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WINTER 2011

On the cover:
Ryan's Fancy
Featured on page 18

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Gaze

FALL 2010

Happy 2011!

Personally, I can't think of a better time than the dawning of a new year to announce important changes at your favourite Atlantic Canadian GLBT publication.

When I launched Gaze last July, I envisioned that the magazine would be published ten times a year, with the next issue scheduled to hit newsstands by mid-September. It's now the middle of January, and this, our Winter 2011 edition, is only our second printing.

As many of you know, Gaze is largely a one-man operation, published with the assistance of freelancers and friends. Unfortunately, churning out a publication like Gaze, on an almost monthly basis, with minimal manpower, proved more difficult than I anticipated, hence my decision to make Gaze a quarterly endeavour, with issues being published in January, April, July and October.

Several of you have enquired about the status of our website, www.gazemagazine.ca. Plans to continue making Gaze available on-line have not been abandoned, however, following a hack attack on our site in the early fall prompted us to disable it and we are currently in the process of having a new one created. In the meantime, additional content (photos, web links, etc.) will be posted on our Facebook page and via Twitter by following @CitizenWilliams.

Despite the growing pains that followed our inaugural printing – and there were many – I continue to remain dedicated to Gaze's long-term prospects. With that, I would encourage you to become a valued member of our editorial team by emailing me at gazemagazine@eastlink.ca so that together we can adequately cover the various GLBT communities within our geographical reach. With your help, we can continue to produce a publication everyone, regardless of sexuality, can learn from and be proud of.

Until next time,





Around the World



ARIZONA: Hours after Democratic congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was shot in the head during a public political event January 8, she was heralded by the Human Rights Campaign – the USA's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization – heralded as “a champion for LGBT equality.” One of twelve people

wounded in the shooting spree that killed six, Giffords has established herself as a vocal supporter of gay rights, including same-sex marriage.

CALIFORNIA: The United States' first GLBT museum opened its doors in San Francisco January 13. Located in The Castro, one of the nation's best-known queer districts, the museum is a project of the GLBT Historical Society, an archives and research center established in 1985.

VANCOUVER: Released results of a first-ever study of HIV rates among gay men in Vancouver have revealed that 18% of those surveyed are infected with the virus; most are taking anti-HIV medications.

ONTARIO: Halton Catholic District School Board chair Alice Anne LeMay raised more than a few eyebrows in January while discussing the board's ban on gay-straight alliances. “[They’re] banned because they are not within the teachings of the Catholic Church,” LeMay said, further adding, “We don’t have Nazi groups either.” In a subsequent press release, LeMay stated it was never her intent to compare gay-straight alliances and Nazi groups. “Rather I was providing a number of examples of groups that are not endorsed and permitted in Halton Catholic schools, for example, groups in favour of abortion or hate groups of any nature.”



CALIFORNIA: Palm Springs police chief David Dominguez stepped down earlier this month, soon after apologizing to members of the gay community for making an “inappropriate comment.” According to ontopmag.com, a complaint filed against Dominguez by a fellow cop accused him of referring

to homosexuals as “a bunch of filthy motherf--kers” and telling them they “should get paid extra” for taking part in a 2009 undercover gay sex-sting operation that led to 19 arrests.

TEXAS: Tyjanae Moore, a transgendered female, was arrested at the Houston Public Library November 17 for “knowingly entering a restroom of the opposite sex” and thrown in jail, despite a 2010 executive order from openly gay Houston mayor Annise Parker allowing transgendered persons to use the city restroom of their choice. Ms. Moore pleaded guilty to the charge and was given credit for the two nights she spent in jail.



NEW YORK: Dogged for years by rumours surrounding her relationship with longtime pal Gayle King, billionaire talk show queen Oprah Winfrey addressed the allegations head-on during a tear-stained interview with ABC's Barbara Walters in December. “I’m not lesbian,” Oprah told Walters. “I’m not even kind of lesbian.”

The interview was somewhat reminiscent of a 2007 exchange between Nova Scotia songbird Anne Murray and Globe & Mail reporter Michael Posner, Murray's biographer. Asked by Posner if she was gay, Murray told him, “No. I’m not. Nor have I ever been, although I know there are people who thought I was. I do have a lot of women friends, but none of them is gay nor have they ever been.”



Around the World

GERMANY: Thirty-some-things Michael Konigsfeld and Thomas Brandl, operators of a funeral home in Cologne, are hoping to win over members of the gay community by offering rainbow-coloured urns and erotic coffins featuring nude-renaissance imagery.



KENTUCKY: In October, Masons at an annual statewide meeting in Louisville voted against a proposal that would have prohibited openly gay men from joining their storied fraternity. John Wright, the leader of a lodge in that state, who's own coming out resulted in him being called "a flaming faggot" and prompted several members of his lodge to walk out and call for his resignation, called the move a "critical moment in the Lodge's history."

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The New Hampshire Union Leader, the state's second-largest newspaper made headlines of its own in October when it refused to print the same-sex wedding announcement of N.H. native Greg Gould and his Venezuelan fiancé Aurelio Tiné despite the legalization of homosexual unions in that state.



"The state recognizes a lot of things," publisher Joe MacDonald reportedly responded, "including my right to set policy for the newspaper. This paper's view is that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that will never change as long as I am running the paper."

CALGARY: Outlooks Magazine has announced that effective February 2011, the glossy GLBT publication will be available exclusively by subscription and retail sales throughout Canada.



UGANDA: The managing editor of Uganda's controversial Rolling Stone magazine (not to be confused with the similarly named U.S. publication) has said his newspaper plans to appeal a recent court ruling declaring it unjust to publish the names and photos of gay men living in the African nation. Homosexuality is a criminal offense in Uganda. Three men sued Rolling Stone after it printed a photographic list of Uganda's "top homos," together with a front-cover banner calling for them to be hanged. A second list, advertised on the front page with headlines like "More homos' faces exposed" and "Men of Shame Part II" followed. Editor Giles Muhame said the photos were lifted from the gay networking website, gaydar.co.uk.



NIGERIA: The town of Ebem Ohafia has placed a total ban on homosexuality. Community leader Eze Ukoha Kalu recently told those attending its Cultural Carnival that confirmed homosexuals would be stoned.

Hometown Headlines

HALIFAX: Police warned residents to be cautious of face-to-face meetings with individuals initially encountered on-line after two gay men were robbed in separate incidents in South End Halifax. Investigators believed the suspects were targeting gay men through the on-line dating website Plenty of Fish.



HALIFAX: Deb Nelson, who's spent four seasons toiling as a design expert for CBC's gay style duo Steven and Chris has announced plans to open a furniture shop at 5881 Almon Street. Footage of the building's renos will likely be used for a show on HGTV.



HALIFAX: Q104, a radio station renowned for its on-air irreverence, came under fire in December for an advertisement some felt reinforced negative attitudes towards gays. The Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, a local advocacy group, called on the station to pull an ad stating, "We'll deck the halls, but we draw the line at gay apparel."

While some members of Halifax's rainbow community felt this particular use of the word "gay" was a non-issue, NSRAP argued that it "contributes to an atmosphere of homophobia."

The ad was ultimately changed to read: "At Q104, we're all about decking the halls, and if the mood strikes us, donning a little gay apparel."



SYDNEY: Cape Breton now has an "alternative" bar, Club 418, which opened its George Street doors November 5. Operated by well-known

Sydney denizen Pat Iannetti, the civic-addressed named watering hole, boasts a large dance floor, two bars and a pool room.



HALIFAX: The Pogue Fado found itself at the centre of a they said-they said debate in October after two gay men were asked to leave the Barrington Street watering hole for being overly affectionate. The couple's supporters

swore the two were simply kissing, but the bar's co-owner Richard Stevens told The Chronicle Herald they were expelled for lewd behaviour and had already been warned to stop. The incident quickly became an issue of straight-vs-gay, even though Stevens made his position clear that sexual orientation wasn't the problem, "inappropriate behaviour" was.

Unlike the Irish Pub, the duo was never publically identified, and the mens' only formal statement on the matter was delivered via the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, which denied the duo did anything wrong: "Their actions were in no way sexual, and would never have been considered inappropriate for an opposite-sex couple."

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND:

Bill and Lou, a gay couple in Little Pond, a tiny community some 65 km northeast of Charlottetown, were burned out of their home October 18. The couple was asleep in their bed when an incendiary device crashed through one of their windows in the early morning hours. As the flames spread, Bill pulled Lou, who has a physical disability and is fighting cancer, through the mud to safety.



In an interview with Xtra in November, Bill said the couple's roadside mailbox had previously been burned and before that they'd received a religious-themed note condemning their sexuality.



MONCTON: So long, Club SoHo! The Mountain Road GLBT bar – formerly The Mint – returned to its exotic nightclub roots soon after it opened last summer, having shut down in favour of a straight reincarnation, Bikini Beach.



Hometown Headlines

DARTMOUTH: Telling a customer all queers and faggots should be shot isn't a firing offense – so long as you're a cab driver in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

"It's not against the bylaw to be like that," councillor and Taxi Commission chair Steve Adams told the CBC in October when asked about a complaint previously lodged against Bob's Taxi. "It's in poor taste. It's basically ignorance. I'm hoping that's not the norm and I'm sure it's not."



A report on taxi-related grievances released last fall revealed that the Dartmouth-based company had been at the centre of 31 separate gripes, more than either of its larger competitors, Yellow Cab or Casino Taxi.

Last summer, Shambala Sun advertising rep Paul Laybolt told Frank Magazine he and husband Greg Cook were forced to walk home across the MacDonald Bridge after they were ejected by a Casino Taxi driver for sharing a kiss on the drive home to Dartmouth from Menz Bar. "It was literally a peck on the cheek," Paul told Frank in August. 🏳️

Write On!

I was pleasantly pleased with your first publication. "You done good!" I especially liked your "Around the World" and "Almost Gay-mous" features. Should you continue with the latter, pleaseeeeee include Suzie Orman. Good luck with your venture.

– John M. Penny



As a gay man and new family physician in the Halifax area, I'm very pleased to see a maritime-based GLBT magazine for the local (and broader) community. I have a number of gay and lesbian patients who will be happy to find voice in such a publication.

I wish you the best of luck for success and look forward to reading more editions of your magazine.

Respectfully, Tim Matheson

Congratulations on your beautiful magazine. I'm afraid all those gorgeous males are going to turn the heads of heteros. I loved the Queertoons, enjoyed the articles and the outstanding photography. All the best for your publication.

– Kathleen Tudor

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Almost Gaymous

CANADIAN
EDITION

Richard Hatch



Rhode Island is his home, but Survivor Borneo's million-dollar winner is no stranger to Nova Scotia. Hatch, who spent time in a U.S. prison for tax-evasion, owns property throughout Cape Breton – Glace Bay, Louisbourg, Sydney Mines and New Waterford. He and his Argentinian boyfriend, Emiliano Cabral, were married in Sydney in 2005.

Don Hannah



Born and raised in Shediac, New Brunswick, Don Hannah is a well-known Canadian playwright and novelist. His first play, *The Wedding Script*, earned him a Floyd S. Chalmers Canadian Play Award, a cash prize subsequently won by Ann-Marie MacDonald. His 2007 novel, *Ragged Islands* was the recipient of the Thomas H. Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award. Currently based in Toronto, Mount Allison-educated Hannah and his partner Doug Guildford also own a home in Vogler's Cove, Lunenburg County.

Mike Ruiz



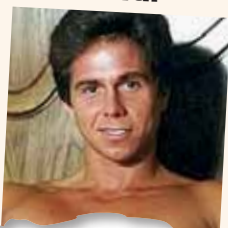
Quite literally one of the hottest photographers in the business, Quebec native Mike Ruiz's celebrity client roster includes just about every star from hunky heartthrob Zac Efron to beloved golden girl Betty White. A former model, openly gay Ruiz also studied acting before being bitten by the photography bug. He's appeared on several reality shows, including *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*, and on the third season of *Canada's Next Top Model*.

Rufus Wainwright



Born to legendary Canadian folksinger Kate McGarrigle (who with sister Anna sang the National Film Board's famed *Log Driver's Waltz*) and American entertainer Loudon Wainwright III (remember his *Dead Skunk* song?), Rufus Wainwright was predisposed to musical greatness. Despite a turbulent adolescence and a struggle with crystal meth as an adult, the flamboyant singer-songwriter has won the respect of fans and performers the world over; Elton John reportedly dubbed him "the greatest songwriter on the planet." The award winning musician has released a series of albums, recorded tracks for *Brokeback Mountain* and *Moulin Rouge!* and appeared in the Martin Scorsese film *The Aviator*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio.

Peter North



He's one of the, er, um, biggest adult film stars the straight world has ever known, but before Spryfield-raised Alden Brown made his mark as porn king Peter North, he raised eyebrows as gay-for-pay "actor" Matt Ramsey. Today, the J.L. Ilseley alumnus is the CEO of California-based North Pole Enterprises which, if you Google it, you'll find has nothing to do with Santa Claus.

Charlotte Whitton



She made history when, in 1951, she became the first female chief magistrate of a major Canadian city. What remains to be determined, however, is whether or not Charlotte Whitton also happened to be Ottawa's first lesbian mayor or the first lesbian mayor of a major Canadian city. Though she never married, Whitton lived for many years with her unmarried companion, Margaret Grier. The nature of their relationship came under scrutiny in 1999 when the National Archives released the remainder of Whitton's private papers, which included very personal correspondence between the two women.

John Baird



Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Environment Minister has never publically addressed his sexuality, but that hasn't stopped others from doing so. In fact, last February when CBC Radio personality Andy Barrie asked Pamela Taylor, a Conservative running in a provincial by-election in Toronto Centre, if she could think of a single gay Conservative politician, either provincially or federally, her first thought was of the Ottawa West-Nepean MP. "Openly gay?" she asked. "John Baird." And in an article published earlier this year, Halifax-based *Frank* Magazine claimed it had confirmation from a former Queen's Park insider that Taylor was on the money: "Yes, Mr. Baird is gay, but, no, I don't think he's ever publicly come out and confirmed it."

Ann-Marie MacDonald



The former host of CBC's biography series *Life and Times*, MacDonald was born in West Germany and spent the first few years of her own life on a military base near Baden-Baden. She studied acting at the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal and subsequently moved to Toronto. A playwright and novelist, MacDonald's first novel *Fall on Your Knees* was named to Oprah's Book Club in 2002. MacDonald's partner is playwright and theatre director Alisa Palmer.

Brenley MacEchern



Having kept mum about their sexuality on the advice of their handlers, the Canadian musical duo known as Madison Violet first talked openly about their relationship a couple years back. "Not being candid about who we are can easily be misconstrued as being afraid or, even worse, ashamed, and that's not something either of us can live with," Ontario native MacEchern told *Xtra.ca* in 2008. MacIsaac, who hails from Inverness County, is the sister of openly gay fiddler Ashley MacIsaac.

Anne Heche



Perhaps best-known in the Maritimes for her Emmy Award-winning portrayal of twin sisters Marley and Vicky Love on the long-running soap opera *Another World*, Heche gained worldwide prominence as the long-time girlfriend of Ellen Degeneres. Today, Heche is the main squeeze of Dartmouth-raised, Prince Andrew High grad James Tupper, whom she met on the set of the now-defunct ABC drama *Men in Trees*. Their son Atlas was born in 2009.

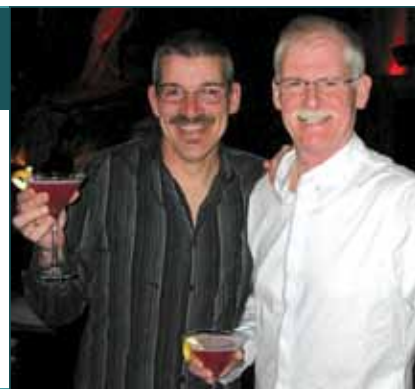


Engagement

William McDuff & Wayne Duncan

are pleased to announce their forthcoming marriage, which will take place
Saturday, October 22, 2011 at the Halifax Club.

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William is public servant with Transport Canada.



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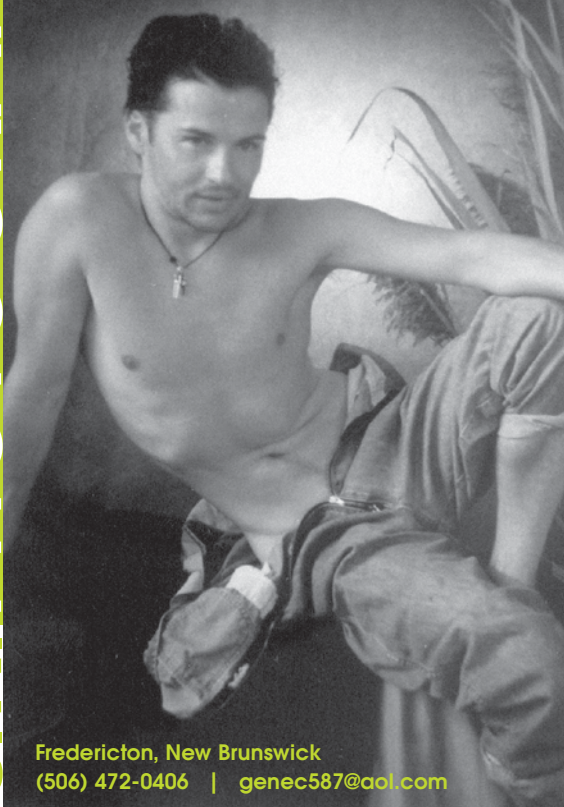
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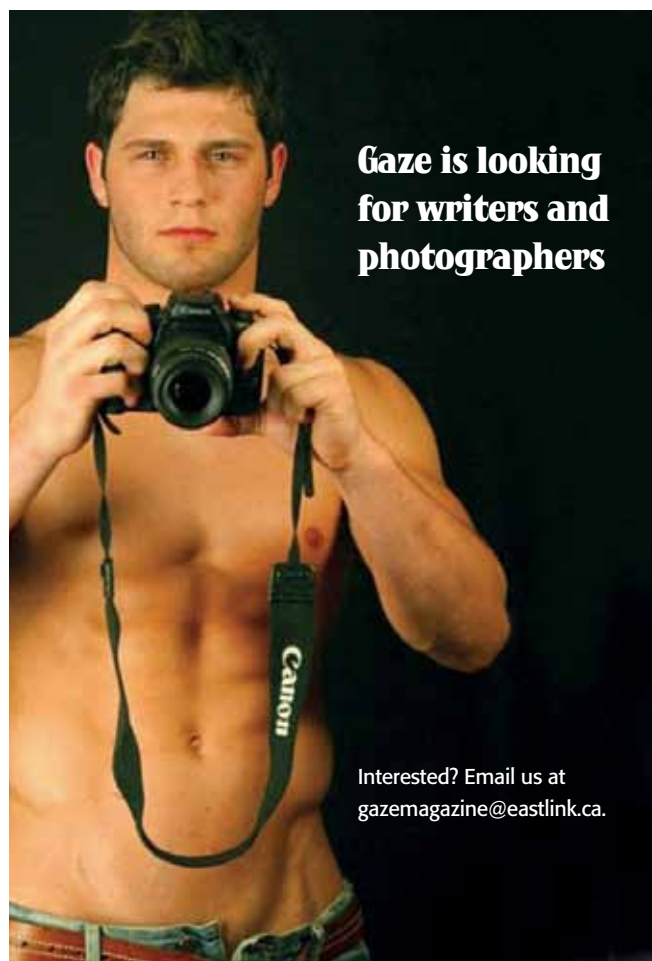
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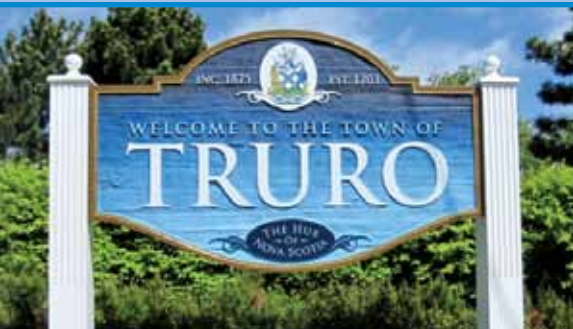
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Is Truro Getting a Bum Rap?

"I've lived (in Truro) my whole life and I've had no problem whatsoever with anyone in the community," says Albert McNutt, founder of the Northern AIDS Connection Society. "That said, I can't say everyone in Truro is understanding and accepting."

While McNutt believes much of Truro's homophobic 'renewal' can be traced to the mayor's public comments, he confesses, "I'm openly gay and openly HIV positive and nobody has said anything to me."

"Within a small community, we have several restaurants that have rainbow stickers up; we have Saint Andrew's United Church which voted 98% in favour [of being] an all-affirming church (meaning it allows the performance of gay marriages)... [and] we have a lot of gay-straight alliances at schools now. The Cobequid Education Centre has one. Brookfield has one. There are three in Pictou County. There's an environment and setting for gay and lesbian students to feel more comfortable... much more open."

Ray Merriam's Fair Trade Café on Prince Street has long displayed a rainbow sticker on its door. Merriam, whose café prominently displays a giant sign that reads, "Fair Trade Community Café Diversity Policy: No Hatred, No Discrimination, No Racism," says

embracing the GLBT community has brought in more customers.

"When Dr. Richard Florida came out with his book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, he talked about open-mindedness and welcoming different lifestyles and how it was good for business," says Merriam.



"When the national media descended upon Truro after the Bill Mills flag debacle, they asked the Northern AIDS Society if there was any gay-friendly place to go in town and they said The Fair Trade Café, so we were their base for the next two days.... We were on the national news and you can't pay for that kind of thing."

When asked if he's ever received flack for his establishment's gay-friendly atmosphere, Merriam grabs his guest book to point to a now-missing page where someone had scrawled hateful remarks. "Somebody once wrote 'How dare you have this *Wayves* magazine in here?' and my daughter wrote back 'Why didn't you sign your name so we can know who you are?'"

For her part, Jill Moore, a representative of Rainbow Proud – a local GLBT group – says her sexuality has never been an issue in Truro. "I have seen things that I don't fully agree with, but I haven't felt directly affected by it," says Moore, who moved to Nova Scotia from Western Canada. "The media has been very favourable [to our group]. For any event, they've always announced it. We've received lots of donations. Many local businesses have donated to us. We do have quite a bit of community support."

Keltie Jones, a lesbian who moved to Truro from California, agrees. "In my experiences,



Ray Merriam in his café with Joe MacIntyre.



It's unlikely Truro will ever join San Francisco, New York, Montreal and Ogunquit, Maine on the world's ever-growing list of top gay travel destinations – especially if Bill Mills remains mayor. Anti-gay sentiments expressed by Mills in connection with the town's 2007 refusal to fly the pride flag and his subsequent campaign to end gay cruising in a local park known for hosting gay and straight encounters have left many members and supporters of the GLBT community with the impression that Truro just isn't very gay-friendly. Is Truro really the Hub of Homophobia? Or is the town simply getting a bum rap? Anjuli Patil investigates.

here, I've felt completely accepted... I don't think (people here are) any more homophobic than any other community I've lived in and I would say, probably less homophobic than some places I've been in California. Everyone thinks California is so liberal and open... the college I was working at had a significant and vocal Evangelical group... these were the folks that would stand at events carrying the "God Hates Fags" signs... I've never seen that [in Truro]."

Jones, the Associate VP Academic for Students at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, says Truro's received a bad rap based on some very public, very real issues, but maintains that "the people of Truro are actually quite friendly and embracing."

But Truro native Tito Thomas, an openly gay loans officer and staff supervisor living in Halifax, says there's still much headway to be made before Truro can ever be considered gay-friendly.



Tito Thomas

"We've got a lot to do and a long way to go," Thomas tells Gaze. "I feel Truro is still very homophobic in the sense that most people think [being gay is] taboo. That itself is a feeling of being uncomfortable which I consider to be homophobic. I live in Halifax now, which has a much larger gay community, and I am a large part in the community there. When I visit home, I can tell that people are sometimes uncomfortable with the way that I dress or act, but my personality doesn't allow me to feel guilty or hide who I am."

Rainbow Proud member Wayne Collette, an openly gay man living in Truro, says much progress has already been made. "I believe Truro has come a long way in five years," he says. "I don't think there are any towns or cities that are oblivious to homophobia. I hope we're making a difference in Truro."

"This was our third year in the Canada Day parade. That, for us, was big because we were able to show the community who we were ... we're proud to represent this community in Truro. I think the stigmatism of the gay society is also embedded in [the fact that] a lot of people think we're freaks... We're just showing we're normal people with normal jobs. 🏳️"





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Ryan's Fancy

Story by Simon Thibault

Photographs by Tyler John

It's 2006, happy hour at a local watering hole. There's no stage, just a stool and a microphone stand by the back door. A dozen people are crowded around the bar, laughing, drinking.

No one expects much; you see nobody really goes to see the shows. Most of the crowd's just there to save a few bucks before happy hour ends and the drink prices go up. Meanwhile, a singer sits down on the stool and starts to strum his guitar. He introduces himself, and the lively conversation politely fades to a murmur. Then he starts to sing – and the murmuring stops.

This small-framed man with the very big voice has captured the audience's attention. Like any good storyteller, he knows how to string you along, to keep you waiting for the next word, the next nuance, the next theme. But most of all, he knows how to get you to keep quiet so you won't miss anything. When Ryan MacGrath sings, people listen.

Getting people to listen is likely easier for openly queer musicians now than ever before. Queer sensibilities abound in pop music today, and not just in terms of being fashionably faggy or subscribing to bisexual chic. The idea of being true to one's sexuality, rather than packaging it for pop music consumption (Lady Gaga, anyone?) has become almost "normal" in the world of music, especially among independent artists.

Indie wunderkind Owen Pallett has always sung about men. Antony Hegarty of Antony & The Johnsons has identified with the transgender and gender-queer communities since his first performances in New York City. And Peaches sings equally about motherfuckers and fatherfuckers.

For Ryan, 32, being openly queer is a boon, allowing him to take more risks. "It makes me stand out from what tends to be a homogenous music scene full of copy cats. It allows me to be totally comfortable with wearing make-up and lace on my latest album cover. And it makes me feel proud that I do not hide who I am. If these things weren't important to me, then, yes, I could probably be making more money and playing bigger shows. That's just how things are. But they matter, and I am uncompromising. C'est la vie."

Just because Ryan is uncompromising in his ethics, don't think he's limiting his audience by doing so. During a recent show in rural Nova Scotia, he wondered what it would be like to sing a song about men loving men. He remembers how after the show he was approached by someone – a middle-aged, heterosexual man – who told him how he'd been able to relate to the young, openly-gay artist's music. "You know the whole sexuality thing, you really transcend that," he told him. For Ryan, this sense of openness is what it's all about.

Raised in Guysborough County, Ryan's father, a car salesman in Antigonish, is well known and respected in the area. His mother is an active member of the local United Church. Unlike his parents, Ryan wasn't exactly the gregarious type growing up. Sure, there are photos of him as a young boy wearing oversized glasses and carrying a microphone, but that's about as far as you get.

Nevertheless, there was always something inside him itching to come out; Ryan knew he was different. As a teenager, those differences became too much for him to hide.

"It wasn't until I actually kissed a guy when I was in grade 11 though, that I fully realized my sexuality. I was stunned! I had never felt that way kissing a girl. I knew I had to face my feelings.

Shy by his very nature, Ryan addressed the issue with his mom the best way he knew how. "I wrote [her] a note. I left it on the kitchen table while she was in the laundry room, and I ran up to my bedroom and waited." Later, she slipped a reply under his door, assuring him things would be okay. She was right.

After finishing high school, Ryan moved to Wolfville to study sciences at Acadia University. But an art history class soon changed both his mind and, ultimately, his career path. Within a year, he'd left the Annapolis Valley for Halifax and enrolled at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design. There, he fell in love with painting and spent hours in his studio.

But Ryan soon found himself seduced by a new lover – a cheap, second-hand guitar. He quickly taught himself to play a few chords, penned a few songs and gigs around town began to materialize.

He formed his first band, Ryan MacGrath & The Wooden House, in 2005. The following summer, they played Halifax Pride, sharing the stage with Gentleman Reg and The Cliks. They also released a self-titled EP.

Deciding he wanted to fly solo, Ryan ultimately checked out of The Wooden House and with a determination to dedicate himself completely to his musical career, quit his day job as a server and holed up in his Dartmouth home, where he spent his days writing and working on songs.

A meeting with Don MacKay, a local producer and studio engineer, would pave the way for Ryan's first solo EP, a six-track CD titled "In My Own Company."

It was in his own company that Ryan learned there is more to music than just songs and melodies. The music business is an industry in which talent alone isn't enough. He knew he had to distinguish himself, but was painfully aware that playing in a world run by moguls and managers wouldn't be easy.

With that in mind, he hired a local barbershop quartet to sing with him at the launch party for "In My Own Company," and sold perfume of his own design. And while his unconventional methods succeeded in creating buzz for both Ryan and his album, it was only the beginning of what was to be a lengthy journey; promoting an album can be expensive, especially the travel.



"We needed to get [to Toronto] to play a showcase for Canada Music Week, but we were broke," he recalls. "We had heard that some friends had performed on the train the previous year, so we just called the VIA [Rail] 1 800 number. We spoke to a few people, they sent us a contract, and voila, we were booked to play on the train! VIA gave us fare for two in exchange for two short performances on the train. I've done this about six times now, and it's always fun and a little strange [...] performing while these gorgeous landscapes zoom by."

Bitten by the music bug, Ryan decided he wanted to produce more. The arrangement on "In My Own Company" was simple and sparse, honest and from the heart. But the heart was no longer enough for the young artist. He heard larger orchestrations in his head. He wanted the sounds to swoop down and scoop up his audience.

He contemplated recording a full-length album, but money was tight and the process of recording an album was going to be extremely costly. So back to waiting tables he went.

Then along came Jason Michael MacIsaac, formerly of the Heavy Blinkers. With a shared love of unusual instrumentations and building musical layers, the pair began working on songs and, together, they churned out more than 25 potential album tunes. Now all they needed was to find a band.

Jason needed someone who could understand and recreate the sounds they were looking for: old world, orchestrated, sophisticated. "As Jason and I were wrapping up the demo-ing process, we started to look around Halifax for musicians we thought could provide the right vibe for the mixes we had created," Ryan remembers. "One night, [we] were both playing a fundraiser show for a local theatre company, and Gypsophilia happened to be on the same bill. As soon as [they] hit the stage, he and I looked at each other and knew they were the band we were looking for."

Ryan and his producer pitched the idea to various members of the band who, oddly enough, had been mulling over the idea of working with a singer-songwriter. It was serendipity.

Within a few weeks, collaborative rehearsals were underway. David Christensen (then working with Symphony Nova Scotia) helped Ryan write down chords and charts for the sheet music. "I don't read or write music, I play by ear," explains Ryan, "so it was necessary to have someone like Dave translate my songs into written form."

The group rehearsed for two months before finally heading into a local studio and they only had two days to record all the instrumentation. Gypsophilia played live off the floor, playing and record-

ing for close to twenty hours during the two-day sessions. With the core of the material recorded, Ryan and Jason got to working on overdubs and vocals, recording when money permitted. It would take another two months before all the material was ready.

Before long, money issues surfaced again, prompting Ryan to come up with an idea that would not only help him find the money he needed, but also help raise his profile. With Valentine's Day fast approaching, he started an online auction called "Press Play For Love," which promised the successful bidder a song written and recorded especially for their valentine. The auction raised just over \$300. That may not sound like much in monetary terms,

but the attention the auction received from local TV and radio stations, was positively priceless – especially when you consider his album wasn't even ready to promote yet.

In the meantime, Ryan was able to cultivate another musical relationship, this time with the help of his manager/art dealer, Adriana Afford, who owns and operates Argyle Fine Art, a gallery located on the Halifax waterfront. Juno Award-winning artist Chantal Kreviazuk is one of Adriana's clients.

During one visit to the gallery, Chantal took a shine to one of Ryan's paintings. But rather than have Chantal buy the painting, Adriana instead arranged a deal whereby Chantal would be given the artwork for a song. Literally. Chantal would perform a duet with Ryan.

Ryan's eyes light up as he explains what it was like to sing with someone he's admired for years. "She was in L.A. at the time, and we were in a hurry to get this portion of the project done, so she recorded her parts for the song in her studio. She called me right before she did her vocals to ask me how she should approach it. I said, "You're Chantal Kreviazuk, just do what you do." The song, called "Bird & Cage", featured on his now-available Cooper Hatch Paris CD, opens with a soft muted trumpet. It shines like a melancholy memory, an ode to romantic nostalgia.

For Ryan MacGrath, the benefits of song-writing are not only about performing duets with Canadian pop-music royalty. Nor is it about travelling across the country, or etching out a place for himself in the business. He's not a songwriter who's there just to sell albums, or to hear his songs on the radio. For the formerly shy kid from Guysborough County, the rewards speak for themselves.

"The songs are really just mediums through which I can relate to and bond with people. When I get letters and emails from people who have connected with what I'm doing, and they share very personal stories with me because my music has triggered an emotion or a memory – that keeps me going." 🎵





Chez Tess Creperie 5687 Charles Street, Halifax

Located in Halifax's North End and housed in a recently renovated building half a block off Agricola Street, Chez Tess truly is a neighbourhood restaurant.

At the entrance, I'm greeted by a calming, romantic atmosphere. The décor is simple yet sophisticated – without being pretentious – and the lighting provides just enough ambiance to create a tender mood without making me feel awkward for having invited my parents along. The music in the background is loud enough to allow me to recognize a favourite song, yet muted enough to avoid having to call on my fluency in sign language.

To start, we ordered the Warm Brie. While the presentation of the dish – a wedge of warmed Brie, accompanied with baguette slices, Kalamata olives and a few slices of green apple – was a little on the pretentious side, all was forgiven with the first bite.

The main event didn't disappoint, either. The Provence, a vegetarian delight of roasted veggies matched with a walnut pesto and spinach and ricotta spread, was a light but flavourful fare.

My carnivorous companions gave top marks to the Chicken Florentine and the Seafood Medley was anything but disappointing to the pure-blooded Maritimers in attendance.

We paired the whole adventure with a delicious house red, one of the many impressive wine selections offered at Chez Tess, with the exception of the local Jost.

Though my experience with crepes to this point could be traced to a line-up at the Farmer's Market, I had high expectations for a sweet or savory – and uncomplicated – treat; I decided to try The Euro. I imagined this to be the finest example of a sweet crepe; a vanilla representation elegantly stuffed with ripe bananas and Nutella with just a hint of maple bourbon Chantilly.

My mother, the matriarch chocoholic, ordered – and was ultimately silenced by the deliciousness of – the chocolate mousse crepe with almond brittle.

But the blue-ribbon winner, however, was the apple and golden raisin crepe. Nestled in the warmth embrace of a crepe were caramelized granny smith apples, giant Sultana raisins swarmed in a syrup of brown butter, vanilla Chantilly, caramel sauce and the songs of angels. We ordered it a la mode, a decision which all but drove me into a diabetic coma of pure ecstasy.

Chez Tess Creperie is a true find and a great addition to the list of Halifax hot spots; a great place for a date or a gathering of close friends who appreciate good food without the snobbery of fine dining.

– Jenna Conter

Ryan MacGrath Cooper Hatch Paris, 2010

In addition to the folk and rock sounds that typically emanate from the streets of Halifax, there's crooner Ryan MacGrath, whose debut, full-length recording Cooper Hatch Paris was released earlier this year. This album – all ten tracks were written by MacGrath himself – fuses classy, theatrical pop with the sounds of jazz, courtesy of Halifax's Gypsophilia. Vocal appearances by Erin Costello and Chantal Kreviazuk keep the mix flowing.

Vocally, MacGrath's voice is strong and confident, possessing the maturity of James Taylor while embracing the stylistic dramatics of Rufus Wainwright who, along with other Canadian greats like Ron Sexsmith, Hawksley Workman and Joni Mitchell, he cites as a musical influence. Musically, he travels travel from the jazzy duet with Chantal Kreviazuk on Bird & Cage to the traditionally styled My Boyfriend, easily the release's sweetest; the kind of song Roy Orbison might have recorded had he been gay. That said, it may be MacGrath's vocals that are preventing his songs from reaching their full potential, as the listener is left wondering whether or not he can pull off more than polite and proper crooning.

That's not to say MacGrath can't succeed in his comfort zone. He sounds his best on Apple Tree, a song of longing that, musically speaking, could be the second cousin of Don McLean's Vincent. MacGrath's ear-pleasing Celebrity Death – an upbeat pop song that traces celebrity from "diamond in the rough to washed up" – is another highlight.

Cooper Hatch Paris offers a clean, clear, rich production, all the while sounding like something taken from 1970s contemporary pop. It will be interesting to see if MacGrath can enhance his current sound and how it will evolve from this strong debut effort.

– Michael Browne





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**Pierre Fitch
at PUMP**

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**It Gets Better
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**So You
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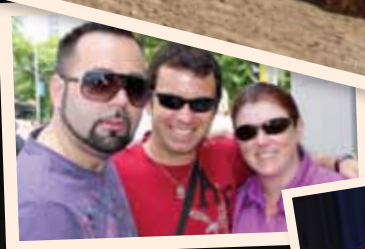
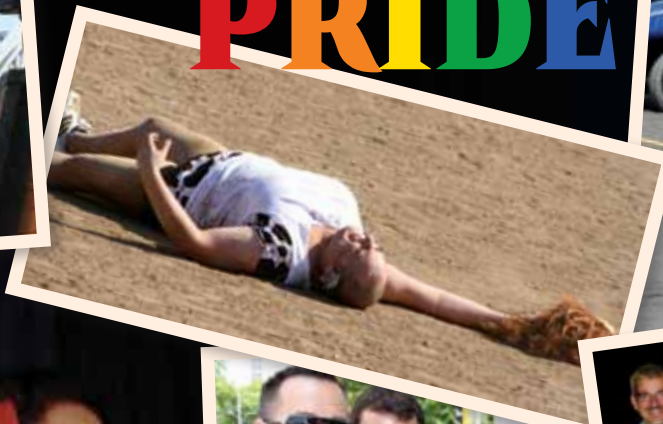


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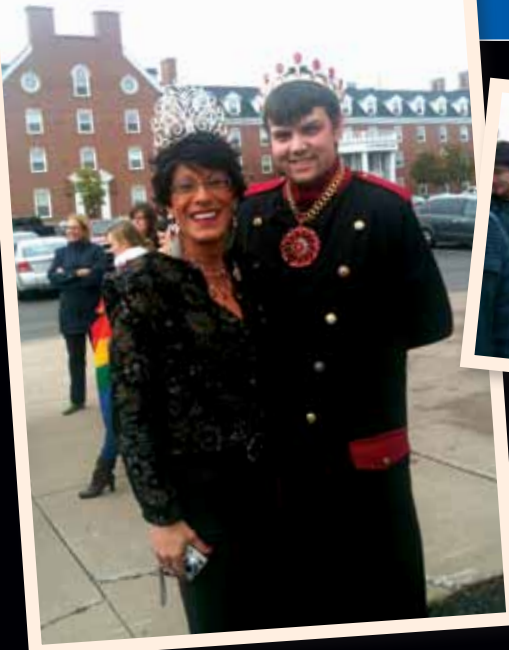


Halifax
Pride



Fredericton
Pride

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**Antigonish
Pride**



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Pride**



**Mz. Menz Bar
Pageant**



**Mr./Mz.
Reflections
Pageant**



Gay-loha!

Loving my time here in Honolulu! 'Course, what's not to love? Warm temperatures, sandy beaches, gorgeous sunsets and plenty of hot surfers! My luggage has yet to turn up – thanks for nothing USAirways! – but fortunately I'm staying at the Ala Moana Hotel, right next door to a major shopping mall. So as long as Old Navy can keep me in \$2 underwear and \$6 T-shirts, I'll live. Ha!

Spending a lot of time in Waikiki. Found a great neighbourhood gay bar – Hula's – located near the beach on the 2nd floor of the Waikiki Grand on Kapahulu Avenue. Sexy, friendly bartenders (Jeff makes a mean Mai Tai), pretty dance boys and reasonable drink prices have made it the preferred hang-out of many Canuck visitors. And when it closes, we hop in a cab and head to Fusion, a nearby dance bar open till 4 am.

The city's a snap to navigate on foot (with the right footwear, of course), and a stroll along Kalakana Avenue – a main thoroughfare between my hotel on Atkinson Drive and Kapahulu – is a must! You'll find everything from Gucci and Chanel to restaurants like the Hard Rock Café (stop in for a vodka-laced Triple Cherry Cola!) and a never-ending series of ABC convenience stores. There's even an indoor gun range on the street!

Honolulu may not be a bustling rainbow metropolis like San Francisco or New York City, but there's definitely a strong gay community here. And if you're looking for a departure from the snore-dinary, pack your bags and call your travel agent!

See you soon,
John



Triple Cherry Cola



Waikiki Grand



Hula's Hotness!



Waikiki sunset



Ala Moana Hotel



Hula's Bartender Staff



Waikiki sunset

Gaybourhood Watch

Born and raised in Halifax, Maggie Haywood is the manager of Venus Envy on Barrington Street.

1. *What was your favourite childhood Halloween costume?*
A pirate. Arrr.
2. *What was your first paying job?*
A great job with a paintball outfit: instructor/DJ
3. *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*
I don't remember ever having a specific profession that I aspired to – I certainly couldn't have imagined my current job running a sex shop – but I've always had vague goals of "happiness" and "success". And to be independently wealthy, of course.
4. *Which person has had the greatest influence on your life?*
It's difficult to narrow down... my grandmother, my mother, my father... I have a wonderful family.
5. *Who was your teenage celebrity crush?*
K.S. Lang. Some things never change.
6. *What sport did you play in high school?*
Drama club.
7. *What qualities do you most admire in a man?*
Intelligence, a sense of humour and a dash of femininity.
8. *What qualities do you most admire in a woman?*
Ditto.
9. *Last place you went on vacation?*
Ottawa – working vacation – is a surprisingly awesome city.
10. *Person living or dead you'd most like to meet?*
Charles Darwin. Or any one of the last couple of popes. Or Lady Gaga. Preferably all three, over dinner.
11. *What is your greatest regret?*
Not discovering the wonders of therapy twenty years ago.
12. *What is your greatest fear?*
Therapy.
13. *What is your biggest pet peeve?*
Poor manners. Or poor grammar.
14. *Facebook or Twitter?*
Facebook.
15. *Blackberry or iPhone?*
If I were less clumsy: iPhone.
16. *Wonder Woman or She-Ra?*
Wonder Woman.
17. *Favourite colour?*
How can I pick just one?
18. *Do you wear pink?*
Not lately.
19. *Who would play you in the movie of your life?*
I've been told I resemble Kate Winslet... and George Stroumboulopoulos.
20. *If you had to describe yourself in one word, what would it be?*
Stead.



Born in Charlottetown, Grant Baker-Maltais has worked as hairdresser for over 15 years. He is the owner/operator of Salon G Force in Halifax.

1. *What was your favourite childhood Halloween costume?*
The Iron Sheik (Atlantic Grand Prix Wrestling).
2. *What was your first paying job?*
Dishwasher in my dad's restaurant.
3. *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*
Helicopter pilot.
4. *Which person has had the greatest influence on your life?*
My mom.
5. *Who was your teenage celebrity crush?*
Donnelly Rhodes a.k.a. Dr. Grant Roberts, Danger Bay.
6. *What sport did you play in high school?*
Soccer.
7. *What qualities do you most admire in a man?*
The ability to laugh at himself.
8. *What qualities do you most admire in a woman?*
Strength.
9. *Last place you went on vacation?*
Montreal
10. *Person living or dead you'd most like to meet?*
Michael Jackson.
11. *What is your greatest regret?*
Not sticking with learning to play guitar.
12. *What is your greatest fear?*
Not being able to tell my husband Matthew I love him before I pass.
13. *What is your biggest pet peeve?*
Having a client in my chair who says, "Do whatever you want, but don't change the color, not any shorter, and leave the bangs. But do whatever you want."
14. *Facebook or Twitter?*
Facebook.
15. *Blackberry or iPhone?*
Blackberry.
16. *Colin Farrell or Colin Firth?*
Colin Farrell
17. *Favourite colour?*
Purple.
18. *Do you wear pink?*
Yes.
19. *Who would play you in the movie of your life?*
Charlie David.
20. *If you had to describe yourself in one word, what would it be?*
Passionate.



Reality Bytes



Mr. McCance, you are a douchebag. That's right, a douchebag ... you apologized for your poor choice in words, but you are always going to be a total douchebag. I can only suspect that you have some, shall I say, issues to work out ... I predict that sometime soon you will find yourself in the headlines again, this time caught with a Rent Boy from some South American country. And when that happens, I sincerely hope that you do not kill yourself, Mr. McCance, because no one should ever wish that upon someone else.

— Openly gay actor George Takei (a.k.a. *Star Trek's* Mr. Zulu), in response to the Clint McCance matter.



Seriously they want me to wear purple because five queers killed themselves. The only way I'm wearin' it for them is if they all commit suicide... We are honoring the fact that they sinned and killed thereselves [sic] because of their sin... being a fag doesn't give you the right to ruin the rest of our lives. If you get easily offended by being called a fag then don't tell anyone you are a fag. Keep that shit to yourself. I don't care how people decide to live their lives. They don't bother me if they keep it to thereselves [sic]. It pisses me off though that we make a special purple fag day for them. I like that fags can't procreate. I also enjoy the fact that they often give each other aids and die.

— Arkansas school board VP Clint McCance's Facebook response to an anti-gay bullying initiative set up in the wake of a wave of youth suicides. He has since resigned from the school board.

Mr. McCance apparently doesn't know or doesn't care to use the names of the five dead kids he's attacking and mocking. He simply calls them queers or fags. But these kids have names and they have families and they have friends who are still mourning their loss and will mourn for the rest of their lives... These are not queers or fags as Mr. McCance calls them. They are people. They are human beings.

— CNN's Anderson Cooper in response to Clint McCance's Facebook post.



Reality Bytes



I have a lot of gay fans, male and female... As you know I've always been outspoken, I've always been pretty outrageous. I always believe that a person should be who they are, and you should be comfortable being who you are and people should leave you alone to be who you are... I think we need to dig down a little deeper and be a little kinder to one another and accept one another for who we are.

– Singer Dolly Parton, talking about her gay fans and the issue of bullying on *Larry King Live*.



At one point a 'friend of the family' called me a "fucking fruit", pushed me on the ground, spit in my face, and ripped the tiny white gold hoop from my ear. I accepted it for what it was. This was not my first experience with a bully ... I knew, but was not open about my sexuality. I accepted the hatred. I was bullied daily ... sometimes going home without a shirt on my back. Home to cry to mother, September through June. Looking back, I can see why she was so exhausted all of the time. BULLSHIT takes its toll ... I couldn't explain the circumstances to my mother. The only thing I could tell her was "BULLY". I was a 13-year-old monster. The only thing easier than talking to Mom was facing the bullies at school.

– Perry Paris talks about his own sexuality and personal experiences with bullying in an October blog post. Read it here: <http://bit.ly/parisalamode>



We didn't have full-on sex. We got busy. And as soon as I was done, I kicked him out.

– *Out Adventures* co-founder Rob Sharp, discussing his first experience with a man, in a YouTube video for the *Gay Bachelor* Blog.

I realized I couldn't have faith in this religion that would exclude anyone, particularly my [gay] brother, for the way he's born and for loving someone. I mean, how do you exclude someone for love?

– Actress Anne Hathaway, on leaving the Catholic Church.



...the medications which have greatly lowered the death rate have given people a false sense of security. And then there is that attitude that, 'Well, if I do get infected ... there's back up there, so that I should be able to live an average life span.'

– AIDS activist and former Nova Scotia school teacher Eric Smith, discussing the modern-day perception that AIDS is a generational disease on CBC's *Information Morning*.

I know the prospect of coming out might seem frightening and like it's going to be the end of the world. I can't lie, I was afraid to come out ... But it's so liberating. You stop lying to yourself and to your friends and your family and you actually start living for the first time in your life.

– Fredericton native Denis Theriault, discussing his coming out in a YouTube video for the *It Gets Better* campaign. Watch his video here: <http://bit.ly/DenisfromFreddy>



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