work with professional theatre to develop theatre skills, and to participate in a series of workshops towards the creation of an original performance piece. We are also seeking queer-positive volunteers, guest speakers and sponsors to help us provide this excellent learning and growing experience for queer youth.

Anyone interested in supporting Acting Out! in any capacity, please contact dapopo@dapopo.org.

Regular Columns



Groups & Services 9 • I Am What I Amherst 7 • Kibitz & Bitch will return in June • NSRAP Report 4 • The Sanctuary Garden 6 • The 416er will be back in May



Deadline for May issue: Friday, April 6 (first Friday of every month!) submissions@wayves.ca • Online: www.wayves.ca • Join us on Facebook: Wayves Magazine Rocks! ... and on Twitter: @WayvesMagazine

Atlantic News

OUTeast accepting submissions

OUTeast, Atlantic Canada's Queer Film Festival, is currently accepting film submissions for the 2012 OUTeast Film Festival, to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia in June of 2012.

OUTeast is dedicated to presenting the very best in queer independent cinema from around the world to our community in Halifax. We are committed to showcasing work that will challenge, educate, and unite our audiences, and to celebrating artistic excellence in the medium of film. To learn how to submit a film for consideration in the 2012 OUTeast Film Festival, download the entry guidelines and form at www.outeastfilm.com. If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please contact Jenna Dufton, Programming Manager: jenna@outeastfilm.com. Submissions may be fiction, documentary, animation or experimental of any length. We will accept films dealing with queer subject matter as well as those made by queer filmmakers. Only films completed no more than 18 months prior to the OUTeast Film Festival will be considered for admission. Preference will be given to submissions that have not been distributed theatrically or broadcast on television in the Atlantic region prior to the 2012 Festival. Deadline for all submissions is May 4, 2012. OUTeast will be announcing dates and screening venues for the 2012 OUTeast

Film Festival in the coming weeks. 2012 marks OUTeast's first annual queer film festival. In 2011, OUTeast hosted events including Come OUT East at The Company House, That's So Gay-la at the Atlantic Film Festival, and the OUTeast peepIN at The Nocturne Festival. OUTeast also facilitates a mentorship program for emerging queer filmmakers.

Cape Breton Pride and Coastal Braid

by Peter Steele
Reprinted from Coastal Braid Magazine

Congratulations to Coastal Braid on the launch of its web-magazine. We are so proud to be a part of such a wonderful venue of all things great about the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community on Cape Breton Island. Thank you for asking us to be a contributor.

Pride Cape Breton, in its essence, is a large circle of friends. It is generated by a group of volunteers dedicated to the overall well-being of the island's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. As part of that commitment, we provide safe and welcoming environments in which our community members can gather and socialize.

Pride Cape Breton is a continuation of a number of past organizations that have attempted to band together the island gay population. This is an organized process that began close to, if not more than, twenty-five years

ago. Home base is Sydney, however we host events throughout the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM).

As a result of the efforts of so many dedicated individuals, past and present, Cape Breton's gay community has become a visible one on the island, and that visibility has harvested a general acceptance of who we are, and our place in the Cape Breton fabric. Yes, homophobia still exists throughout our fair island, but Pride Cape Breton has enjoyed many successes in bridging the gay and heterosexual communities. We have a strong support system throughout the community at large, and the business community jumps at any chance to support our efforts. For years, I've mentioned repeatedly how fortunate we are to live in a place with a small town community atmosphere, yet demonstrates such progressive attitudes towards the gay community. We are so fortunate to have a municipal council always proud to support and be a part of celebrating our diversity.

Besides producing an annual ten-day Pride Festival, each month we host a dance, usually at Sydney's Southend Community Centre, with our Halloween and Pride dances taking place at Sydney's Horizon Achievement Centre. All our dances feature the island's most popular DJ, with one of the best music and light shows east of Halifax.

Although dances are the main social event we cater, our Pride Festival presents a number of activities, many of which are family oriented and open to the straight community. We believe that if we expect to be included, we too need to be inclusive.



Apart from the social aspect of the community, Pride Cape Breton volunteers have taken, and continue to take, workshops in helping to provide better services and support to our community members. From time to time, we place emphasis on our youth, who sometimes still struggle to be open about themselves, but still face criticism for being who they are. We do our part to build relationships with local agencies so we can make referrals to individuals who find themselves in need of help. Pride Cape Breton has evolved into an umbrella for all things gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender in Cape Breton.

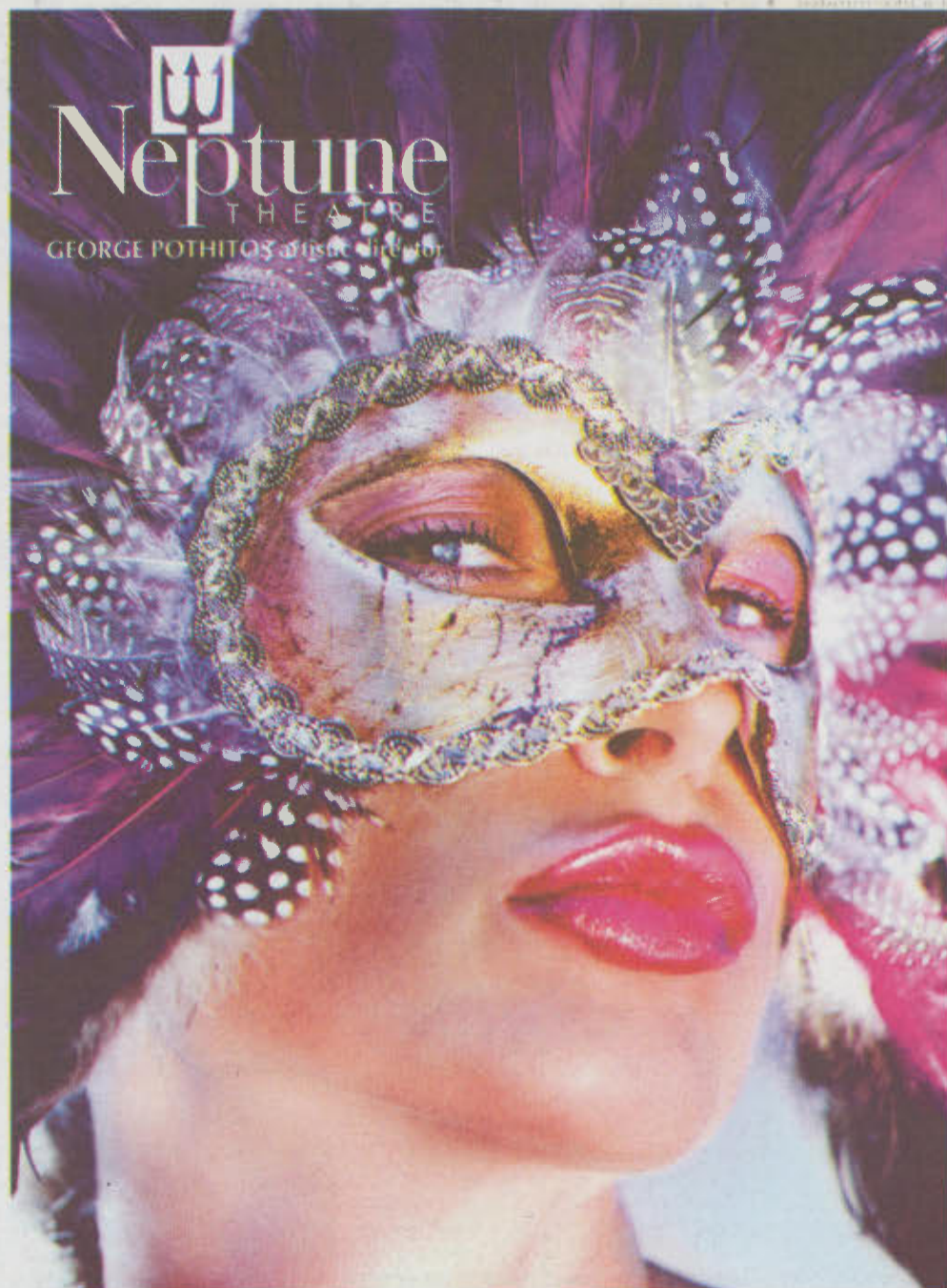
This is but a basic description of what Pride Cape Breton is, and what we strive to do for our community. Over the next few months you will learn more specifics about our endeavours, as well as our plans for the future. Until next time, please visit our website, and feel free to join us on FaceBook; we'd be so happy to have you on board. If you have any questions, or just wish to contact us, you may send us an email at pridecapebretoninfo@gmail.com.

From time to time we are lucky to get positive press in our local newspaper, and the television stations will cover some of our activities in their news reporting. We are also featured once every month-and-a-half on CBC's Party Line, keeping islanders abreast of what our community is doing. This all contributes to the positive reputation the gay community has throughout the island.

We do have our own website, and you can visit us at www.pridecapebreton.com. You can also join us on our FaceBook page at www.facebook.com/pridecapebreton. It's not surprising to see the growth in our community because of FaceBook, and, for many under-19 year olds, it has presented them with a means of being a part of our community. It has also been instrumental in opening doors for our trans-members, and they together have started their own organization, STARS.

First-person accounts of local queer history sought!

Were you at Nova Scotia's first pride picnic in 1973, or in the first Halifax Pride March in 1988? Did you hang out at The Heidelberg, party at the Green Lantern or do you still have a t-shirt from The Turret? Were you a ...continued next page



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History

...continued from previous page
member of APPLE or LGRNS? Do you have any knowledge of notable GLBT people who are no longer with us? Do you have posters or documents about key events or organizations?

First-person (or even second-hand) accounts of the early days (and nights) of Halifax's and Nova Scotia's GLBT history are being sought for documentation. And stories about important people are wanted too! If you have stories and/or artifacts, we'd like to hear and document them. Send an email to PrideGuide@eastlink.ca or leave a phone message at 902-423-6999.

St. John's Pride News

Pride planning is getting up and running again for 2012.



Pamela Sheaves

St. John's Pride Inc. is growing! The new Board will capture a stronger sense of public stewardship and demonstrate to prospective partners that we have a vote of confidence from the public. In February, co-founder Jennifer McCreath announced her resignation; her seat will be replaced by three people in an election at a planning meeting scheduled for March 21st. These new three will join the remaining two boardmembers planning Pride Week, which takes place July 16-22, and Pride Day on the July 21.

By mid-March, the Facebook event had 39 people "going" and another 36 "maybes" representing the largest intended turnout for a Pride planning meeting in St. John's history.

St. John's Pride Inc., was founded in 2010 to create a formal structure that would create a program that would build credibility, challenge community indifference, and attempt to bring more prominent members to the table. The core values of the organization include a commitment to transparency, accountability and inclusivity.

Wayves On Line!

Did you miss the last issue of Wayves? Or did your favourite distribution point run out of copies? Don't fret! Now you can visit www.wayves.ca, and download the current issue, and the archives too! We have lots of back issues on line too. If you'd like to be notified when the current issue is online- email us at submissions@wayves.ca!

We are very interested in reaching out to and involving our youth in this year's festivities, and providing them with opportunities to promote of their fundraisers and events here on St. John's Pride Inc webpage, so if you are involved in the GSA movement, or know someone who is please feel free to contact Jennifer McCreath or Pamela Sheaves or the "St John's Pride" Facebook group.

We would really use your experience and input, and would love to get a chance to pick your brains and get everyone involved. We are trying to incorporate a broader spectrum of the community in the planning committees. There are opportunities for mature and professional members of the LGBT community to contribute to the planning and execution of this years festivities.

We are planning to provide venues and events in which there will be space and promotion of the Businesses, products and services of LGBT and allied business, services and organizations.

Here we have a chance to participate, promote, mentor and share your experience/business to help build a better community for everyone.

We feel it is really important to reach out to our whole community and allies. This is your celebration! Lets work together to make it the best St Johns Pride yet. Feel free to request friend status and contact us with your thoughts.

Fetish Ball Strikes Again!

The Ninth Annual Fetish Ball will be held April 28, 2012 at the old Mill Banquet Room on Wyse Road in Dartmouth. The doors open at 8 p.m. and close at 2 a.m.. The show starts at 9 p.m. with the Fetish Wear Contest at 11 p.m. and dancing until 2 a.m..

The Fetish Ball is the biggest fundraiser for a number of local fetish groups and not-for-profit groups. The three to four hundred people from all orientations who participate always have a great time and have a chance to win some decent prizes from the local sponsors like Venus Envy, Halfway Creations, Wayves and The Coast.

The show includes displays involving bondage in a Vac Bed, fire cupping, violet wand play, Bastinado and trampling, gender bending, Age Play and Diaper Lovers, rope dancing

Our Cover

Our cover was designed by Cam MacLeod, with just the tiniest bit of help from his friends, and shows Drake Jensen performing at the National Arts Centre.



Kale is a local Rope Master; his tripod rig was used for a Suspension Scene in last year's Fetish Ball, and he will be back this year again. The ring he is holding on to is the focal point for all his ropes as they are looped around a person's body to distribute the load factor and let the person feel like they are floating.

and suspension and any other edge play we can find before show time, as well as the Burlesque and Boylesque dancers.

The Fetish Contest at 11 p.m. will be judged by three local celebrities from the Community. The rules are simple: all genitals are to be covered, as well as female breasts, and no butt cheeks are to be showing. The outfit can be spiky, lacey, leathery, rubbery, latex... you get the idea. We are here to have fun with people whom we have grown to know over the years and with new folks of a like-minded attitude. There will be prizes for the best Fetish outfits in several categories.

Some of the reasons to come to the Fetish Ball are: to support our local

Important WAYVES Dates!

Issue Content Deadlines: Fridays: Apr 6, May 4, June 1: that is, the first Friday of each month (skipping January.) You can send your news, ideas, comments, criticisms, columns, cartoons and more to submissions@wayves.ca any time!

Production Meetings (Halifax): Mondays: Apr 9, May 7, June 4; help decide what goes in the next issue, 6:30 PM, at a Place to be announced in Halifax. All welcome, every meeting.

Magazine Layout (Halifax): Apr 15, May 20, June 10: help build the paper—no special skills required, just enthusiasm, and joining us even once, or for a few hours, helps a LOT! 9:30 AM. Email us for location.

We're on the stands, in the mail, and online on the fourth Friday of every month!

fetish groups; to check out the latest fetish fashions; connect with the best Dom/mes and subs in the Maritimes; see how to join some of the local fetish & BDSM groups; see the exotic acts being put together by local groups; and to feel free to be who you really are, even if it is only for a night.

At this year's Fetish Ball Weekend, Burnside Motel and Menz Bar on Gottingen Street will be the sites for the Friday evening parties. Burnside will have a Meet and Greet Dance with a DJ and three play rooms. Menz Bar will have a drag show and a Fetish/BDSM evening with several play rooms. Outlandish—a dress up party—will be on Thursday at Menz Bar if you want to start the weekend early.

New this year the School of Kink will be hosting an Interactive Dungeon from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday the 28th at its new play space in Fern Lane. The Interactive Dungeon will showcase some of the Fetish community's most popular forms of play. We'll have flogging, spanking and other forms of impact play, as well as needle play, wax play, fire play, and the always popular violet wand and rope bondage. This is the perfect opportunity for the public to come out and try what it is that we do first hand. Many of our local community members have volunteered their time and expertise to make sure the experience is a positive and safe one. Everyone is welcome to try out anything being showcased as either the giver or the receiver. We'll give tips

and hints to make sure you feel comfortable with whatever you choose to experience.

Mortgage Man

Growing up in Annapolis County, it was clear from a very early age that Clinton Wilkins's entrepreneurial spirit would one day be a force to be reckoned with. An established Regal catalogue rep by the time he was eight years old, the Middleton Regional High School alumnus went on to establish a booming DJ biz while still in his early teens.



That said, when the Wilmot native recently appeared on the front page of The Chronicle Herald's March 7 edition, few were surprised by the paper of record's decision to brand the 29-year-old SMU Commerce grad a "mortgage prodigy."

"He came highly recommended," boasts Dartmouth resident Kevin Barrett, who along with his husband David Evans, are clients of the Clin-
...continued next page

Wayves

Wayves exists to inform Atlantic Canadian lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people of activities in their communities, to promote those activities and to support their aims and objectives.

Wayves is an independent publication, published every month except February by a non-profit collective. Anyone who contributes to Wayves is automatically considered to be a member of the collective and is welcome to participate in all meetings and discussions. Wayves reserves the right to refuse material that might be reasonably considered heterosexism, racism, sexism or an attack on individuals or communities. Opinions expressed in Wayves are not necessarily those of the editorial collective. The article submission deadlines are posted in the *Important Wayves Dates* section of this page. Articles should be a maximum of 1,000 words and may be edited for length. Submissions should be emailed in plain text to the address below. Articles and letters may be published with pseudonyms or anonymously, but Wayves must have contact information for the author. The copyright for all submissions remains the property of the original author/creator.

Advertising: Jim Bain, Advertising Manager, email at ads@wayves.ca or call 902.845.2059. Responsibility for errors in advertisements is limited to the value of the space.

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list of our distributors in Atlantic Canada and around the country. If there are none handy to your home, write to submissions@wayves.ca and tell us where we should be!

Atlantic News continued

Mortgage Man

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 ton Wilkins Mortgage Group. "As a gay couple, working with Clinton was very comfortable." As a gay man himself, "he understands the (LG-BTQ) community ... (and) provided us with a better rate than the banks were offering."

Having inked 305 mortgages worth a combined \$62 million last year, Wilkins placed first among Centum Home Lenders' 2,700 Canadian agents in terms of units and the value of mortgages written in 2011.

Centum Home Lenders is part of Centum Financial Group Inc., a subsidiary of Century 21 Canada.

Wilkins, a bachelor who received his AMP designation from the Canadian Association of Accredited Mortgage Professionals in 2010, kick-started his business in 2006 and currently operates offices at 99 Wyse Road, Dartmouth and 489 Main Street, Kingston in the Annapolis Valley.

IDAH launches 2012 campaign

This year the International Day Against Homophobia is May 17. Participate! This day belongs to *You!*

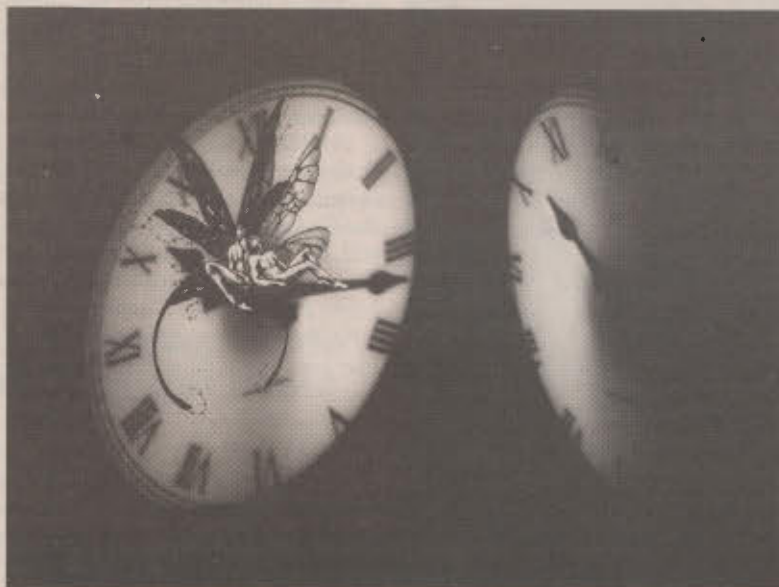
Posters and leaflets are available in French and in English; visit the website and our Facebook page www.homophobiaday.org and www.facebook.com/gaicoute

You can get promotional material using the order form at www.homophobiaday.org/default.aspx?scheme=3098. Happy campaigning!

Want your activities publicized? Write to mail@homophobiaday.org.

Upcoming Art Show with Gay Faeries

If erotic males faeries captured in loving and playful poses entices your imagination than the upcoming June 2012 art show for at Viewpoint Gallery is where you need to be. The show entitled the 'Playgrounds of the Faerie' allows the realms of man and



One of the pictures that will be exhibited at ViewPoint Gallery in June. Go see it.

faerie and the worlds of photography and fine art to mingle, creating magical and mystifying glimpses into the hidden existence of these bewitching creatures.

The playfully gay and sensual nature of the Faerie is captured by the photography of Phillip Joy and the drawings of Maritza Miari. From catching a nap on a teddy bear to playing tricks on humans these faeries find endless ways to amuse themselves. This photography project will relate a story in which the viewer is given a gift to view, through the camera lens, the Fay—teasers with capricious amorous natures that are known to use our world as their playground. Magical creatures of light, color, energy, and love they hide in the everyday objects of our existence enjoying the enchantment of our physical realm and sometimes playing mischievous harmless tricks on humans.

Phillip Joy is a local artist, using the media of photography. Self taught, his work has won several awards and is regularly featured in Viewpoint Gallery. His work typically focuses on glamour, fantasy, and spontaneous portraits, cityscapes, travel, and the abstract, and is a means to explore the secret lives of people—the untold journeys of the human experience, a way to explore

a different reality, become something else or see things from a different perspective. The mystique of his images allows the viewer to imagine a hundred different scenarios and feel just as many emotions.

Maritza Miari is an award-winning designer and artist with over 17 years of international experience, including Cuba, Spain and Canada. Working directly with clients, she manages projects from initial conception to final publication. She has a vast experience as designer and illustrator, mixing her art skills with the design line. Her work is placed in public spaces and private spaces in Cuba, Canada, Ireland, Dominican Republic and Spain. She has participated in sole and collective exhibitions and projects, and has been in charge of publicity campaigns, global, corporate and beyond.

Viewpoint Gallery is at 1272 Barrington Street.

- Exhibition: Tuesday, June 5 to Sunday, July 1, 2012.
- Opening Reception: Thursday, June 7th from 6 - 9 p.m..
- Artist Talk: Sunday, June 17th, 2 p.m..

For more information contact Phillip at fyresong@hotmail.com or visit <http://www.viewpointgallery.ca/> or <http://www.facebook.com/events/179934535451967/>.

NSRAP Report

Below is a letter from Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP) board member Lucas Thorne-Humphrey that was sent to Minister of Health Maureen MacDonald on March 1, 2012.

Lucas serves as the chair of the NSRAP Health Committee.

Dear Minister:

It is the position of NSRAP that the province of Nova Scotia should publicly fund the quadrivalent HPV vaccine Gardasil® for boys/young men between the ages of 9 and 26 in Nova Scotia. In particular and perhaps with more cost avoidance over the long term, we suggest public funding for the vaccine for the higher risk male population, specifically men whom have sex with men (MSM).

NSRAP has been working since 1995 across Nova Scotia as a voice for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Community (Rainbow Community.) We have accomplished much in the past; areas of note include providing national leadership in the recognition of same sex relationships including marriage, community research and education. Part of our role is advocating for Nova Scotians' access to health care, including vaccinations that have particular relevance to members of our community.

Support for our specific recommendation has come from recent evidence by Giuliano et al, the extrapolation of data already published leading to public vaccination in young females, and the recent National Advisory Commission on Immunization (NACI) recommendations. NACI has recommended that all Canadian males and specifically high-risk groups such as MSM receive this vaccine.

NSRAP acknowledges the significant added cost of providing this vaccine and administering it to Nova Scotian boys. We consider public funding of this vaccination specifically in MSM similar to that of Hepatitis A & B vaccinations (already currently covered). We do appreciate cost related concerns. As with other vaccinations we are confident that the overall reduction in health care costs over the long term justifies this expansion of our publicly funded vaccination program. The proposed implications of improved quality of life and reduced lost productivity from the implicated cancers and known infections make this effort highly significant in long-term preventative health.

Although clinical outcome data in these areas will likely be lacking for many years, we are confident in the validity of expanding vaccination to MSM specifically given the reasonable extrapolation from current data. You can appreciate that such preventative health initiatives are an important part of the effectiveness and sustainability of our health care system in Nova Scotia.

We eagerly await your response to our inquiry. In the interim please do not hesitate to contact us for any clarification or further community input that we can provide.

With best regards, Lucas Thorne-Humphrey, BSc Pharm, ACPR

Benjamin Moore
The Colour Experts

<p>BURNSIDE Decorating Centre Next to Staples 468-8408</p>	<p>COLORWORKS Decorating Centre 3667 Strawberry Hill 455-1335</p>
<p>ACADIA & QUILLEY'S Decorating Centre 6243 Quinpool Road 423-4915</p>	<p>WWW.SUSNISPAINTS.COM Your One Stop Decorating Centres</p>

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Leonard Preyra
MLA, Halifax Citadel - Sable Island

"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." ~ Martin Luther

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International Women's Week



Old friends, new friends, and families gathered on International Women's Day, March 8th, to celebrate the day—a great sunny day for the event.



Des Adams, one of the speakers at the Rally gave, once again, stirring words that mesmerized the crowd.



One of five Feminist Choruses of Nova Scotia who returned for a concert at Alderney Landing Theatre to kick off an incredible week for HRM's International Women's Week 2012. Kudos to everyone involved in making it the best IWD in years!



Many of the people who had been at the IWD march and their supporters joined together to participate in a protest against a contest that was being put on by Q105, where the prize was to be won by a man. The prize was a woman from Prague.



The Rally ended with a March joined by many others who chanted with great enthusiasm, heard by many in the central downtown area.



Photographs by
Anita Louise Martinez

An extremely well-attended Dance ended the amazingly well-organized week. The place was packed and jumpin' all night long. Usually many leave early, but this time people left reluctantly when the music was shut down at the end of the dance. A fantastic time was had by all.

St. John's Youth Group Creates Peace Banner



On January 25, 2012 Planned Parenthood's LGBTQ Youth Group in St. John's NL created a peace banner. Each youth and adult mentor created a unique flag, sending out positive energy and peace to the world for 2012!



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The Sanctuary Garden

Recently I saw the play *Communion* at Neptune Studio. As I reviewed the synopsis, tired and somewhat cranky after a long day, a wayward thought flashed through my mind—what am I, a therapist, doing at a show like this? Don't I get enough of this in my work already, stories of ruptured relationships, open wounds and deep, unfulfilled, unmet dreams and desires? I dragged my weary body into the theatre and promptly sat down and snoozed.

When the lights went up a simple three chair setting was minimalist enough to engage my tired eyes and brain—anything more elaborate would have taxed me too much. A three chair set and a three character play, simple, rich, dark and humorous—a play that was just enough and yet so much more. It was communion between the players, and with an audience, a 'sharing in common.'

From Wikipedia I learn the term communion is "derived from Latin *communio* (sharing in common). The corresponding term in Greek is *κοινωνία* (*koinonia*), which is often translated as "fellowship." In Christianity, the basic meaning of the term communion is an especially close relationship of Christians, as individuals or as a Church, with God and with other Christians. The Christian meaning limits the experience within its own community, while the Greek word *κοινωνία*, predating Christianity, could apply to a "business

partnership, to fellowship of life in marriage, to a spiritual relationship with a god such as Zeus, to comradely fellowship between friends, to a community or society."

Having been born into the Catholic faith, communion is not an unknown word; the first meaning associated with it, as in 'going to communion,' is an event, or experience, often fraught with anxiety—will I break a cardinal rule and bite into the communion wafer! Biting the wafer was bad, and hell awaited. Or is food caught in my teeth or is my breath smelly as I open wide to receive communion? Have I confessed all my sins—is my soul pure enough? These are just some of the worries attached to this common yet profound experience. The play reminded me of all this and more. Similar questions surround the everyday experience of communion with each other—am I good enough, do I deserve this gift, is my body clean enough; the commercials tell us a breath mint is all that is needed to prepare for the kiss and communion tells us of vulnerability, of honesty, of the work needed to share, of the fragile yet resilient connections between us.

A week later I was driving into town, listening to the radio, a show about how to refinish cupboards, and I thought about how my plan to paint the kitchen cupboards was a much bigger and harder job than I anticipated; the traffic was congested as a construction zone came into view, three

gigantic trailers were ahead of me as I moved into the next lane—more of my attention was needed! Was I going to be late for the meeting, would the drivers merge as ought to happen according to the traffic rules and...? No, the trailers sailed on ahead and as I was left behind, coming to a dead stop, it was as if my mind did too. All of a sudden all the thoughts and feelings I was juggling dropped, stopped, flopped—nothing, the end! Who am I, where am I, emerged from this open space, am I having an Alzheimer's moment I heard and anxiety flooded me—but I remembered all that had been happening as I dropped the balls so it was something else.

Is it in our nature to name and thus know? Is naming about control, or is it about situating experience in a knowable landscape? Or maybe naming is the mapping of the landscape as it becomes knowable. In the landscape of the soul, meaning is embedded and becoming, transcendent and immanent. It may be "as if" a deep pool in which we float and into which we fall. It is the place of all relationship, the wounded and the whole, the loved and unloved, the being and becoming. It is fraught with danger, and hope, a metaphor for the landscape in which the pilgrims of old walked towards the Holy Land, "à la Sainte-Terre." Those pilgrims who walked the land, as the Dark Ages ended, more for the freedom it offered and their presumed openness to exploration

and discovery, are different from the sturdy walkers of goal-oriented faith. They are the saunterers (*Sainte-Terre*) whom Thoreau praised for the very reasons the purposeful burghers of old disparaged them. To saunter the landscape of the soul with freedom and openness, it is necessary to first enter into this experience. To commune with it presumes awareness.

From the everyday moment of thinking, planning, moving and anticipating within a known landscape, I plummeted into the unknown, not with intention or awareness, but suddenly, frighteningly, and unanchored. A new freedom opens before me and I determine to wander this landscape, not with an agenda, or to "do lunch," but to know it. What can I say—am I changed, does the world look different? I am not sure, and I know the play about communion was somehow a trigger point that deepened my knowing about relationships, vulnerability, hope and despair. Its shape and structure is not mine, nor it may it be yours, yet it teaches about possibilities. The author, Daniel McIvor, is to be thanked for a play that plays on *Communion*.



LGBTQ Student Suicide: Why Is It Increasing In Our Schools?

Part One

by Susan Rose

What a wonderful life we have here in Canada! Any society is as free as the education system teaches, so we are the free-est of the free. Canadians pride themselves on our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Freedom to a Safe and Inclusive environment means to be included and equal in all institutions, especially in our schools. We live in one of the greatest countries in the world. With respect to LGBT human rights here in Canada, we've come a long way—or have we?

The last Wednesday in February is Anti-Bullying or Pink Shirt Day, an event that began in a Nova Scotia high school by two young students in response to watching their friend being called fag and other derogatory names because he was wearing a pink shirt. I commend the two youths and anyone who has the courage to stand up and say enough! Many youths are taking a stand and beginning to speak out against bullying. According to Egale's Safe School Survey, sixty percent of the students who responded said they are upset about the number of bullying incidents they see on a daily basis. The majority of this violence is directed at our LGBTQ youth, or youth that are thought to be LGBTQ. The students also told us that they are extremely disturbed because day after day they see many teachers turn their heads when in the presence of these incidents.

So what is the situation in most schools today in Canada? Why are teachers not dealing with homophobic and transphobic bullying? Is it safe to be out and proud? Are teachers fearful of intervening in homophobic and transphobic incidents? Why is there an increase in LGBTQ suicides? What messages are being communicated in our schools about the LG-

BTQ community? These are just a few questions for me to consider as chair of Egale's Education Committee. I have been hearing about far too many LGBTQ suicides. One in particular was Jamie Hubley's, and for some reason it affected me greatly.

As I read about Jamie's loving family and friends, I knew the crisis was far worse than I thought. The more I read about him and his struggles, the more upset I became. Even with a loving supportive family the hate at school became too much for him to deal with. He stood alone. Jamie's suicide is one that I will never forget. I see his smiling face every day and wonder, who will be next?

Rick Mercer's rant, saying we should all feel responsible for Jamie's death so that this does not happen again, was discussed for a week and it's forgotten about once again.

Google Jamie Hubley and read about his journey—how he tried to begin a Rainbow Club at his Catholic school to promote acceptance; how he watched powerless as his posters were torn down; how he tried to cope with being called derogatory names in the hallways. Look at his Youtube videos and see, like I did, a wonderful, talented young man who was so courageous and had much to give. He finally felt that he could not wait a few more years for it to get better!

Yes, we have the right to marry, and many people thought our fight was over. Most of the donations Egale received from the LGBTQ community came to an end when we won that right. Many felt we did not need a national organization like Egale Canada.

I know there are many of us who are out to our families, friends and colleagues, and living content peaceful lives. Many of us are truly out and Proud! What a wonderful place to

be! As a matter of fact, so many of us have forgotten the horrible feelings of being in the closet, and what it feels like to be unsafe, that we have become complacent.

So why are we seeing increasing numbers of our LGBTQ youth commit suicide?

In 2009-10, 642 youth committed suicide in Canada. Thirty percent of them did so because they were gay, lesbian, or transgendered. I'm not sure if you feel as I do, but I'm extremely saddened and angry that in one year we lost over 200 youth from our community. Let's think for a moment: Do we have schools in Canada where LGBTQ topics are completely excluded? *Yes We Do!* Are there schools in Canada where the mention of homosexuality is a reason

to be sent to the guidance counselor? *Yes There Are!* The answers to these two questions should have most of us outraged. We must ask ourselves: who is responsible?

Next month I will explore reasons why LGBTQ youth are killing

themselves at alarming rates. I'll take you inside several of the largest school boards in Canada as we look for answers. We have a crisis in our schools and our community once again is paying an extremely heavy price—Our Lives!

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MOOSEHEAD POOL TOURNAMENT @ 8PM • Draught Special till Close*

TUE: **So You Think You Got Talent*** -10PM • 2 Drinks for \$9**

WED: **KARAOKE*** - Win up to \$500 • 32oz Pitcher Specials!

THU: **OUTLANDISH!** - The Fashion & Arts Based Dance Party -10PM*
Hosted by Christopher Copstick • 32oz Pitcher Specials!

FRI: **Shitz & Gigglez Comedy Show*** @ 9:30PM, \$5 Cover***
HOUSE DJ STARTING AT 11PM • 2 Drinks for \$9**

SAT: **Happy Hour 3-10PM • HOUSE DJ @ 9:30PM*****
Sing Along Show Tunes with Gobby in the Music Room*

SUN: **Happy Hour 3-9PM, Drag Show 9PM*** • 32oz Long Island Ice Tea \$13

* Check the events calendar on our web site for details. * Moosehead Draught Specials!
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Rainbow Refugees Is Official!

by Hugo Dann

Rainbow Refugees NS has had a busy start to the year. On February 5th we had a meeting at the Company House in Halifax and with the support of everyone there we agreed to become a registered non-profit organization under Nova Scotia's Registry of Joint Stocks. We are now officially the Rainbow Refugee Association of Nova Scotia. On February 14, Pink Triangle Day, we had a bake sale at the office of our partner organization, Immigration Settlement and Integration Services (ISIS). Proceeds from that sale will be combined with money raised by a bake sale held in our name by OUTLaw, Dalhousie Schulich School of Law's LGBTQ student association.

Plans are in the works for a full-scale fundraising/awareness event to be held on, or around, May 17: International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia; look for more details about this event in the May issue of Wayves. There are ideas already being put forward for future partnerships, fundraisers and events, but we will be very proud to be marching in our first Halifax Pride Parade this July.

Sadly, all this activity is more than justified. The situation appears to be getting darker for LGBTQ people across the world. It seems like an enormous backlash is being perpetrated against queers by dictatorial regimes or fledgling democracies in Russia, Iraq, and parts of Africa, determined to shore up their sagging moral authority by beating up on their most vulnerable citizens. The infamous "Kill the Gays" bill has been reintroduced into the Ugandan Parliament by M. P. David Bahati. On February 14, the very day that Rainbow Refugees Nova Scotia was selling

cupcakes and tuna wraps at ISIS, Uganda's Minister of Ethics led a police raid on a workshop being led by Freedom and Roam, an organization for lesbians, bisexual and transgender woman. The leader of Freedom and Roam, Kasha Jacqueline Nabagasera, an internationally honoured lesbian activist, was placed under order of arrest, but managed to escape the raid. While she continues to be the target of daily police harassment, she has not stopped speaking out or curtailed her activism one iota!

In St. Petersburg, where Russia's great composer Tchaikovsky took his own life rather than face humiliation and exile following a gay scandal, a law has been passed that literally forbids any discussion of homosexuality or gender identity and expression. They have imposed a silence that they hope will render us invisible. In Moscow, religious and political leaders are calling for the anti-LGBT laws to be extended to include all of Russia. Now we learn of the targeted killing of young people in Iraq who are presumed gay—more than 30 have been shot dead in the streets as this goes to press.

What can we possibly do in the face of so much hate? We can help, even if it's only one life at a time. It costs \$12,000 to sponsor a refugee to come to safety in Canada; 100 people, giving \$10 a month for a year. With that, Rainbow Refugees Nova Scotia can bring a gay, lesbian, or trans person to freedom. Think about that. Who knows, the life we save could be another Tchaikovsky, or even another Kasha Nabagasera.

To learn more about our activities, please visit Rainbow Refugees Nova Scotia on Facebook, or email us at rainbowrefugee.ns@gmail.com.

I Am Still What I Amherst

by Gerard Veldhoven

Archbishop weighs in on same-sex marriage.

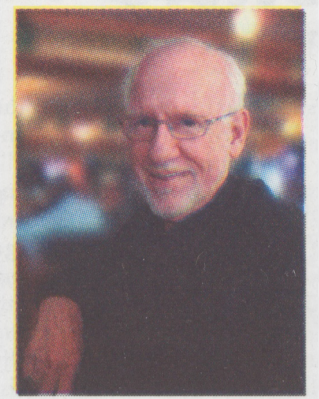
Currently, ten countries around the world have legalized same-sex marriage. The English parliament is about to change the marriage laws to include gay couples being able to get legally married. Prime Minister David Cameron indicated last fall that he was in favour of the change. As is customary, church officials have lots to say and mostly in a negative and condemning tone. The Archbishop of Canterbury is staunchly against the change in the marriage laws. Rowan Williams is however a supporter of gay rights and that contradicts his statements regarding the right and privilege for gay couples to marry. He insists the same-sex marriage law is wrong as it imposes cultural change. I ask the following; what is wrong with cultural change? Do we not improve fairness and equal opportunity for all people seeking change in a world still dominated by those against equality? The Equality minister, Lynne Featherstone, said the churches do not own the marriage laws and indicated that the same-sex marriage law would be about "the underlying principles of family, society and personal freedoms."

In many European countries only civil marriages are legal as clergy are not licensed to perform marriages. Cultures are indeed going

through a change, and if that was not accepted then the equal rights laws for the queer community would not exist. Canada is a fore-runner in recognizing that members of the LGBT community are equal to all others. That does not mean all is well as we read about the many loopholes that remain to be dealt with and hopefully in a timely manner. As long as the laws are interpreted in many ways, we will need to be vigilant.

Amherst's LGBT community remains divided and there is no indication if a new group will be formed. It seems the interest does not exist and therefore, as in many smaller communities, LGBT groups are falling apart. Amherst had a flag raising ceremony last July and it is unlikely that will happen this year. However, I will give it some thought and I am willing to organize that event if I am able to muster some others willing to take part. Last year I gathered enough people to make the event a success as about fifty folks watched the ceremony, along with Mayor Rob Small, MLA Brian Skabar and Cumberland County Warden Keith Hunter who were guest speakers, along with the fabulous Eldon Hay.

"Never apologize for showing feeling. When you do so, you apologize for the truth." - Benjamin Disraeli



How does it feel?

by Lucy Wallace

What does it mean to me to be a transwoman in twenty eleven? I guess this is a simple question but it would supply my audience with a myriad of answers. What the status of life for someone like me in Nova Scotia is, how I am treated, what is the future, what it is really like, does it get better? To all of these questions, the answer is far from certain or finite.

On a daily basis, treatment from others is far from kind. I can't enter the public dressed as I would like without numerous stares, mutterings, slurs, threats, discrimination or the occasional time where someone will try to jump me. I have to make sure I can take care of myself if there was ever to be a fight or someone were to get violent because there is just so much hatred out there. People lack the education to dispel their prejudic-

es so they project them on people like me. There is also ridicule for people who are attracted to a trans* person so it makes it extremely difficult to procure affection from a significant other. It is lonely and painful every single day.

Really, it is like being a boy with this girl trapped inside of you for your entire life. People don't believe you, make fun of you because your outer image is not indicative of your spirit, you are ridiculed for doing "girl" things and you are essentially trapped. It is a dim box without much air and devoid of light. You become accustomed to being alive but wandering through your days, never quite content with much because the essential persona you bear is not congruent to your inner being. You lash out at others and yourself because there is so much sadness and distress from this incorrect sex.

In the future, I will hope that other trans* identified people are not forced into the sex industry or menial jobs for lack of employment or as a means to pay for their procedures. I hope


that I will not have to shell roughly thirty to fifty thousand dollars out of my own pocket to achieve the body I was robbed of genetically. I will hope that suicide and mental illnesses will become less prevalent. I will hope for trans* people to be humanized by the media and shown as we truly are. I will hope that this no longer will be labeled something like a disorder where it makes it appear as a sickness. I will hope that the LGBT community will be more inclusive of trans* identities. I will hope to be free.

I want more than anything to believe that it gets better. I want to be happy so badly, I want the same as everyone else, I feel like I am the same as other girls but without the credit or recognition. I believe it will be better in the future after I can afford to have a body people recognize as female. I almost feel like the idea of it getting better for trans* people really depends on how much money you have and how far in the transition you are. It just doesn't randomly get better though—as Rick Mercer would say, we have to MAKE it better.

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Letters

Where's the T?

Dear Wayves

It's time for me to speak from the heart. So I hear it quite often: "Jennifer McCreath stole Pride" Well, context: City of St. John's and vicinity: 200000. People who attended 2010 Pride parade: 300. Average attendance at 2010 pride planning meetings: 10. So, what was there to steal? Yes, I created St. John's Pride Inc and grappled pride from 5 self-appointed, self-entitled individuals. No, my group of 3 may not have ever had a public vote of confidence, but neither did anyone else! We didn't steal anything, we adopted a concept and legitimized it. We created an

organization with framework and procedures, an organization with legal and internal corporate responsibility to act in a transparent, accountable, and inclusive manner. In 2011, we produced a Pride Week that would see a drastic increase in quality events, attendance, partnerships, and media attention, work so good it caught the attention of several other Prides who have asked me to consult them.

Unfortunately, the biggest mistake was to have a transsexual woman activist, non-native-Newfoundlander, who is not gay or lesbian, who does not support the Newfoundland seal hunt, who believes abortion is murder, acting as the face of the organization. Funny how a community who hates being judged, bullied, and misunderstood, is doing the exact same thing to me for the same reasons. I can only wonder if someone else had produced this work with these results, would be met with the same amount of hostility? I think I've been very

misunderstood and made out to be worse than I really am.

The relationship between the trans and gays is turbulent. We are different communities with different issues and priorities. Seems I'm a villain for suggesting that access to housing, health care, employment, and human rights, for trans people, are more important than who can donate blood and who can get a marriage certificate. Furthermore, gays haven't had to fight to use public washrooms or board airplanes. They've never fought a government that insisted on assigning them the wrong gender; never had to change their gender appearance; never had to adjust to new hormones; never had to risk public embarrassment or safety by showing someone their ID; and never had uninsured surgery bills.

Another strange conflict has been my stance on abortion and animal rights. Who knew I wasn't allowed to have opinions? Funny how a statement suggesting that it would be

wrong to abort a baby simply because you know it will turn out trans, gets twisted into a story that Jennifer is completely anti-women's rights. Oh, and I am sorry that I think clubbing baby seals on the head is wrong, how un-Newfoundland of me. But you know, I still produced an awesome Pride Week.

Another issue seems to be this huge focus on the gay youth demographic. Nice in theory, but when most transwomen find themselves coming out and going through transition at an average age of 30-45, Egale's partnership with Government to deploy high school GSAs won't help us. When that press release came out, I saw no mention of anything trans. These Government meetings happened privately with no trans stakeholder engagement, too. Am I wrong to feel concerned?

So yes, I have criticized Egale, and criticized the Pflag/Planned Parenthood partnership—but never while speaking for Pride. Well, let's put the shoe on the other foot. How about I create a Canadian Trans Organisation, have a membership of transwomen, and undertake trans work, yet proclaim myself "Canada's LGBT Human Rights organization" or "Canada's only organization that helps all Canadians who are struggling with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity." Sorry Egale and sorry Pflag, you wouldn't be happy either.

When a government lawyer questioned the validity of same sex marriage on foreign visitors, there was a massive outcry. But days later when I brought to light a fairly new government policy that bans trans people from flying, hardly a peep out of anyone. I look all over the world at Pride organizations, and see consistent alienation of the trans community—so much that we are seeing separate Trans Pride marches. Was I foolish to think that I could create an LGBT organization led by me? Well, I did create it, and I did hit our goals. But, the pressure is too much: the threats, the teasing, the mocking, the

mudslinging, the boycotts.

It's time to move on and focus on building a stronger trans community. I'm going to create my own M2F transition consulting service at jennifermccreath.com, and deeply engage trans people across the nation to form a national advocacy organization. And amazingly, our dear friends in Corner Brook Pride have taken note of the great work I have done here, and have asked for me to lead them in their future. How's that for vindication? Anyway folks, if I did steal it, you've got it back now, bigger and better than ever. I hope to find myself welcome if I choose to attend some of your events this summer. Pride is for everyone! Never forget that. Sincerely, Jennifer McCreath

Really, Where Is It?

To Capital Health:

I will be 65 years old this year. I am a legal female and I am a post-op transsexual. I saw your recent video and, if I am mistaken, I apologize. However, I did not see any trans representation in your video other than a verbal mention of the letter "T."

Across Canada we were struggling, and still are, for help. Three doctors gave me personal assistance, but I have seen no indication of any others assisting us. We get counselling for two to four years, but to what end? The only trans that have completed their changeover have been people who have left this province and, in most part, paid for it themselves. This was not only expensive but in most cases it delayed transitioning to people's twenties or thirties at the least.

Why does it appear that we are being sidetracked?

I have been away from the front line for over four years. Now that I am able to get back, it seems we have gone backwards. I would appreciate an update if you think that would assist me to understand.

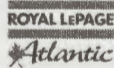
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Halifax Pride 2012 Holds 1st Community Meeting

by Hugo Dann

Despite the ongoing transit strike, on March 3rd some fifteen hardy queer Haligonians joined members of the Halifax Pride Committee for their first open community meeting. Kudos to Halifax Pride for selecting the North End Library on Gortingen Street with its gender neutral bathroom facilities and street level accessibility. Pride Chair Krista Snow got the meeting started by inviting those Committee members present to update us on their particular activities. We learned that fundraising was underway through Halfway to Pride at Reflections and Pride's series of colour parties, although no details were provided about what's been raised so far. We were also told about some new events, including a possible matinee film series, presented in partnership with the Youth Project.

Concerns had been raised at Pride's Annual General Meeting about some proposed changes to the bylaws and to Halifax Pride's communications policy. It was good to hear that a bylaw committee, one with strong community participation, has been meeting. Changes to the bylaws will be rolled out for approval at a special general meeting, perhaps as early as mid-April.

It was noted that there were still significant difficulties with how Pride is connecting with its core, the LGBTQ Community of Halifax. Some of these appear to be logistical problems, such as a poorly maintained database; others laid the problem on an overstretched committee; too few people having to work too hard to do too much. However, as one community member rightly pointed out, "Communication was identified as a priority at the AGM, so clearly, it is up to Pride to make it so." That said, the committee showed a refreshing willingness to welcome community input, and there was a sense that things were improving.

As a former Pride Chair, I hope that future meetings will include details about the deficit, fundraising targets and policies, and how Halifax Pride sees itself within the larger community picture. How does Pride plan to reflect the diversity of Halifax's queers throughout Pride Week? How are they helping to develop LGBTQ tourism, the arts, and supporting other community organizations? With these questions still hopefully to be addressed, I nonetheless left the meeting feeling more about about the direction of Halifax Pride.

Groups & Services continued

email:mountpride@mountstudents.ca, meets last Monday (at 2:00pm.) at Meetings in the Diversity Centre in Roseria. Possible events that are being planned for the year include sexuality awareness, movies nights, social events, guest speakers, and many more. There are always LGBTQ community events to be involved with and events that are always fun. This group is open to anyone who would like to join. Also, join the "Mount Pride" Facebook group!

Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project: NSRAP, the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project: for 15 years the leading advocate for Nova Scotia's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community. Fostering change in our communities through education, outreach, and political action. 444.3206 email: nsrap@nsrap.ca web: www.nsrp.ca at TBA

Outlaw: GLBTQ & Allies Law Students Association at Dalhousie Law School email:chad.skinner@dal.ca web: www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2416842853 (Meetings vary. Please email for further information or check out our Facebook group.) at Dalhousie Law School. 6061 University Avenue. Halifax, Nova Scotia.

PFLAG: Support & education on issues of sexual orientation & gender identity. These meetings are open to all. For more information please feel free to contact Michelle Malette by phone or email. Hope you'll join us! 431-8500 email: halifaxns@pflagcanada.ca, meets 1st Thursday (We meet on the 1st Thursday of each month from 6:30 -8:30 pm 902-431-8500) at Youth Project, 2281 Brunswick St, Halifax

Play Group for Queer Families: 422-8780 (3-5pm) at Board Room (Play Room) at Needham Community Recreation Centre, 3372 Devonshire St (north end Halifax, near intersection of Duffus & Novalea, bus routes 7 & 9) Bring a snack for your child(ren). We will be collecting money from each family to cover the cost of the room rental, likely \$2-4 per week.

Pride Week: Producers of Atlantic Canada's largest LGBTQ cultural festival. 431-1194 email: info@halifaxpride.ca web: www.halifaxpride.ca

prideHealth: prideHealth is a program of Capital Health and the IWK Health Centre. If you are a member of the pride community and need support with any kind of health care call Anita our Clinical Nursing Specialist, number below. She is available free of charge, offers complete confidentiality, and can also give you support if you are experiencing homo or transphobia. prideHealth- improving safe access to health care. 220.0643

Quakers: Quakerism emphasizes that we all manifest the Divine: 429-2904 web:halifax.quaker.ca, meets every Sunday at Library at Atlantic School of Theology, Franklyn St. All very welcome.

Queer Play: A Queer performing arts group in Halifax NS email: queerplay@gmail.com

SMU-Q: A student-driven society that provides positive support, advocacy, activities, and education through the dissemination of information to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersexual, and ally persons of Saint Mary's University

and the LGBTQIA community at large. 902-496-8216 email: info@smuq.ca web: www.smuq.ca (See our facebook group http://www.facebook.com/SaintMarysUniversityQ and website for details on upcoming events) at Saint Mary's University

Spirituality For Lesbians: We seek to deepen our relationship with God, knowing that God loves us and calls us into life just as he has created us. Persons of every or no denomination are welcome. 459-2649, meets 2nd Wednesday (7:30-9PM, phone for meeting locations)

Team Halifax: All GLBT over 18, athletes and performance artists, as well as anyone willing to help out. 422-9510 web: www.teamhalifax.com (No fixed schedule at this time, look on website for further details.)

The Masculine Spectrum: is a new support group for all transgender, transsexual, & trans men, FtMs, female assigned at birth genderqueers, two-spirited, intersexed, & questioning people 18 years of age or older, of all sexual orientations. No significant others, friends, family, or allies please. web: ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/genderspectrum/, meets 2nd Sunday at Just Us Cafe, 5896 Spring Garden Road

The Youth Project: Support, education and social activities for youth 25 and under across Nova Scotia. Weekly events, plus a youth food bank and Health nurse on site. 429-5429 email: youthproject@youthproject.ns.ca web: www.youthproject.ns.ca (Please see our website for an up-to-date calendar of events.)

Trans Family Nova Scotia: Trans Family is an open & supportive space welcoming families, friends and allies as well as trans and genderqueer folk themselves. If you are unable to join us at a meeting for any reason, we can help you find resources and refer you to other appropriate organizations to help meet your needs. For more information, please feel free to call or email Michelle. 902-431-8500 email: transfamily@eastlink.ca, meets 3rd Monday (6:30 to 8:30 pm) at The Youth Project 2281 Brunswick St., Halifax

Universalist Unitarian Church: an inclusive liberal religious community 429-5500 email: uuchurch@eastlink.ca web: UUCH.ca, meets every Sunday (10:30; see website for special events) at 5500 Inglis St

Kentville

Red Door: Youth Health & Support Centre. Information and services for sexual health. Ages 13 - 30. 679-1411 web: thereddoor.ca (Monday to Friday 2pm to 6pm) at 150 Park Street

Lunenburg

Second Story Women's Centre: We offer a meeting space for women, support counselling, programs, and referrals. (902)640-3044 email: secstory@eastlink.ca web: www.secstory.com at Second Story Women's Centre is located at 22 King Street, Post Office Centre, Lunenburg.

Middleton

PFLAG: Information and support for GLBT community and their friends and families. 902-825-0548 email: middletonns@pflagcanada.ca web: www.

pflagcanada.ca/middleton.html (Check online for meeting times and locations- or phone 825-0548)

New Glasgow

Pictou County Centre for Sexual Health: Providing comprehensive and accessible sexual and reproductive health services in a safe, confidential and non-judgemental manner for women and men of all ages. PCCSH is affiliated with the Nova Scotia Association of Sexual Health and the Canadian Federation of Sexual Health. They are a pro-choice and GLBTQ friendly organization. 695-3366 email: psexualhealth@hotmail.com web: www.pictoucountysexualhealth.com

Pictou County Women's Centre: Offering Individual Support Counselling and Referral, Advocacy and Accompaniment, Programs and Community Education 755-4647 email: pcwc@womenscentre.ca

New Minas / Annapolis Valley

Valley Youth Project: Sexual Orientation. Gender Identity. Allies. Youth. email:valleyyouthproject@gmail.com (6-8:30 most Wednesdays through May) at New Minas Civic Center, 9209 Commercial St. Ages 25 & under. Free bus tickets available. Free food. Fun activities. Join us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/pages/Valley-Youth-Project/22418494995

Sydney

AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton: Support, advocacy, prevention/education for those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. Free condoms! Queer Advocacy and Education, Needle Distribution, Food Bank, Coffee, Safe Space for those infected or affected. (902) 567-1766 Toll Free 1-877-597-9255 email: christineporter@accb.ns.ca web: www.accb.ns.ca (Free Anonymous Testing 1-902-567-1123 Monday and Tuesday each week from 8:30 to 4:30 and Thursdays from 8:30 to Noon. Check our Website for events and updates.) at 150 Bentinck St, Sydney, N.S. B1P 1G6

Cape Breton University Sexual Diversity Centre: We provide a welcoming environment for GLBTQ people and their Allies. 902-563-1481 email: sdc@cbu.ns.ca (Monday to Thursday 8:30-5 or by appointment) at the Students' Union Building, Cape Breton University.

PFLAG: Peer support & education on issues of sexual orientation & gender identity. email: sydney@pflagcanada.ca, meets last Sunday (of the month from 6:30-8:30pm. No meetings for June, July or August.) at Family Place Resource Centre, 714 Alexandra Street

Pride Cape Breton Society: Dances and

Social Events. Monthly dances are Adults Only! Check website community events. (902) 539-4627 email: info@pridecapbreton.com web: www.pridecapbreton.com (Dances on the last Saturday of every month. Check website for dance and special event dates!) at Southend Community Centre. Maps are at our website.

Tatamagouche

Tatamagouche Centre: We are an affirming centre, welcoming all gay, lesbian, and transgendered people. 1.800.218.2220 email: tatacent@tatacentre.ca web: www.tatacentre.ca

Truro

Central Nova Women's Resource Centre: Resources, programs and services available for all women identified women. Advocacy and support - with outreach to rural areas. Also, see our Facebook group. Central Nova Women's Resource Centre http://cnwrc.weebly.com, cnwrc@eastlink.ca 535 Prince Street, Truro, NS B2N 1E8 (902) 895-4295 web: cnwrc.weebly.com

Colchester Sexual Assault Centre: Provides support and information to anyone (GLBTQ included) affected by sexual assault and abuse. 902-897-4366 email: trurosexualassault@hotmail.com (Centre Hours Mon-Thurs 9:30-4:30) at 80 Glenwood Drive, Truro Nova Scotia

Hepatitis C Aware: a project of Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) working to educate members of the communities in Colchester, Cumberland, East Hants and Pictou counties on Hepatitis C. 1-866-940-AIDS email:nacs@eastlink.ca

Northern AIDS Connection Society: HIV prevention education initiative serving counties Colchester, Pictou, Cumberland & East Hants 895-0931 email: nacs@eastlink.ca web: northernaidconnectionsociety.ca (Our Board of Directors meet bi-monthly on the third Thursday of the month. Annual General Meeting held regularly in June. See webpage for contact numbers in your area of northern Nova Scotia.) at 33 Pleasant Street, Truro, N.S.

Rainbow Proud: Rainbow Proud supports the LGBT** community of Truro and surrounding areas. Our small group of volunteers work hard to put events together for everyone's enjoyment. Any feedback will be considered and can be sent to our email address. We hope you continue to come celebrate our community together. email: rainbowproud@hotmail.com web:rainbowproudnovascotia.ca (See webpage for schedule.)

RESPECT: Students Making Healthy Decisions 893-6300 email: respect@nsac.ca at P.O. Box 550, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Truro, N.S. B2N 5E3

SAAFE (Supporting An Alternative Friendly Environment): Social/support group at the NS Agricultural College. 893-6300 email: lyoun@nsac.ns.ca (Meetings as requested. Membership changes each academic year.)

Wolfville

Acadia Women's Centre: 585-2140 email: womenscentre@acadiu.ca (Acadia SUB Second Level Balcony)

Yarmouth

South West Nova Pride: We are a social group for SW Nova Scotia. All GLBT people of any age and in any stage of coming out are invited, we have a monthly gathering at Sobey's community room on Starrs Rd. in Yarmouth at 7:00 PM on the 2nd last Wednesday of each month. We create a monthly calendar of events for such things as pool, potluck parties, day trips or what ever members like to do. So come join us have fun and meet other GLBT people. 645-2914/749-0977 email:jackanddan@eastlink.ca,dianefcc@eastlink.ca web: SWNovaPride.com (Check out our our facebook at South West Nova Pride.)

Prince Edward Island (902)

Gay PEI Mailing List: Electronic mailing list for all GLBT, questioning and friendly, focus is on PEI email: gay-pe-owner@yahoo.com web: groups.yahoo.com/group/gay-pe/ at All first posts are moderated to stop spambots, otherwise, it's an open list.

GLBT Youth group: Safe Space Drop-Ins 367-3408 or toll free 1 877 380 5776 (E-mail us for further details.) at 144 Prince St.

PFLAG Canada - PEI: Providing support, education and advocacy for GLBT persons, their families and friends in PEI 902-887-3620 email: pei@pflagcanada.ca web: www.pflagcanada.ca (Meetings take place on an as needs basis.) at Check with Mary or Bill Kendrick on this months location by calling 902-887-3620.

Charlottetown

AIDS PEI: AIDS PEI offers HIV prevention and support services to all residents of PEI. 902-566-2437 email: info@aidspei.com web: www.aidspei.com at 375 University Ave, Unit 2, Charlottetown PE, C1A 4N4

ARC - Abegweit Rainbow Collective: Serving GLBT Islanders, their friends and families. 894-5776 email: info@arcofpei.com web: www.arcofpei.com, meets 1st Monday (6:00pm) at 375 University Ave Suite # 2 Charlottetown, PE)

Lay Chaplaincy Services

Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax
5500 Inglis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1J8
uuchurch@eastlink.ca
902-429-5500

Susan Stephen & Gwen Armshaw Lay Chaplains
stephen57@gmail.com armshaw@hfx.eastlink.ca

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Drake Jensen

...continued from page 1

nothing, barely getting out of bed, uninterested in music. He decided he had to do something. "I sat down and e-mailed Alan Hubley and told him what had happened to me, drawing parallels to what had happened to his son. I asked if we could dedicate the video to Jamie. Alan immediately e-mailed me back.

"In no time we had a picture of Jamie and the rest is history."

As of the middle of March, the number has passed 20,000 and it continues upward.

I ask Sean how he wound up husband of Canada's first out, gay country music artist.

"I was being stalked," he jokes.

The story of Drake and Sean is pure happenstance, ordinary for a Hollywood film, yet extraordinary in its telling. In 2007 Sean had been single for about a year and a half. A late-bloomer, he'd come out a couple of years prior and felt he was heading in a comfortable direction, personally and career-wise.

"One day this guy from New Brunswick started chatting with me online. I had no idea what he looked like because the picture on his profile was so small," Sean recounts. "We started talking and I got a sense he was different than the other guys I had been chatting with online."

Although uninterested in a long-distance relationship, Sean continued communicating, intrigued by the man on the other end of the chat. He sensed a kind of loneliness about him, something left unarticulated but found when reading between the lines. One day the man asked for Sean's phone number, which he uncharacteristically gave out.

"The first time Drake called we talked on the phone for three hours. It was like talking to an old friend. Every night after that, for about two months, we talked on the phone, about anything and everything."

The next step, again out of character for Sean, was to meet. He bought a plane ticket to Moncton and saw

the tall cowboy waiting for him at the front of the arrivals crowd. They spent the weekend together, Drake showing him around. All too soon it was over. "On the day I left we had lunch together and Drake drove me to the airport. We got there just in the nick of time," says Sean. "When we were in the air I'm sure the flight attendants were wondering what the hell was going on with this grown man sitting there, bawling his eyes out."

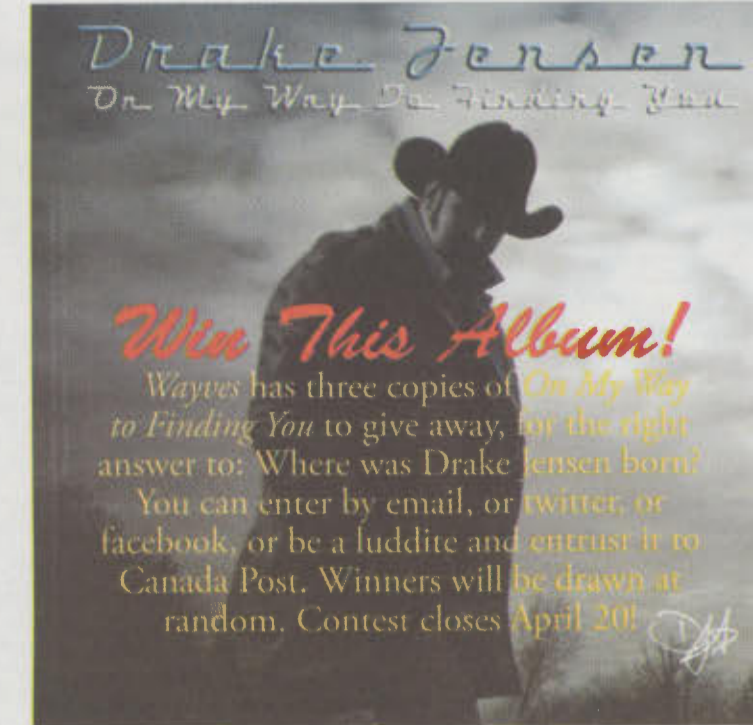
I watch the two of them as they look knowingly at each other, their eyes misting up. After a short pause, Sean continues. "After a short time we decided that Drake was going to move to Ottawa. So that's how it began."

Drake takes up the rest of the story. "After I got here and was looking for work, we'd go to Tim Horton's while I was passing out resumes and going for interviews. One time, we were sitting there having a coffee and out of the blue I said, 'I think we should get married.' And he said, 'I think we should, too.'"

Drake and Sean were married on March 1, 2008, less than a year after Drake's arrival in Ottawa.



Wedded bliss.



"I'm a huge advocate of marriage," he explains. "Many people have fought for our equality and our recognition. I felt getting married was the logical thing for us."

"Above and beyond our relationship, we're best friends. We deal with everything like best friends first, and we don't allow the music business or our relationship to colour that friendship. That's how it works best for us. If, at the end of the day, there's one person I'm going to trust with my life, it's my husband."

Drake and Sean make it a point to separate their business relationship—artist and manager—from their personal relationship. Work and love are separate, but since great art springs from strong feelings, they still complement each other in close proximity.

Both men have day jobs but Drake's focus has shifted more towards making music full-time. They're in the midst of planning a second album and for this project Drake has written more music than he did on the first, where he wrote both the lyrics and music for "I Found Me," and the lyrics for two more, "I Knew Her When" and "All You Need."

"All You Need" jogs a sentimental memory from Sean. "For one round of recording [in mid-January 2011] Drake went to Nashville by himself. One day I got home and there was an e-mail from Drake reading, 'Here's what we did today.' There was a preliminary recording of 'All You Need.' I listened to it and I cried. It was such a beautiful song."

Drake chuckles, "You cried because it was about you."

Sean smiles. "The recording was a demo, just the producer singing along with her guitar. A month or so later we were in Nashville in the studio and the song was coming to life. That's when it really hit me. To watch it grow, technically and otherwise, was amazing."

Friday, April 27th \$10 / \$15 After March 31st

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8pm-2am Dance, Prizes, Women Wrestling

2am- Play Rooms Open

Saturday, April 28th

Burnside Motel

Play Rooms Open All Day Until 8pm

Old Mill Tavern - Wyse Rd

8pm-9pm Meet & Greet

Saturday, April 28th

Old Mill Tavern - Wyse Rd

9pm-11pm

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model: Sarah Bonecrusher



"We had Dolly Parton's guitar player and Kid Rock's steel player. We had a guy who had played with Faith Hill. We had Elvis Presley's ex-keyboard player. Hearing what I wrote come to life with all these wonderful musicians was a surreal experience," Drake adds.

Drake may be writing more for the second album but he's drawn the line at writing a whole album himself, instead preferring to bring in other peoples' perspectives, adding colour and texture, allowing to it become much more interesting in the end.

He also acknowledges the debut album's decidedly East Coast flavour. It might be a country album recorded in Nashville with the best musicians in the industry but the Maritime underpinnings are still there. "My heart will always be next to the ocean, no matter where I live."

"Something I've noticed and I admire about Maritimers—Cape Bretoners in particular—is that they have a strong attachment and identification to home, even if they don't live there. I admire it to the point of almost being jealous of it," says Sean, who can claim Maritime ancestry via his Acadian father.

Drake finishes his coffee and winks. "I think it's my accent. Even when I sing, it never really goes away. Since I've moved to Ontario my accent has softened somewhat..."

He affects his accent: "... but get a beer into me, bye, you can tell I'm from Cape Breton!"

On the subject of whether his career may be damaged by his coming out, Drake holds firm: "Before you can stand up for anything, you have to stand up for yourself. I didn't do this as a kid, but I'm doing it now. I think I made the right decision and I don't mind admitting that I was scared. Sean and I invested a lot of time and money into this project and I didn't want to see it fail."

By their estimation, Drake's career has indeed changed—for the better. He took a risk, opened up, and is on the path he always knew he wanted to be on.

"I've always been proud of him, no matter what he does, because I've seen with my own eyes how focused he is on giving the best of himself," says Sean. "Even more now, because music is what he is. It's part of his soul."

"Am I proud of him? Absolutely. And I'm proud to be part of this project and help it along in any way I can."

Drake likens the first album to a business card, a way to put his voice out there, to test the waters and find out if people would listen. He's pleased at the positive reviews so far. "It's definitely worth another album. And several more after that."

The interview over, I tuck my voice recorder away into my jacket and the three of us head out for a beer. I'm happy to have reconnected with Drake. I'm glad to have met Sean and listened to their story. If it's possible to brighten a room just by being there, these two are adept at a fault.

There are plans in the works for a dozen-stop Ontario tour later in the year. The East Coast Music Awards are coming up in April. Once the new album is released next year there will likely be more touring. Drake Jensen's at the beginning of the adventure and, as his friend and his fan, I can't wait to see what kind of happy storm he sings up along the way.

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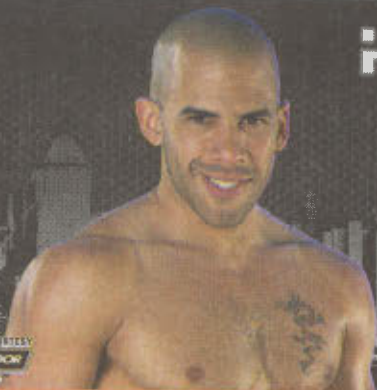
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