

Out and About

AUTUMN 2011

Southern Community Connections



Vacancies for Volunteer Counsellors



Are you just about to complete your studies or professional training in counselling or recently qualified and seeking registration as a psychologist, therapist, social worker....and want to be a volunteer counsellor at ACON in Wollongong, for our GLBT and HIV communities, across the Southern Region?

Are you already working in this field and just want to volunteer in your community as a counsellor?

Contact Súin (sounds like 'Shoon'), Coordinator for the Volunteer Counselling Program Southern Region 4226 1163. Súin will be happy to provide you with all the details.

The role involves counselling, training and development, professional external supervision, and a great setting among the ACON team – both local and in Sydney. It includes face to face work as well as phone counselling and an online component. Interested?

Southern Region's Social Groups

We are very fortunate to be connected with so many great community groups throughout the area. All of them are welcoming and friendly and encourage new members to attend social gatherings, meetings and activities at any time.

Some of the groups include:

WAGS – a social group for gay and bisexual men in the Illawarra.

REAL – a social group for lesbians in the Illawarra.

LISA – a social group for lesbians who come from the Shoalhaven area.

BeGay – a social group for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people who come from the south coast near Bega and beyond.

Hume Phoenix – a social group for GLBT people based in Albury Wodonga Area.

If you are a member of another group or starting one up, please contact us in the ACON Illawarra office. We'd love to help you however we can. Contact Illawarra@acon.org.au



**OUT AND ABOUT
Autumn 2010**

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of ACON, its associates, or the Editor. Publication of contributions will be at the discretion of the Editor. Any articles containing racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory remarks will not be published.

Contributions:

Original contributions and letters are welcomed and encouraged. It is preferred that articles are submitted by email to illaadmin@acon.org.au

**Deadline for the Winter edition
June/July/August is 1 May 2011**

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BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

Manager's Report

Happy New Year everyone and I hope if you were lucky enough to have a holiday, it was just what you wanted! Happy Mardi Gras too of course!

Last newsletter the drought had broken and the wildflowers were blooming. This time, I sincerely hope everyone in the flood affected areas of our southern region are doing well and not too devastated by the torrential rain many of you have had to endure. Please take advantage of our 1800 number and phone ACON for support and even a chance to have counselling if you need it. 1800 063 060

Chinese New Year began on 3 February and this year is the Year of the Rabbit (Golden Rabbit if you please!). According to Chinese tradition the Rabbit year is a calming one, where we can all catch our collective breaths and calm our nerves. Just what we all need after the Tiger year we've been through: floods, cyclones, economic meltdown et al.

Recruitment for the position of Client Service Officer is well underway and until this position is filled we have a temporary Client Service Officer who continues to deliver client services to our communities.

This means you can ring or come in to talk with an ACON staff member for advocacy, support and services as usual.

Some of you may have heard that ACON is moving: ACON Sydney that is. Yes, after many years at Commonwealth Street, ACON Sydney Office is moving. The new premises at 414 Elizabeth St – just next to Central Station – will house all of ACON's Sydney-based staff and facilities. This will include the Positive Living Centre, the Sex Workers Outreach Project and the

Luncheon Club, which is jointly run by ACON and HIV/AIDS charity the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.

The move will happen some time after Mardi Gras, which means all those participating in the parade will still see the old Commonwealth Street building being the hive of activity it has always been. If you do manage to come to Sydney for the Mardi Gras Parade or any of the Festival, have a squiz at the new building while in town.

The new office is very close to Central Station so its an easy location for rural and regional people to visit after the move.

Check out the website for more info leading up to the anticipated move date in April 2011.

Radda

Inspire the volunteer in you

National Volunteer Week 9 -15 May 2011



National Volunteer Week (NVW) is the largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism in Australia. It provides an opportunity to highlight the role of volunteers in our communities and to say thank you to the more than 5 million Australians who volunteer. *'Inspiring the volunteer in you'* is this year's National Volunteer Week theme, aligning with the United Nations theme of 'International Year of the Volunteer plus 10'.

Here at ACON Southern Region we have a dedicated team of volunteers who, throughout 2010/2011, have shared with us their time, skills, experience and passion. Your support enhances the services we provide and allows us to achieve so much.

SO A BIG THANK YOU

If you would like to become a part of the ACON team, we are currently seeking volunteers for a number of

roles including front of house assistant, condom packer, BEATS outreach assistant, event assistants, youth group facilitators and crossroad exploring diversity panelists. We also have a number of **NEW** volunteer opportunities in 2011.

ACON Rovers

Rovers attend a range of major events ensuring that people are partying in a safe environment where support is on hand. Aside from keeping an eye on partygoers, Rovers provide health promotion information and general party info.

Care and support

Help provide practical care and support that many elderly people and people with HIV/AIDS find essential to maintaining an independent life in the community. Common activities include helping with housework, shopping, transportation or just popping in to have a chat and cup of tea.



wherever sex happens



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www.whereversexhappens.org.au

Courtesy of the Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre

Outlandish

Strong, healthy and resilient Rural & Regional GLBTIQ communities.

In November 2010 ACON Hunter facilitated a regional GLBTIQ Weekend Workshop in Tamworth NSW.

Twelve committee members from five NSW regional GLBTIQ groups attended the weekend.

The aim of the workshop was to develop the capacity of the Tamworth based North West Rainbow Connection Inc committee members.

Other regional GLBTIQ groups were invited to share their skills and knowledge, and to showcase their work/events/activities.

As an inaugural event, it was very successful.

There is so much great stuff happening



in the regions, it is very inspiring.

People were genuinely curious about other groups, and everyone readily shared information and support, and provided really positive and constructive feedback and suggestions to each other.

Another exciting outcome was the establishment of a NSW

Rural and Regional GLBTIQ network. The network is called *Outlandish*.

There will be an annual Outlandish gathering to share skills and knowledge, and build on the strength and capacity of each other to ensure we have strong, healthy and resilient Rural and Regional GLBTIQ communities across NSW.

There is a facebook page set up to facilitate communication, share ideas and resources, network, ask questions and support each other. Committee members of other GLBTIQ rural/regional groups in NSW are very welcome to join the group.

Discussion is underway for the organising of the 2011 Outlandish gathering in Lismore.

Celebrating Youth

Chadwick Spinazza

– Community Health Promotion Officer, ACON Southern Region.

National Youth Week (NYW) is 1 - 10 April 2011, and this year's theme is 'OWN IT!'

What is National Youth Week? Well, NYW is the largest celebration of young people in Australia. Thousands of young people aged 12 – 24 all across Australia get involved in NYW each year, share ideas, have their voices heard, and celebrate their contribution to the community, by organising events, activities, forums, exhibitions, gigs, debates, workshops, sporting events, online events etc but most importantly they HAVE FUN!

"OWN IT!" the theme for National Youth Week 2011 gives our diverse community of young people an amazing opportunity to really 'Say Something' (which just happens to tie in with the Mardi Gras theme this year).

Being involved or organising a NYW event is easy and so

much fun to do, why not take the opportunity to really show a queer side this NYW.

For example this year, in the Southern Region, we have taken an alternate path for our NYW event. 'Should we OWN IT! The Queer Debate' is our event that enables young members and future leaders to come and debate on all things queer, from homophobia to mental health, from sexuality to sexual behaviour and everything else in between.

National Youth Week 2011 is about our community, it's about coming together in celebration, it's about letting each other be ourselves, its about giving everyone the equal opportunity to OWN IT! So whatever event or community project it is, just make sure you 'OWN IT!'

For more information on ACON Southern Region's NYW 2011 you can contact our office on 4226 1163





calendar

MARCH 2011

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 3 | Q to Q
5pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |
| 5 | WAGS
7pm at ACON
Contact 42261163 |
| 8 | REAL—IWD MEDITATION
7am at ACON
Contact 0431 887 770 |
| 17 | Q to Q
5pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |
| 15 | UNITY Diners Club
7pm at Murphys Bar
Contact 0403 899 015 |
| 19 | WAGS
7pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |
| 24 | REAL
6pm at ACON
Contact 0431 887 770 |
| 26 | UNITY Dance Party
8pm at Beaton Park Tennis
Club—Contact 0403 899 015 |
| 31 | Q to Q
5pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |

APRIL 2011

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2 | WAGS
7pm at ACON
Contact 42261163 |
| 7 | SHOULD WE OWN IT
QUEER DEBATE 4pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |
| 14 | Q to Q
5pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |
| 15 | INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SILENCE
www.dayofsilence.org/ |
| 16 | WAGS
7pm at ACON
Contact 42261163 |
| 19 | UNITY Diners Club
7pm at Costa Azzura Woodfire
Restaurant 0403 899 015 |
| 21 | REAL
6pm at ACON
Contact 0431 887 770 |
| 28 | Q to Q
5pm at ACON
Contact 4226 1163 |

MAY 2011

7	<p>WAGS 7pm at ACON Contact 42261163</p>
12	<p>Q to Q 5pm at ACON Contact 4226 1163</p>
17	<p>INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA</p>
21	<p>WAGS 7pm at ACON Contact 42261163</p>
26	<p>Q to Q 5pm at ACON Contact 4226 1163</p>
26	<p>REAL 6pm at ACON Contact 0431 887 770</p>

UNITY Wollongong

presents



A Danceparty for the Illawarra GLBTQI community & friends

Saturday March 26th 8:00pm - 12:30am Beaton Park Tennis Club

18+ event entry - \$10

Retro DJ - Garry Sound

Raffles, lucky door/ Best Dressed prizes & shows

Enquiries - 0403 899 015 or info@unity-wollongong.org



UNITY Wollongong is a not-for-profit association with an elected committee of volunteers who plan and organise events for the Illawarra GLBTQI community, their friends & supporters.

UNITY Wollongong is over 25 years old, having first been established in the early 1980s as a social support group for the area.

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International Women's Day



8 March 2011

From first stirrings in the socialism of European working women's industrial campaigns from the late 1800s to demands for women's suffrage – the right to vote – International Women's Day was officially commemorated in Europe in March 1911. For a hundred years women all over the world, alone and together, have made **8 March** the one day of the year when we celebrate our unique achievements and bring focus to our continuing and developing demands for access and equity, to full human rights and opportunities, to reach beyond our imagined potential.



"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat".

Rebecca West, writer, 1913



The colours GREEN, WHITE & VIOLET were used by the English suffragettes, the Pankhurst's and many allies, used them on sashes, for their slogan **GIVE** (green) **WOMEN** (white) the **VOTE** (violet).

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY events

WOMEN'S SURFING/ BODY BOARDING

Saturday 5 March 8am – 12noon
at Seven Mile Beach Gerroa.
Enter off 7 Mile Beach Road,
opposite shop. Cost: Free

MEDITATION SESSION

Tuesday 8 March
REAL is having a meditation session
and breakfast at ACON's community
space, from 7am. If you are
interested please drop us an email
real.illawarra@gmail.com

CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

An opportunity for women who run
home based businesses and those
who want to.

Thursday 3 March at Oak Flats
Bowling Club 10am till 2pm.
Bookings essential 4221 6170

Other great websites to check out:

www.womenshistory.com.au

www.isis.aust.com

Your local council website



The NSW adaptation of an innovative condom reinforcement campaign originally developed by the Victorian AIDS Council - *Wherever Sex Happens* - make its debut in NSW in January.

Wherever Sex Happens... Slip It On! reminds gay men to be prepared and to slip on a condom wherever sex is expected to happen - in a bed, a park, a beach - and wherever it's not - a supermarket, on a plane, etc.

Wherever Sex Happens... Slip It On! builds on the success of ACON's popular *Slip It On* campaign and logo. The brightly coloured, pop-art inspired logo is now easily recognised as *the* safe sex icon in NSW and reinforces the key HIV prevention message: wherever you have sex, use a condom.

The campaign materials link to a campaign specific website (whereversexhappens.org.au) which contains relevant information that reinforces the need for men to carry condoms and lube with them to use

when situations turn steamy.

The website also addresses issues related to minimising HIV risk with information about sex-on-premises venues, on-line cruising and hook ups, risk reduction strategies and a reminder to test regularly for sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis.

ACON's Director of Community Health, Geoff Honnor, described the campaign as a creative twist on an enduring message.

"Twenty six years into the HIV epidemic, condoms remain the most effective way to prevent HIV as well as many other sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

We've avoided any increase in HIV rates in New South Wales for the last 11 years because most gay men continue to use condoms most of the time. It's an important message for everyone and one that never goes out of style. "

www.whereversexhappens.org.au

REAL - Respecting Equality Amongst Lesbians



ACON Community Space
18 Ellen St Wollongong
4th Thursday of each month. 6pm – 8pm
Ph: 0431 887 770
Website: realillawarra.blogspot.com/
Email: real.illawarra@gmail.com



Wollongong Area Gays
www.wags.net.au

WAGS is a local Gay and Bisexual social, peer support and networking group for men in the Illawarra

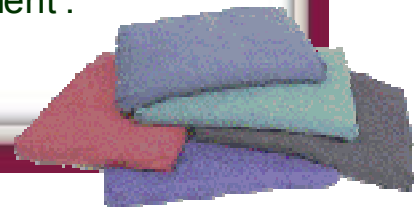
WAGS meets on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month
ACON community space
18 Ellen Street, Wollongong (the white building)
7pm to 9 pm

Sit On It

Come along to a Free community meditation session any & every **Thursday at ACON Community Space, 7am for a prompt 7.30am start.** Enter via the Ellen Street side gate by the car port.

Ever wanted to see what this Meditation lark is about? Already an experienced 'sitter', but miss meditating in a group?

Silent sitting meditation. Nothing to bring but your body, an open mind, and do dress comfy. Súin will be there to 'convene' the 20min 'sit', and if wanted will give some pointers about posture, purpose, and 'no achievement'. Stay for a cuppa & a chat afterwards.





wherever sex happens



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www.wheresexhappens.org.au

Courtesy of the Victorian AIDS Centre / Gay Men's Health Centre



ILLAWARRA RISING Float 2011 Angels and Demons

Look out for your local float, Illawarra Rising – ‘Angels & Demons’ among this year’s parade entries on 5 March.

Are you an Angel or a Demon?

This Mardi Gras, Illawarra Rising pays tribute to those within and without our communities that help

us to grow and work towards positive change – Angels.

We also look at those things about ourselves and others that have made life difficult – Demons.

As you are watching or participating this year, the Illawarra Rising Mardi Gras float invites you to ask:

“In 2011 and beyond, what can we do to move forward? What are the things we must overcome if we are to continue to strengthen our community? How can we make it happen?”

Illawarra Rising and the Phoenix Theatre wishes everyone a safe and happy Mardi Gras season.



Private Lives 2

Be a part of the second national survey of the health and wellbeing of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Australians

The first Private Lives survey was conducted in 2005 and involved over 5,000 participants. The results of the survey have had a major impact on improvements in health and community services for GLBT people across the country.

The first Private Lives survey suggested there may be some significant differences in the lives of GLBT people depending on whether

they live in a metro or rural or regional location. We hope to be able to explore these differences in more detail but this will only be possible if we have a higher response rate among rural and regional GLBT people.

Please complete the survey if you are eligible and pass it on and promote it for us:

www.privatelivessurvey.org.au

SWOP

SEX WORKERS OUTREACH PROJECT

Want to know the ins and outs of your profession?

SWOP has a brand new website that features information for sex workers, about:

- Sexual Health
- The Law
- Workplace Safety
- SWOP Services
- Downloadable Resources
- Regional and Rural Services
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)
- Links to other useful sites
- And much, much more!

www.swop.org.au

SWOP - Sex Workers Outreach Project
69 Abercrombie Street Chippendale NSW 2008
Phone: (02) 9319 4866
Free call: 1800 622 902
Email: infoswop@acon.org.au

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ACON Walking Group

Improve your fitness & make new friends!

**6:30am Mondays,
Wednesdays & Fridays.**

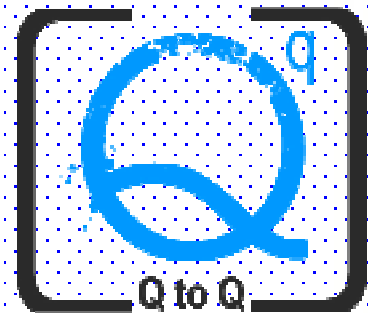
**Starts from North Beach
Kiosk, North Beach
Wollongong**

Contact: 4226 1163 for more information



Q to Q GLBT youth group

Q to Q offers same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people the ability to be themselves and meet other like minded people in a safe and accepting environment.



Q to Q meets every fortnight on Thursdays from 5pm at ACON community Space 18 Ellen Street Wollongong.

Contacts

ACON Illawarra

47 Kenny St, Wollongong
Ph: (02) 4226 1163
Email: illawarra@acon.org.au

SUPPORT

ACON Counselling at Illawarra

- 4226 1163

For all GLBT and PWH community members

ACON (Sydney) -1800 063 060 (freecall)

ACON Treatments Information

-1800 816 518

ACON 24 hour Treatment Support

-1800 454 510

Gender Centre

Transgender Support and Social network based in Sydney.

- 9569 2366 www.gendercentre.org.au

Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers

Wollongong - 4226 7899

Dapto - 4262 9499

Warilla - 4295 9499

Illawarra Women's Health Centre

- 4255 6800

info@womenshealthcentre.com.au

Multicultural HIV/AIDS Service

- 9515 3098

Nowra Women's Health Centre.

- 4421 0703

Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm

Positive Life NSW - 1800 245 677 (freecall)

www.positivelife.org.au to view 'talkabout' magazine online.

Positive Heterosexuals (POZHET)

- 1800 812 404

For Men and Women who are HIV positive.

Sex Industry Outreach Worker.

Contact ACON - 4226 1163 (office) or 0417 694 149 (mobile)

Wollongong Women's Resource Centre

- 4228 1499

MEDICAL

Sexual Health Clinics Illawarra & Shoalhaven

Wollongong - 4226 1189

Nowra - 4423 9353

Port Kembla - 4223 8457

Free Dental Care through SESIAHS
(Anyone with a Pension or Health Card)
- 1300 369 651

Clinic 35

Wodonga - (02) 6022 8888

DRUG AND ALCOHOL

Watershed Detox & Rehab Services

(24 Hours) - 4272 3000

First Step Program at Port Kembla

Hospital

- 4275 1529 / 0411 408 726

LEGAL

Illawarra Legal Centre - 4276 1939

Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre

4422 9529 / 1800 229 529

HALC HIV/AIDS Legal Centre

1800 063 060 (freecall) www.halc.org.au

SOCIAL

Pink Nation - Illawarra Gay and Lesbian weekly radio program presenting queer information, news, entertainment. Mondays 5pm - 6 pm, 2VOX, 106.9FM

Respecting Equality Amongst Lesbians

(REAL) social & support group for lesbians

Contact Fay or Janine 0431 887 770 or

real.illawarra@gmail.com

<http://realillawarra.blogspot.com/>

Q to Q – group for same-sex attracted and gender diverse school aged young people or those questioning their sexuality or gender

Contact Chadwick at ACON: 4226 1163

illawarra@acon.org.au

Wollongong Area Gays (WAGS) - Social and

support group for gay & bi-sexual men contact

ACON: 4226 1163

www.wags.net.au

Unity Wollongong - Dinner and

dance group. Contact 0403 899 015