

Volume 1, Issue 2

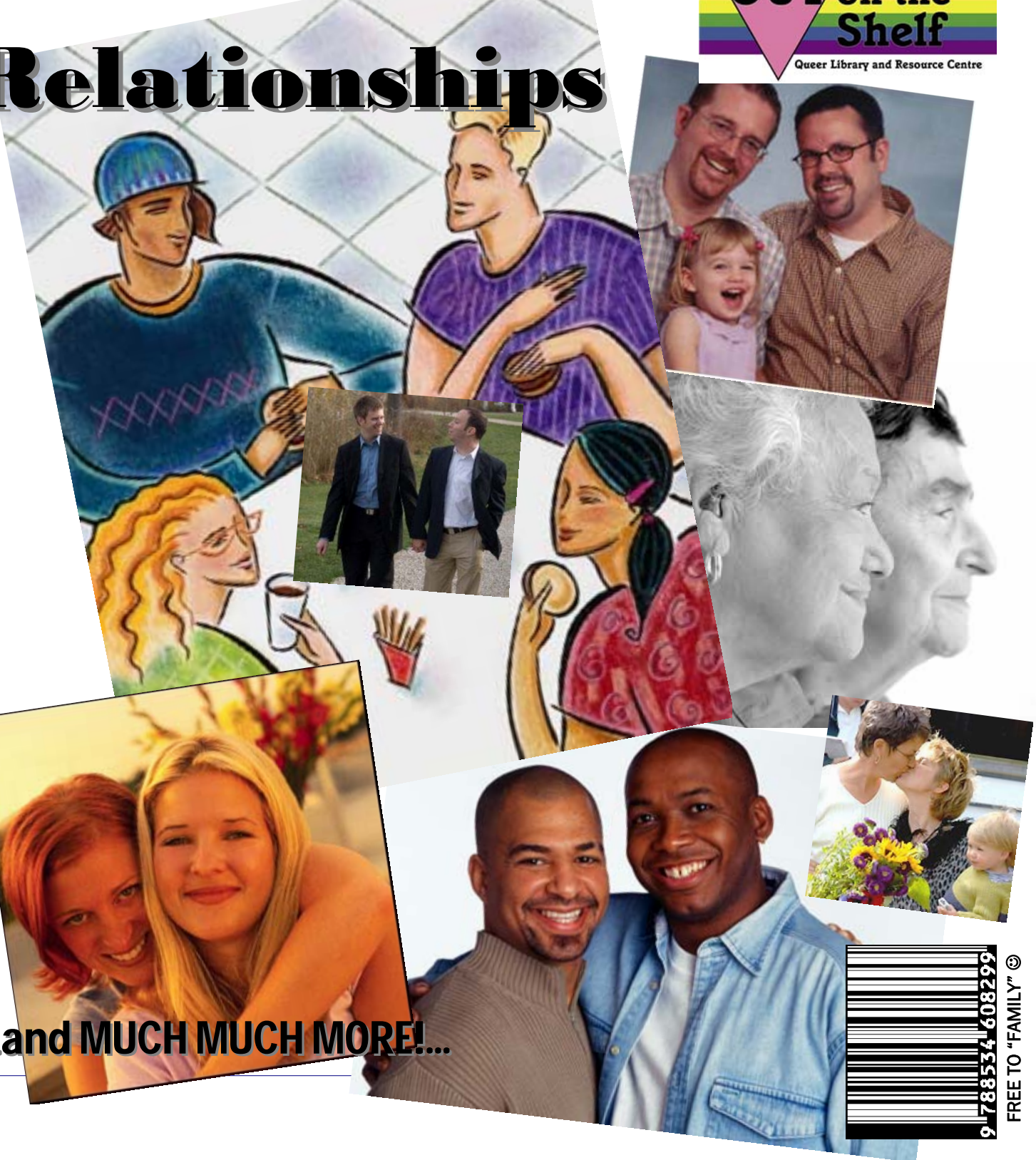
Mar/Apr 2007

# Shelf Life

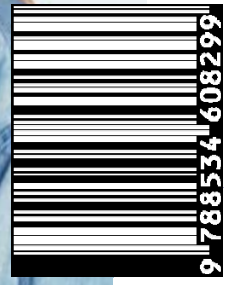
OUT ON THE SHELF'S BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



## Relationships



...and MUCH MUCH MORE!...



FREE TO "FAMILY" ©

## Thoughts from the Editor – Relationships...



So in the last issue of Shelf Life, I had mentioned that this issue was going to be about relationships. Relationships—they're all around us. Relationships with our friends, our families, our urban families, our co-workers, our local community...and even our global communities.

On the next page, you can read about some recent changes at Out On The Shelf and our need to really focus on our relationship with YOU, our community. Basically, we're looking for a new home in the community. If that's not about establishing new relationships and strengthening old ones...I don't know what is.

On the topic of relationships, check out the book reviews that we've got for you in this edition of Shelf Life. It's a book that was actually written by a former member of our community. Some very interesting commentary and observations about being single in the Queer Community. Can anyone relate?

Finally, there are some great resources that we were able to find online that provide some practical advice on the queer "dating scene." There is definitely not a shortage of advice out there about how to meet people, how to date, how to maintain, how to fight, how to make-up, the list goes on. Seriously...have you ever googled "queer relationships"? Brace yourself if you do.

In light of the tragedy that has recently happened in Virginia, at the risk of sounding too "new age," (not that there's anything wrong with that) nothing has become clearer to me than the importance of relationships and how we are all connected through these relationships whether it's on personal, local or global levels.

Looking back on how Out On The Shelf has developed, it has totally thrived through our relationships with individuals in the community, each other as volunteers and with the community as a whole. Thank you so much for everything that you've done for us so far. We appreciate our relationship with you...and we look forward to developing this LTR with some serious TLC :) Cheers!

Jerome Chang

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***"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one!'"***

***~ C.S. Lewis***

## FEATURES

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***"Relationships are like crystals, you don't realize how much you love it until it breaks."***

***~ Anon***

# We're MOVING?

## Join Out On The Shelf's Home Hunting Campaign!

Dear Community Member,

In the last year and a half, the queer (LGBTTSIQQ\*) communities of the Guelph area have come together to create a wonderful place for people to access resources and programming. Out On The Shelf provides a volunteer-run space, embodying the pride, visibility, diversity and spirit of our community. With over 1,500 resources and numerous social groups and events, Out On The Shelf has served over 1000 visitors. It is now time to take the next step - and we need your help!



Out On The Shelf (OOTS), Guelph's queer library and resource centre, is searching for a new home. Our new location needs to be solidified by June 1st. Since OOTS opened its doors in August 2005, it has been housed in the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) community room.

However, budget requirements make it necessary for CMHA to curtail expenditures and, unfortunately, CMHA is no longer able to continue housing Out On The Shelf.

We are grateful to CMHA for such a strong and supportive partnership. In the year and a half that we have been open, we have outgrown our 400 square foot space. This move is an opportunity for us to grow and expand. We are looking for a larger, more

visible location in order better serve YOU - the local community. However, June 1st is approaching quickly, and we need your support! Our Home Hunting campaign goal is to raise \$30,000. You can help by making a financial contribution to the Campaign, making an in-kind donation (i.e. space or expertise) or by hosting a fundraiser.

Your donations will go directly towards the Home Hunting Campaign. Contributions will enable us to find a snazzy new home, while we work towards developing a base of ongoing, stable funding.

Cheques should be

made out to Out On The Shelf, and mailed to:

**Out On The Shelf**  
**PO Box 25064**  
**370 Stone Road**  
**Guelph ON N1G 4T4**

Come join the Out On The Shelf team and assist us with this growth! More information, including other ways to help, are now available on our website: [www.OutOnTheShelf.ca](http://www.OutOnTheShelf.ca)

Thank you for your continued support,

Out On The Shelf

\* Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transexual, Two-Spirited, Intersex, Queer and Questioning Communities and our allies

# UPCOMING EVENTS!

## Lesbian Women 50 Plus Social Club

Thursdays—7:00PM - 8:00PM

Something new-Just for you! Lesbian Women 50 +

We have a new social club for women who are lesbian, bisexual, Transgendered, and or queer, over 50 and want to discover like-minded women. We hope to share our common interests and see where they take us. I know for example I am interested in Ballroom Dancing, RVing, movies and artwork. It will be an informal meeting where we all decide how best to make this work for all of us. So, come out, come out wherever you are and join us.

Facilitator: Judith Eden

Weekly meetings @ Out On The Shelf, 147 Wyndham Street, 3rd floor (beside the Diana Restaurant)

Bring along your wish list! This is really exciting. If you do not have email and would still like to join the group please leave a voice message at Out On The Shelf's phone number at

519-821-1789.

## GAMES NIGHT!!

Second Friday each month!

Come and join in the social fun at Games Night at Out On The Shelf, an all ages event!

From 7:30pm to 10:00pm,

come play either Euchure, Dominos, Yatzy, Life, Clue, Battleship, Monopoly, Scrabble, Crib, Outburst..... or

bring an idea for a game that you would like to share with others. You don't need

to know how to play, just bring yourself and we'll teach you. Please bring your own

drinks, we will provide snacks. For more information

call Out On The Shelf at 519.821.1789.

## DANCE WITH PRIDE ~ an Out On The Shelf Fundraiser

### Dancing with the DJ & Out On The Shelf

are having a Fundraising Dance!!!

**Date** : Saturday June 2, 2007

**Location** : Harpo's Banquet Hall, 89 Dawson Road, Guelph

**Time** : 8 pm to 1 am

**Cost** : \$20 (includes light snacks Cheese & Veggie Trays & a few surprises) plus Cash Bar

**DJ** : Tami Burns

**Tickets** : The Bookshelf – 41 Quebec Street

(519) 821-3311 ext. 1

: Out On The Shelf – 147 Wyndham Street, room 309,  
(519)821-1789

:Tami Burns – Dancin' With The DJ

(519) 836-4684.

: Dave Vervoort M.Sc.- Rainbow Therapist

(519) 821-5163

## \*ONLINE RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT\*

[www.outontheshelf.ca](http://www.outontheshelf.ca)

Check out the community calendar on our website!

We would LOVE to help you advertise events that would be of interest to the Queer Community and our Allies!!

# Guelph PRIDE is around the corner!...



## GUELPH PRIDE 2007

The Guelph Pride Organizing

Committee invites the citizens of Guelph to join them at this year's celebration of community and diversity. Pride celebrations, that began as a single event, have now expanded to what is being called Pride Weekend in Guelph.

The weekend begins on Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, with the raising of the rainbow flag at City Hall by Mayor Karen Farbridge, followed later that night by a screening of a number of films including a film produced by local Gay-Straight Alliance students about the GSA movement (location still to be determined).

On Saturday evening, the main Pride celebration will take place at the Rude Native with specially

priced drinks, light refreshments, DJ, lots of dancing, a drag performance and fundraising opportunities, with all proceeds helping to fund future Pride celebrations. The evening will be hosted by Magic 106.1 radio personality Carla Donnell.

Join us for a Pride-ful weekend! For more information, contact Barbara McDowall at [barbara@authenticlives.com](mailto:barbara@authenticlives.com).

# Get to know Jack's Corner Store...



As everyone is aware the success of an organization depends not only upon the many volunteers and supporters to commit time and energy to make it succeed, it

must also have sufficient funding to guarantee its survival.

Out On The Shelf has established a special account with Jack's Corner Store which will allow us to maintain an ongoing method of fundraising.

It is simple. It is easy. It can be successful.

Jack's Corner Store is a consignment and collectibles store at 17 Macdonell Street in downtown Guelph. It is a shop filled with new and used household items - dishes, pictures and antiques. It's unique and friendly. The store provides us with a simple and easy method of fundraising for Out On The Shelf. Jack has amended his contract to assist us in meeting our needs. Instead of the usual 40% that most consignment store provide, Jack is giving Out On The Shelf 60%!

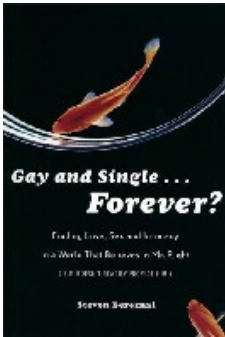
Everyone has items that no longer meet our needs but are still functional, loveable and would be appreciated by someone else. Simply drop them off directly to Jack's Corner Store and have them listed under our account - Out On The Shelf. In order for the donation to be credited to us you have to make sure that it is going to the Out On The Shelf account.

You can donate your items any time, any day and at your convenience. It allows us to fundraise on a continual basis.

Visit Jack's Corner Store to get an idea of the type of things that will make this fundraising idea successful. It is a unique and friendly store where "Memories Are Found". Jack does reserve the right to decline items that he feels are un-saleable. He also does not sell electronics or electrical appliances due to safety regulations. Items must be clean and in good shape. Help create Out On The Shelf memories by donating some of your old treasures and household items!



# Out of our Closets and onto our Shelves...



## Gay and Single... Forever?

By Steven Bereznai

Marlowe & Co., pb, \$20

Reviewed by Scott Clarke

Steven Bereznai's brazen voice, nuanced with honesty and empathy, is a refreshing antidote to all the gay marriage hoopla. Bereznai is the author of *Gay and Single... Forever? 10 things every gay guy looking for love (and not finding it) needs to know*. While never discounting the pleasures of a healthy, fulfilling long term relationship, Bereznai removes the fairy tale romanticism of modern day gay relations in this groundbreaking new book.

*Gay and Single... Forever?* is a genre-blending, sociological look at the personal accounts of one single man, and a cast of his gossip friends, including authors Wayson Choy and Andrew Holleran. Reading this book consequently feels like chatting with your closest friends. The different voices brought together mix effortlessly into Bereznai's message of self-acceptance and his advice on taking responsibility for one's happiness. Could it be possible, Bereznai asks, that single people are simply imagining a gaping hole in their life? And that this hole will seal up, if

only they stopped believing their lives will be unequivocally better with a partner?

Bereznai is a 31 year-old gay man, who came out at the age of 19 bright-eyed and boy-friend ready. Yet, he has remained single his whole life. I know, it sounds tragic. I'll admit that I feared reading this book would somehow jinx me into remaining single my whole life. And although this book is not out to prove the single life is better than partnership, it does make a compelling case that all of us single folks haven't really got it so bad. Reading Bereznai's personal reflections, you quickly begin to fall for him. You understand why his friends tell him he's boyfriend material, while learning why he is also happy being a single man. Sure, he still dreams about living happily ever after with a boyfriend. But this book shows that he's come to terms with the reality that this may not happen. And between its covers he shares stories from his life filled with love, excitement, companionship and sex.

Bereznai's life has been built with a solid community of gay men, within an urban scene that is often taken to be the norm. For those who feel alienated as gay men outside of the urban environment, or popular perceptions of gay identity, the lessons Bereznai provides may at times miss the point. Yet, broadening the scope of this book would also detract from what it does, and what it does very well. Bereznai argues that the positive exposure of gay marriage, and a "we're just like you" narrative of gay rights activists, has

transferred the shame of homosexuality onto the single man. "Being gay and single is the new smoking," Bereznai quotes playwright Paul Rudnick. "It won't be socially acceptable anymore, and you will have to go outside." And while they still allow us in the clubs—hell, we're the ones buying all the drinks—our falling status in the scale of social respectability is getting greater every day. Bereznai reflects on how the image of the single gay man has changed from the radical days of the 1970s to our conservative understandings of sexuality today, free of a political idealism that can distort the past.

This book's greatest strength is Bereznai's refusal to tote politically correct messages of gay sexuality that are all-too-often detached from the reality of gay men's lives. Bereznai also reflects on the realities of drug use, "bare backing," and sex workers in the lives of many single gay men. Throughout discussions of often shame-inducing subject matter, Bereznai maintains the book's personal nature without striving for universal, moralistic answers for all single gay men. In the end, *Gay and Single ... Forever?* is a book about love and companionship that will change the way single gay men feel about their lives. And maybe this is the best path to finding a boyfriend, as they always say you find love when you're not looking for it.



# Practical Dating Advice for Gays & Lesbians



Dating advice for gays and lesbians isn't that much different from dating advice for anyone else. After all, everyone is looking

for a date or partner they are compatible with who will show mutual respect and affection. It can be more difficult, however, to know how to proceed since there are nuances and potential problems that are unique to dating when you are homosexual. I've put together some practical dating advice for gays and lesbians that apply to a variety of situations.

**Come Out of the Closet:** If the person you're attracted to is already a friend, you can deal with it honestly and be straight-forward. Simply admit that you're attracted to him or her,

and have been wondering if they feel the same way. If they are, make plans to get together on an official date. If they say they don't really think of you that way, be gracious and willing to continue being friends.

**Great Places to Meet:** Check out gay and lesbian bookstores and clothing stores in your area. You may meet someone terrific, and you can ask knowledgeable staff where some of the hot spots are in the area. Also be sure to check out the bulletin boards at bookstores - these will often list special events that can be a great place to meet people. Look for the Pink Pages. This is a locally published list or newsletter in most larger cities that list events, clubs, bars, etc. that cater to gays and lesbians. Try visiting a few new spots each week - you'll meet plenty of new friends even if you don't find romance. Check

Out Some Courses at Your Local College. Most schools now offer several courses listed under something like—Gay and Lesbian Studies? Signing up for a few classes will not only broaden your intellectual horizons, it will give you a great way to start conversations with fellow class members.

**Consider Activism:** Groups promoting gay and lesbian rights are filled with intelligent, interesting people who tend to be social and multi-faceted. By doing more for the gay and lesbian community, you'll naturally meet more members of it.

**Always Look Your Best:** This sounds trite, but it's usually when you're not looking that you stumble onto meeting someone terrific! The key to this is keeping your mind open to unexpected opportunities. (cont'd on page 7)

# Dating advice (cont'd)

**Consider Dating Outside Your Type:** If you focus only on trying to find your dream date (tall, dark hair, with a specific look, for instance), you might miss the opportunity to get to know someone incredible. Don't automatically think that someone is too butch, too femme or too this or that. Go out a few times and you may surprise yourself. If not, remain friends and you'll both be able to introduce each other to friends.

**Consider Internet Dating:** If you are comfortable with the idea, consider Internet dating. There are dozens of sites giving dating advice and opportunities to meet gay and lesbians. These range from racy ones for quick, physical relationships to matchmaking services geared specifically to professionals looking for a life-long commitment. If you do decide to try one of these services, be sure you're aware of

some of the more common acronyms used:

ALT — alternative lifestyle  
 BDSM — bondage, dominance and sado-masochism  
 Bear — a bearded and/or hairy man  
 BiF — bisexual female  
 BiM — bisexual male  
 CD — cross-dresser  
 DDF — drug and disease free  
 FTM — female to male transsexual  
 MTF — male to female transsexual  
 POS — HIV+  
 FEMS — gay male who leans to feminine side

As you can tell, dating advice for gays and lesbians is about being open to all possibilities and treating others with respect. It's good advice for anyone looking for a relationship, and will give you the opportunity to make some friends along the way.

#### About the Author:

Kevin Urban is the editor at <http://www.Dating-Site-Advisor.com>, the single's guide to the best online dating web sites. Copyright 2006 Dating-Site-Advisor.com



# First Date Tips for Shy Guys

*Silent Dating*.co.uk

Going out on your first date with a guy or meeting a guy for the first time can be a bit of a nerve racking experience, especially if you're one of those shy guys. Let me tell you something; I'm one of those shy guys. But, this is one shy guy who decided that unless he did something about it, he was never going to get laid or have a boyfriend if he didn't get out there.

Here's my short list of the things that I have done or used in order to get over shyness, meet interesting guys and have a "successful first date". But first, I've got to tell you, that I consider every date that I've ever gone on a success. Why? For starters, I'm still alive to talk and write about it. And because every date, no matter how lousy or dull was a learning experience and one more date that I DID go on. The important thing is to get out there and start meeting guys; start making friends and get off the couch or out of your bedroom.

## 6 Tips for Your Successful First Date

- 1. Have confidence in yourself, your abilities and that the date will go well.** Guys are attracted to guys who have or exude confidence. Confidence is about knowing who you are, what you want and knowing that you'll get it.
- 2. Don't think of it as a date, think of it as meeting someone interesting, for lunch, dinner, drinks, coffee, or whatever it is you plan to do.** By throwing away the "date" label you can get down to just having a pleasant outing with the guy with no "date expectations".
- 3. Relax and just be you.** Trying to conjure up some sort of false persona is pointless, you might impress yourself for a second or two and maybe even the other guy for a moment; until he figures out it's all hype or "bull". It's OK to be you and if the other guy isn't



interested in you it's no big deal, because there's thousands and thousands of gay men out there.

**4. Arrive a little bit early.** I like to arrive at places a little early for a variety of reasons, but I've found it a helpful habit if I'm feeling a bit nervous or shy too. When you're going out to a restaurant or a coffee shop, if you arrive a bit early you can go to the washroom without deserting your date, compose yourself, fix your hair, wash those sweaty palms and relieve yourself if necessary. Arriving a little early or exactly on time also means that you won't be rushed and you won't be puffing out excuses as to why you were late. It just makes things easier and less stressed initially.

**5. Dress for the occasion and location.** You don't need to look like a Queer Eye for the Straight Guy makeover, but if you dress nicely and appropriately for the occasion and the location, you'll not only look great, you'll feel great. You'll be confident that you're in the right attire for wherever it is you're going out to.

And now, for my ultimate not-so-secret dating tip for shy guys...

**6. Wear your "power underwear" when you go out on a date, especially your first date.** If you don't have a pair of "power underwear", get some. The idea is to get something that makes you feel incredibly powerful and sexy. I find that thongs in purple, red or black, fit the bill for my power underwear. They allow you to feel and be powerful, sexy, flirty, and confident; all the things you need on a date. It doesn't matter if you don't end up in the sack or on the floor later on in the evening. Power underwear is something that can give the shy guy that extra little edge.

**Wishing you joy and dating success!**

# Horror-scopes!

**Scorpio** - So it would appear that lately you've been a little...how do I put this delicately?...more outspoken than Donald and Rosie put together...and believe you me...those are two people that you do NOT want to envision together. My apologies to your mind's eye. In anycase...my only message to you right now would be...yo...simmer. Stop flapping that pie-hole of yers. Stop to enjoy the pie...and for goodness sakes...chew with your mouth closed. Incidentally, on the 18th...go for it.

**Virgo** - So there I was. I was busy getting ready for a big to-do, multi-tasking like no one's business...brushing my teeth, making a snack, chatting online and ironing a shirt all at the same time. When all of a sudden, I notice that there is a strange smell coming from the shirt I'm ironing. The next thing I knew, right there on the left chest was a patch of totally melted shirt. MELTED?! Why am I always talking about ironing when it comes to you my little virgos? I'll tell you why...you are hot hot hot these days!! Good on you. Show it off...yes...get out there. Fabulous. Now...can I borrow a shirt?...

**Pisces** - Ok, so let's just take a moment to look around yourself shall we? What is goin on there?! Are you just going to let all this stuff build up around you? Listen, things ain't gonna clean themselves...believe you me. I have tried to wait it out...and it only get worse and worse. Like that little thread you never quite getting around to cutting off those pants you love to wear. Next thing you know, the seam of your pants are gone and there you are without pants in front of the person who might just turn out to be your Life

Partner, but oh no, you also decided to go commando today. You have no one to blame but your family. Call your family. Vent to them. Get it all out. Commando...good on you.

**Aquarius** - Why is it some people just don't know when enough is enough? Honestly? Does there need to be a sign? Do they need to have their hand held the entire way? What're they? 3 years old? Oh, don't worry...I'm not talking about you...but you know who I'm talking about don't you? Well I say, enough is enough. It's time to take things into our own hands and really get it done right. Get in there my little Aquamarine friends and splash some water in their faces! Literally! They need to be stirred up! They need a clear message! Oh, and that impulse purchase you made?...keep the receipt.

**Cancer** - You were doing so good...the results were really starting to show. Don't give up now. You need to surround yourself with people that will help you, not hinder you. It's also time to realize that there are people around you who might call you "friend" all the time...but look out. They are only interested in their own business...and how you can help them. You go out of your way to please everyone, doing things for other people all the time. Enough. Several people around you are beginning to take this for granted. Do things for yourself. You definitely deserve it. More vegetables in the next few weeks please. Your colon is getting ready to send you a message. Yikes.

**Taurus** - Let's take a moment and

discuss Ellen's brown velour suit that she wore at the beginning of the Oscars. WHAT?!?! Ok, new topic. I went to see Pan's Labyrinth...and let me just say...Disney has left the house. This ain't no Narnia...and that definitely ain't no Mister Tumnus. Be prepared for the unexpected in the next few weeks. Family is going to play a pretty big role. Or wait...I meant minor role. Wait...did I say family? I meant fairies. Hey hey...the buffet is being laid out in front of you...indulge yourself...go ahead. Just don't make this a habit...and definitely stay away from the grapes.

**Capricorn** - Just the other day I was sitting around taking some notes. Notes on a scandal actually. There's so many scandalous things going on around us these days isn't there? How wonderful! Let's all take a little time to learn a very valuable lesson from Dame Judi Dench shall we? It's ok to manipulate people around us as long as it gets what we want and we're happy. There now...don't we all feel better? I mean really...Kate had it coming to her. What was she thinking? That mascara was sooooooo 80's. Incidentally...just a reminder...less is more. Maybe I'm talking about make up...maybe I'm not. Thinking about it. Seriously...get on it.

**Leo** - It would appear that the lion doesn't really sleep at night does it my little Leo Lions? Mmmm-hmmm...daddy knows what you've been up to at night. In fact, we all do. Who're you kidding? Summed up in 3 words...YOU GO GIRL! Good on you...go for it! Do what you gotta do. Seriously. It's all about you for this next little while. My one concern is that you've gotten a wee bit on the

cocky side. Nothing too serious. I'm just saying...careful. Aside from that...I really think that it might be a good idea to reconsider some recent purchases. I mean yeah...buy what you need...but do you REALLY need you-know-what? Seriously. Maybe it would make more sense to return that...and get me a gift. I'm just saying.

**Sagittarius** - Well look at you looking all fabulous these days. Uh-huh...people are noticing. It's true. We took a poll...let the hair grow. It's looking good. Just let it go. Go wild! go crazy! You deserve to just let yourself go. Have some fun! Just one thing...DO SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE BOXES! C'mon...they ain't gonna disappear no matter how long you put it off. More boots. More footwear...and bread. It's always time for more bread. Get back to your fave recipes and spice them up. Again...go wild. Oh...just avoid tomatoes...but you knew that already.

**Libra** - So there I was, innocently surfing the net for some information about horses and all things equus related when, imagine my shock and dismay when I came across pictures of Harry Potter himself...naked!...on a horse?!? Honestly...how unhygienic?! Other people have to ride the horse after him...he should have the decency to at least put a towel down first! And where's Hermione and Ron? Let this be a warning to you my lively Librites...if you're planning on getting naked in the next few weeks, you may want to consider who you are doing it with...and bring a towel...and...reconsider the horse. Seriously. Ewww.

**Gemini** - So I ran into my ex at a party on the weekend. And not just ANY ex. It's my FIRST ex. As in my first "real" partner. Yeah...what to do? I mean...sure, I knew that this person was possibly going to be at the party...but when I saw them...well...not gonna lie...i might've freaked a little and then drank 2 bottles of red wine. So let that be a lesson...always make sure to have 2 bottles of red wine ready. Of course...they don't know that I freaked out. That's just gonna be our little secret here. Here's another lil' secret...they were cute as ever. What does this have to do with you? Nothing. Be weary of people wearing purple...and for goodness sake...get a haircut.

**Aries** - Woo hoo!! Look at you all changing things up in the next few months! Well...you know what I mean. Anyway...let's talk a little bit about Britney and Justin. What's going on there? On a related note, I watched a trailer for 300...and then another trailer for The Constant Gardner. Okay...maybe not so related. Point being, I'm having some people over for brunch this Saturday morning and I'm not sure what to make. I might go with scrambled eggs with cottage cheese. It's time for you to make some decisions Aries. Get on top of it...the time is now. And while you're at it...can you make sure to bring some ketchup for the eggs?

**"I never think of the future. It comes soon enough."**

**~ Albert Einstein**

## Guelph Queer Equality [since 1973]

Founded in 1973 as the University of Guelph Homophile Association (UGHA), the group has remained an officially sanctioned University of Guelph club, and has evolved to Guelph Gay Equality (GGE), to Guelph Gay and Lesbian Equality (GGLLE), to Guelph Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Equality (GGLBE or GLoBE), to today's Guelph Queer Equality (GQE).

The group's first dance was held in the Games Room of Lambton Hall, a University of Guelph residence, in 1973; by 1974 dances were held in the Royal Hotel. Delegates from UGHA attended the second annual National Gay Conference in Winnipeg and the first

International Gay Conference in Scotland. In April 1975, the founding conference of GLGRO was held in Guelph, and in June the Gay Line was established.

In 1979 the group helped end the distribution of Today's Student, an American anti-woman, anti gay, fundamentalist tabloid. In 1980, the group was granted community social service status, and in 1983 co-hosted the Understanding Homophobia conference. During the late 1980s, the group sponsored a local radio show, hosted some of GLGRO's meetings, lobbied the provincial government on the human rights code, and helped fund the Aids Committee of Guelph and Wel-

lington County. In October of 2003 we celebrated our 30th anniversary as a community organization.

Now in 2007, Guelph Queer Equality continues to provides a safe space and supportive environment for all people in the transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay community. People of all races, religions, sexual orientations, genders, ages, and abilities are welcome. Guelph Queer Equality events are not restricted to the University Community, they are open to people from the Guelph Community in general.

Check us out at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/~gqe/>

# YOUTH: Supporting Queer Youth (SQY)

SQY (Supporting Queer Youth) is a social-support group for at-risk youth, ages 15 to 22. The group runs through Change Now and meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday evening.

SQY provides a space for youth identifying anywhere within the spectrum of 'queer' - lesbian, gay, bi, trans, intersexed, two-spirited, etc. - or who are questioning their sexual identity. SQY is a chance for youth to meet other youth who understand both the positive and challenging things about being young and queer.

With a different activity every other week SQY is a fun place to

hang out and chat with friends. We make art, watch movies, cook yummy food, and have great events planned for SQY this spring and summer.

We're always open to new ideas, and always looking for new folks to join. For more information, email [sqy-changenow@bellnet.ca](mailto:sqy-changenow@bellnet.ca)



## Local Youth Documentary...

Oct 31, 2006 - Amongst the myriad of issues being discussed in the Municipal election, you'd be hard pressed to hear any talk about homelessness and other obstacles facing displaced youth in Guelph. Countering this oversight, perhaps in some small way, is the inclusion of the documentary *Change Now For the Future* into the Guelph International Film Festival. In a scant forty minutes, director Scott McGovern opens up the downtown and reveals a whole new side to kids that often get the most rotten looks from passersby.

For those of you who don't know, Change Now is a youth drop in centre located in the basement of the Norfolk Street United Church in Guelph. At Change Now, young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 find a place to take shelter, get a hot meal, get job and skills training or just hang out. It's a refuge for those that have run-away, been kicked out or otherwise have no place else to go. But despite all the good work the staff of Change Now do, their charges are often looked on in town as the popular stereotype of street youth: troublemaking and menacing ne'er-do-wells that pollute our otherwise pristine streets with their drugs and surly demeanor.

McGovern turns the tables by talking with the Change Now staff and some of the young people that use the drop-in's services for help. McGovern goes a step further though by

giving the kids a few cameras of their own in order to capture their thoughts and feelings; just them, their friends and the camera with no adult supervision. Edited together, Change Now paints a portrait of a group of misunderstood youth who are funny, intelligent and occasionally insightful. Their personal stories are sometimes heart breaking, but their outlook is surprisingly optimistic and uplifting;



these kids aren't looking for a hand out, they just want to live with dignity and respect.

Often it's their own segments that yield the greatest insight into the Change Now youth. One enterprising camera man and his friends decide to do their own mini-documentary in a documentary by talking to people on the street about decriminalizing marijuana. Little did he know that his investigations would coincide with a visit to Guelph by then Prime Minister Paul Martin during January's Federal

election. The team awaited the Prime Minister outside the local pub he was dropping in to and while they didn't get a chance to quiz him, they nonetheless caught his arrival on film along with the network news crews.

When not walking the streets trying to corner the PM with a question about pot or otherwise just documenting a normal day, the film talks to Change Now's patrons about where they were and where they're hopefully going. The drop-in centre is host to a great many characters and I use that term not as a disparagement but as a way of collectively describing how deeply invested I was in these kids and their stories. The simple message of the film comes through loud and clear: when you engage youth and give them the means and the encouragement they need, then with the right attitude from them there's no reason that can't achieve their goals. These aren't kids bucking to get rich or famous, they just want to work, be independent and not be looked upon as a pox on the community, but rather a thriving part of it.

It's been a while since I've seen a documentary like *Change Now*; it's no frills filmmaking with no agenda beyond capturing the little moments. These are good kids with hopes and dreams just like anyone else and I think McGovern and his team does an admirable job of capturing this.



# What is “OUT ON THE SHELF”?!

## ~ Mission Statement ~

**To gather and make available resources and services with the goal of creating a supportive, positive space, and to be responsive to the dynamic needs and growth of the queer communities.**

Out On The Shelf is a library and resource centre for the LGBTTTTSIQQ\* communities and allies. The centre is staffed regularly so that the community can come and access books, find out about the diverse range of events, resources and services and share a queer friendly space. In the near future, we will provide meeting space for new groups and initiatives.

\*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transexual, Two-Spirited, Intersex, Queer and Questioning Communities

147 Wyndham Street North - 3rd Floor  
(beside Diana's Restaurant in downtown Guelph)  
Guelph, Ontario  
(519) 821-1789

[www.OutOnTheShelf.ca](http://www.OutOnTheShelf.ca)

We are open: Tuesdays.....5:00pm to 8:00pm  
Wednesdays.....10:am to 1:00pm  
Thursdays.....10:00am to 1:00pm  
& 5:00pm to 8:00pm  
Saturdays.....11:00am to 2:00pm



## In the NEXT Issue...

Next Newsletter's Theme: What do you want to see?!

What sort of articles do you want to see in the upcoming editions of Shelf Life? What are some good issues and themes that we should be exploring as a community? Let us know what you think!

Got an ideas or feedback? Interested in contributing to this monthly newsletter?

Get involved! Email your suggestions to [info@outontheshelf.ca](mailto:info@outontheshelf.ca)