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From the **Publisher**



H health, what a fantastic edition to begin 2022 with. Especially as we start gearing to open up again after COVID-19 and get back to having fun and living again. Keeping healthy will be a very good thing.

Also, it is a fantastically relatable edition for me personally. I am a health junkie lol. I like doing it and reading about it. So when Bryen, our editor-in-chief, suggested the theme for this year, I figured FINALLY he came up with a good idea (I kid, lol.)

So where do I begin with the topic of health. I wholeheartedly subscribe to the idea that our fridge and pantry, especially our spice and herb rack, is our best medicine. Before I put anything in my mouth (get your minds out of the gutter), I like to read about it. Every vegetable, every drink, every spice; I like to read about them. I have books and books on the topics. I know the nutritional value, the antioxidant index, the blah blah blah, of as much as I can keep in mind.

Then to round up health for me I add working out, meditation, yoga, holistic health, etc. I believe our best bet to keep healthy, is by combining western health and sciences, with eastern health, knowledge, and wisdom.

That's it, that's health for me. It is very simple, learning about, and enjoying making it part of my life.

I do hope you like the covers theme for this year. We wanted to put a fun, positive take on social media posts, while featuring some of our community's inspiring, respected, and just plain lovely individuals doing their thing. Social media is a wonderful tool, however sometimes as we all know, it gets bogged down with negativity. I do wish that people would use it to spread more love and happy messages. Our 2022 covers will demonstrate this more positive messaging all year.

Before I sign off, I want to give a shout out to all businesses who fought the good fight during the pandemic. But especially since we are on the topic of health, a big shout out to grocery workers, doctors, dentists, holistic health care, restaurants, and all those who kept us fed and healthy.

Antoine Elhashem
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springplay!

Gay, Lesbian, Bi, Trans, Queer, and Two-Spirit Community Seasonal from PinkPlayMags
Free • Spring 2022

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From the Editor

Greetings and salutations!

Here we go with another exciting year of topical content, and this time it's all about you! It's been a rough couple of years for many, so we'll be bringing you features on Health, Fitness, Wellness, and Self-Reflection.

In this issue, Aaron Rothermund explains why **Queer Health Matters**, by spotlighting individuals and organizations who offer services and guidance for the queer community. He caught up with Rainbow Health Ontario, TransPULSE, and the new HQ health clinic in downtown Toronto.

In our second feature, Melissa MacMullin delves into **The Reality of LGBTQ+ Health**, speaking with two community members who have first hand experience within the broader medical system. [Daniel O'Shaughnessy](#) is a Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner who has also put together a list of **10 Habits for a Healthy Mind**. [Rae Spoon](#) is a non-binary, transgender singer, songwriter, music producer, and author, who shares their experiences upon finding out about their cancer diagnosis.

Keeping with the theme of self-care and well-being, our *Travel* article highlights several spas and retreats that you can check into for a day, or weekend, including



a newly opening beer spa. Our *Fiction* piece is *The Book of Casey Adair* by **Ken Harvey**, a 1980s based story of one man discovering life while travelling and living between Madrid, Boston, and Toronto. Our *Hot Artist* profile is on **Hana Shafi**, who produces visual art and writing that explores social and personal themes of wellness. The *Community Cornerstone* column spotlights **Quebec Gay Archives**, whose purpose is to preserve handwritten, printed, visual, and audio material on the history of the LGBTQ+ communities of Quebec.

Be sure to check our quarterly horoscopes, and our [online event listings](#) compiled by our Events Editor, **Sherry Sylvain**. The always inspiring *From The Heart* column is written by **Mychol Scully**, our Creative Director, who also designs this publication for us. As well, we have our annual online **Home & Garden Supplement** providing tips for sprucing up your living quarters, both inside and out.

Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn
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10 Habits for a Healthy Mind

By Daniel O'Shaughnessy

It is well researched that nutrition plays a big role in supporting a positive mindset. The following factors are important in supporting a healthy mind.

1. Sleep 7-9 Hours Per Night

Good quality sleep each night is associated with better mood and overall well-being. Try to sleep before midnight each night, keep your phone out of the bedroom, and try to wind down each night with leisurely reading, meditation, or a bath.

2. Move Everyday

Exercising 30 to 60 minutes per day can enhance a positive mindset and mood. Walking, running, weight-training, dancing, and swimming all count. The important thing is to do exercise that you enjoy.

3. Get Frequent Sunshine

Low vitamin D is a risk factor for low mood and depression. Aim to get out in the sunshine for 30 minutes each day. Get your vitamin D levels tested and supplement with D3 if you are deficient.

4. Consume Oily Fish

Aim to eat at least two portions of oily fish per week. Examples include salmon, mackerel, sardines, sea bass and trout. High fish consumption is associated with a reduced risk of depression in both men and women.

5. Control Stress

Low mood is associated with imbalances of the stress hormone, cortisol. Schedule some "me" time each day, practice meditation, and aim to keep your diet healthy to support your body through stress.

6. Support Digestive Health

Research shows gut bacteria may play a role in influencing mood and behaviour. Chew food well, remove foods from your diet that you are sensitive

to, and consume fermented foods (Natural Yoghurt, Kefir, Kombucha, and Sauerkraut).

7. Eat Colourful Foods

Oxidative stress is associated with low mood. Supporting your body with foods that are bright in colour can support oxidative stress and inflammation as they are rich in antioxidants. Examples include Berries, Peppers, Aubergine, Mango, Green Tea, and Tomatoes.

8. Support Your Genes

Some genetic variants have been associated with mood disorders including depression and anxiety. Support your genes by controlling stress, have a balanced diet, and eat at least eight portions of fruit & vegetables per day. Speak to a Health Professional about testing your genes for variants that may impact mood.

9. Take Your Vitamins

Vitamin B6, B12 and Folate, Magnesium, and Zinc are key nutrients in supporting low mood and depression. Seek advice from a health professional before supplementing.

10. Detoxify Your Environment

Prolonged exposure to environmental toxins can have adverse affects on cognition leading to mood disorders. Limit environment exposures to toxins by buying organic, try not to touch credit card receipts or plastic with BPA, ditch air fresheners, and use filtered water.

Daniel O'Shaughnessy is the author of *Naked Nutrition: an LGBTQ+ Guide to Diet & Lifestyle*





Queer Health Matters

Dissecting the Differences and Disparities of LGBTQ+ Well-Being

By Aaron Rothermund



While the legal rights of LGBTQ+ people have greatly improved in recent decades, equality in healthcare has not yet been achieved. The biased treatment of sexual and gender diversified people has a major impact on their physical and mental health.

Rainbow Health Ontario estimates that roughly 7% of people living in Toronto identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, and another 0.6% identify as trans. According to a report by the *Standing Committee on Health*, when sexual orientation and gender identity merge with ethnicity, age, income, physical ability, and access to health care, we truly see the health challenges among marginalized communities.

“The discrimination and stigmatization that gender and sexual minorities experience can be internalized and contribute to minority stress,” **Travis Salway**,

Post-doctoral Research Fellow at the University of British Columbia, explained to the *Standing Committee on Health*. “Everyone experiences daily stressors, however sexual minority people experience additional stress because of their minority status.”

Lori Ross of the University of Toronto pointed out that the accumulation of stress may also contribute to earlier onset of certain chronic diseases among LGBTQ+ people. Bisexual and lesbian women are more likely to suffer from asthma (16%, compared with 9% among straight women), and are more likely to live with arthritis, so they may wish to add an anti-inflammatory into their diet such as garlic, ginger, turmeric, and / or fatty fish.

Gay or bisexual men are at a greater risk of being diagnosed with anal cancer or being infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Anal cancer is one of the most common HIV related cancers in gay men. It occurs in two places, in the anal canal and in the skin just outside of the anal opening. It starts as a pre-cancerous condition called anal

dysplasia, and the cancer can develop slowly over time.

“Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men have an anal cancer rate of 45 per 100,000 compared with 1.5 to 2 per 100,000 for the general population,” reports **Dr. Tinus Wasserfall**, Family Doctor at Spectrum Health. “Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is a very common infection and is present in 90% of anal cancers.” Dr. Wasserfall recommends that men who have sex with men should be vaccinated for HPV and undergo screening exams for anal cancer no matter what age.

The community-based research project, **Trans PULSE**, considered the impact of social exclusion and discrimination on the health of trans people in Ontario. The study found that 60% of trans individuals experienced depression, 36% stated they had suicidal thoughts, and 10% indicated that they had attempted suicide. The numbers are higher among trans youth, with up to 65% reporting thoughts of self-harm and suicide.

This spring, there’s a new clinic opening in downtown Toronto. **HQ** is a specialized health clinic for trans, non-binary, and MSM. “We really find that sexual health, mental health, and other social needs of the community all go hand-in-hand,” stated Dr. Kevin Woodward, Medical Director at HQ. “We may have people who are coming here for sexual health care, but in the course of talking to them, we uncover that they have significant mental health needs as well.”

HQ will provide judgment-free physical and mental health services, person-centered holistic services, PrEP and PEP access, and easy testing for sexually transmitted diseases with unrivaled same day test results. The clinic will also offer group rooms for gay men, trans and non-binary folk to workshop poetry, enjoy book clubs, or showcase art events. The centre of healthy activity will include social programs including *Socialite & PepperPot*, a community-based drop-in program for Black men that sleep with men, and *Chit Chat*, a networking sessions focused on South Asian men.



Paul Charuk is a healing coach who helps his clients move beyond stress, using clinical hypnosis and sound therapy techniques. He holds a Bachelor of Environmental Studies from York University, and is now certified to use the power of sound and hypnosis to help his clients move on from their past, make desired changes, and achieve goals.

On our current health pandemic, he tells me, “Lucky for us, the human system is a very resilient piece of biology designed to handle stress. The sympathetic nervous system, our primal Red Alert operating program, gives us the fight/flight/freeze response and the hormonal surge of adrenaline that releases that burst of limitless energy. Thankfully, these situations don’t last forever and so after some rest and recovery, we switch back to our standard operating program, the parasympathetic nervous system. In this state we are at ease and the body restores its ability to properly digest food, have sex, and think clearly and creatively.”

“There’s one important thing to mention: the body and mind can’t tell the difference between life and death levels of stress, and everyday stressors of modern society. The stress response system of the body is either on or off. This means that most people are running off of their Red Alert programming. This is a problem because our biology wasn’t designed

to handle prolonged and chronic stress,” Charuk explains.

Now more than ever it’s important to connect with other members of the community, maintain good physical condition, and keep our mental health in check. For those who can afford private health resources, or have a health plan that covers it, explore the intersections of sound therapy and healing from within with [Mind Body Spirit Integration](#).

For 24-hour crisis support call:

Toronto Distress Centre at 416-408-4357 or you can text 741741 from 2 am - 2 pm.

Crisis Service Canada at 1-833-456-4566, text 45645.

Trans Lifeline in Canada call 1-877-330-6366, or in the US call 1-877-565-8860.

LGBT Youthline, call 1-800-268-9688, text 647-694-4275.

Aaron Rothermund is a freelance writer, theatre creator, and filmmaker. Aaron has worked on articles for The Courier, Culture Days, theBUZZ, and PinkPlayMags.



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The Reality of LGBTQ+ Health Concerns

Nutritionist, Daniel O'Shaughnessy, and Cancer Survivor, Rae Spoon Speak Out

By Melissa MacMullin

One of the highest rated health concerns for the LGBTQ+ community is nutrition.

Typically, LGBTQ+ individuals are at a higher risk of various conditions, have limited access to proper health care, and have more detrimental health outcomes due to mental and physical health disparities.

There have been comprehensive strides made within Canadian healthcare to address diversity, however more focus needs to be placed on research and the development of strategies to execute widespread adequate support when it comes to barrier-free healthcare accessibility. Crucial components such as consistency, competency, and the art of continual training and education, will substantially chip away at eradicating marginalization.

[Daniel O'Shaughnessy](#) is a London, UK based, award-winning nutritionist, and Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner, who is a firm believer in personalized holistic queer nutrition. His new book, [Naked Nutrition, an LGBTQ+ Guide to Diet & Lifestyle](#), will be released in Canada on May 17, 2022. It's an LGBTQ+ health-focused guide on dietary

and lifestyle needs featuring topics that include transgender nutrition, mental health support, HIV nutrition, same-sex fertility nutrition, clean sex, and even addiction and substance abuse.

"I think people don't realize that nutrition can actually support health concerns or lifestyle as well as general health. I think if people know how to actually help their body in whatever way, then they will or at least be more conscious. Additionally, I think the heterosexual community doesn't understand the ongoing concerns of the LGBTQ+ community. For example, I have had times when I have been to the doctor and they've asked about my medications, and when I said I use PrEP, they assume I am HIV positive. I think conversations have started, but I fear they are largely segmented and don't consider the community as a whole. It can leave individuals feeling misunderstood and perhaps confused. Does general diet advice suit everyone? No, it doesn't, and often professionals are stuck and don't know how to support individuals with specific LGBTQ+ nutrition needs," expressed O'Shaughnessy, who also has over 10 years clinical experience.

In his book, he distinctly covers the importance of concerns from his transgender clientele. "I focus on the foundations for supporting transition and

beyond. I discuss the pillars such as supporting blood sugar, supporting liver health, and also digestion. I also talk about which medications may be used for FTM and MTF individuals, and how to mitigate the possible (if any) side-effects, surgery support, advice for parents, and also the mental health side. I think when someone decides they want to transition, they think of nothing else and are prepared to go to any lengths, even if this means dealing with a few side-effects here and there. My goal is to help minimize these side-effects, and help these individuals to fully understand the process of transitioning and how best to support it."

Victoria, British Columbia based singer, songwriter, music producer, and author, [Rae Spoon](#) is a non-binary, transgender individual who has been producing music since 2001. In January, 2021, they released a digital book of sheet music for 109 of their songs, and later that spring they published a novel titled, [Green Glass Ghosts](#). Redefining the YA genre and tackling gender, it's an autobiographical adventure about the marginalized life of a young queer musician in Vancouver.

"It has to do with moving out from home, and having substance issues going on, finding your friends, finding yourself. Really it's about those years between being an adult, when you're still part child," relayed Spoon.

Back in March of 2020, Spoon was given a gendered cancer diagnosis, creating extra anxiety and emotional complications. Although it was in an advanced stage, luckily it had been discovered before moving into the lymph system. Currently cancer-free but still receiving residual care treatments for cancer treatment side effects at their local hospital, Spoon shared that when looking for information initially, they discovered that the majority of resources severely gendered the affected person and did more harm than help with the situation. "I had been misgendered many times while receiving treatment. It's like if your name is Bob but they keep calling you Bill. It's the same thing. It's not who you are. You don't feel seen. Or safe," said Spoon. "My access to healthcare has been complicated due to being a non-binary trans person."

Spoon encountered a nurse during their time of treatment who quickly took notice to the difficulties and challenges they were facing, and became

NAKED NUTRITION



An LGBTQ+ Guide to Diet and Lifestyle

DANIEL O'SHAUGHNESSY

somewhat of a pro-active ally. "This had begun to at least get the conversation and idea of change within the hospital going. Transgender people need access to gender-affirming healthcare. I remember getting a needle jabbed into my arm and as that was happening, they used incorrect gendering as an attempt to comfort me, but it did the opposite. There was trauma there. I think it will require broad training across the board in all institutions to limit the suffering and misunderstanding going forward. Something that also aligns with LGBTQ+ problems is fat phobia, sexism, and racism which is huge in the healthcare system. We need a complete systematic overhaul," shared Spoon. "I think unless we try to change them all, it's never going to work."

The time is now for a more inclusive and attentive, all-encompassing healthcare system with access to respectful treatment, in addition to nutritional resources geared towards specific queer and transgender needs.

Melissa MacMullin is a freelance content writer and journalist for leading publications. A strong distinct queer Canadian voice with pride and purpose.





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Experience Ontario's Spa and Wellness Retreats

By Bryen Dunn

We've all been through a lot of upheaval and unrest over the past couple of years, which brought added stress to many. I think we can all agree that 2022 should be about ME! So how about we take a look at some ways that you can pamper yourself right here in Ontario without having the worry and stress of flights and border crossing.

From delicious nourishment, nature-based activities, massage and body treatments, meditation and yoga, to aesthetic pampering like manis and pedis, there are endless ways to help you pause, rest and recharge. Holistic wellness retreats combine yoga, meditation and spiritual restoration with organic, plant-based, guilt-free nutrition and detox programs for mind, body and soul healing.

The [Thermēa Spa Village](#) recently opened in Whitby. It's located within a nature-inspired, rustic environment that includes treatment rooms, sauna rituals, bathing areas, and an underground Epsom salt flotation pool. Experience the 2000-year-old Nordic tradition of Thermo-therapy, an alternation between hot and cold, followed by rest. Explore the restful floating sensation and experience

weightlessness in Källa, discover the age-old Middle Eastern steam bath tradition of Rhassoul. And indulge in a wide array of face, body and foot care treatments with onsite massage therapists and aestheticians. To complete the healing and healthy experience, try one of the three onsite eateries each offering a different farm-to-table dining experience.

The [Muskoka Beer Spa](#) is another new property. This four-season resort offers cabin rentals, a spa, pool, and onsite brewery and beer garden. This family-friendly resort offers a daily supervised kids program, a beach on Clear Lake, and water activities like kayaking, paddle boarding and canoeing. Each of the cabins include complimentary snacks, and firewood, and guests can also request an in-room beer keg from Clearlake Brewing Company, or grab a couple cans and growlers from the onsite bottle shop. Nearby hiking and biking trails include Torrence Barrens, which is located within a conservation area designated as the world's first Dark Sky Reserve, and Hardy Lake Provincial Park & Trail Loop, which is a moderate-level looped trail, perfect for a half-day adventure.

[Iwa Spa](#) in Blue Mountain offers a unique day spa experience based on Japanese wellness techniques. Services include holistic therapy treatments, restorative yoga classes and reflexology, and they are known for their Ganban, a kind of volcanic rock therapy, that includes the Cider Moon Back Treatment. It features a soothing Crème Brûlée Bath,



followed by a Green Tea Milk Wash, a sweet cream scrub, and a glistening Red Hot Shandy Oil massage. The [Scandinave Spa](#) is also located in Blue Mountain, and are well known for their indoor/outdoor hydrotherapy treatments and Scandinavian baths.

See below for a list of other spas, resorts, and retreats that will have you wallowing your worries away.

Prince Edward County's [Bloomfield Beauty Co.](#) is the area's first luxury spa to offer both classic and medical aesthetics, and onsite shop for your favourite skin care and beauty products.

[Grand Wellness Centre](#) in Brantford offers massage therapy and rejuvenating body treatments, including the unique body beer bundle - a soothing beer soak, signature healing 'ale'ments salt scrub, and massage.

[Hammam Spa by CÉla](#) has locations in Toronto and North York, and is inspired by Middle Eastern spas. Hammam combines ancient healing traditions, natural elements, and modern comforts to create the ultimate wellness experience. Indulge in the cleansing ritual of Turkish Baths, which includes the benefits of steam rooms and deep detoxifying treatments.

[Elmspa](#) in Toronto has specialized treatment rooms, a rain shower, and relaxing garden space. A variety of healing services, such as the Siam Herbal Body Treatment, are based on traditional Thai traditions.

[Joie Day Spa](#) in Hamilton offers a Royalty Spa Package, a customized experience that includes a facial, massage, body wrap and specially made spa lunch.

[H2O Float Studio](#) in Toronto has calming float cabins, with a special "Dark Side of the Pod" experience, offering music fans to experience Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon album as they float under a starry sky in complete darkness.

[The Briars Resort & Spa](#) in Jacksons Point provides skin care and facial treatments, body therapies, reflexology, and hydrotherapy. Guests can also enjoy water activities on Lake Simcoe, or the many nearby hiking and biking trails.

[Langdon Hall Country House Hotel & Spa](#) in Cambridge offers restorative and aesthetic treatments, as well as wine tastings, cooking classes, and garden tours.

[Touchstone Resort](#) in Bracebridge has a luxurious personalized in-house spa, therapeutic services like facials, massage, body wraps and scrubs, that use minerals and plants from nearby Lake Muskoka. There's also a private sandy beach and infinity pool onsite.

[Sir Sam's Inn & Spa](#) in Eagle Lake is an adults-only luxury resort with exclusive rooms featuring private hot tubs and wood fireplaces. The Waterspa offers high-pressure water jets to relax your body prior to spa treatments and massage.



Hana Shafi

by Jon Pressick

Hot Artist

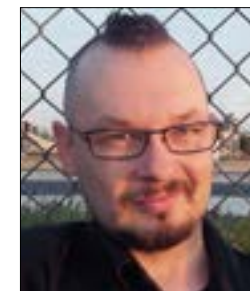
These works had a tremendous impact. “I didn’t expect it to become a series,” she reveals, “but it got such a tremendous heartfelt response from people. I then started to expand to even wider topics, like mental health, body positivity, and so on. I did it for five years, making approximately 285 affirmation pieces that touched on everything from feeling good in your own skin to advocating for climate justice.”

This is where Hana has taken the path of artistic wellness intentionality. As a response to world events and conditions, she saw the need to bring wellness ideas and positivity into people’s lives. That said, she does feel that these themes have always been with her. “Even my very early drawings were centered around mental health,” Hana reveals, “but definitely in a more abstract sense because they weren’t accompanied with actual written affirmations.”

Hana’s work has resonated so profoundly with some folks that they’ve had her art tattooed on their bodies. “That is a huge honour, and I am incredibly grateful to each person who gets my work tattooed. You’ve given a piece of my artwork a very special place in your life, and that’s deeply touching to me.

After bringing the Affirmation series to a close, Hana has remained as busy as ever. “I’m showcasing a style now that some of the people who started following me during the time of the affirmation series may not be used to, but that I hope they will embrace and support too. I’m working on my third book, which I plan to have illustrations in, and I’m super excited about it!”

Jon Pressick is a writer who focuses on sex and sexuality. View his work at sexinwords.ca



For many artists, the intersection between art creation and wellness themes is natural, instinctual.

At other times, the artist can make a concerted, determined effort to bring themes of survival, resilience, and affirmation to their fans. Style and aesthetic can affect the intention. The intention can determine the style and aesthetic. The possibilities are truly endless.

Hana Shafi embraces these intersections and excels at producing visual art and writing that explores social and personal themes of wellness in ways that have captivated and inspired countless followers.

Under both her name and the nom de plume Frizz Kid, Shafi creates visually stunning artwork and has penned two widely-praised books—one a collection of poetry and illustrations, and the other a companion to her long-running online series of affirmations.

“I started the affirmation series in March 2016,” Hana shares, “and it was initially a response to a lot of victim-blaming and slut-shaming attitudes that were showing up in the media due to the [Jian] Ghomeshi trial being front and centre in the news at the time. So in the beginning, I wanted to create pieces centered around healing for survivors.”

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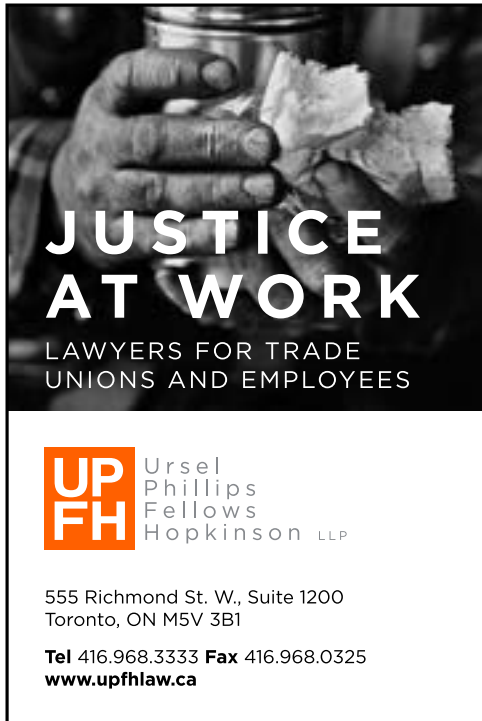
Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.



[Elm Hurst Inn & Spa](#) in Ingersoll offers themed packages, like the Pajama Party, featuring individual manicures and pedicures for four guests, as well as one night’s accommodation in a deluxe room with a complimentary buffet breakfast and mini gourmet pizzas delivered to your room.

[Ste. Anne’s Spa](#) in Grafton has a full-service spa menu that includes the fieldstone grotto, part of their outdoor hydrotherapy treatment. Enjoy their fresh country cuisine, and stay overnight in their super cozy accommodations.

[White Oaks Conference Resort & Spa](#) in Niagara-on-the-Lake offers the unique ‘fire and ice’ clinical facial that combines a cinnamon-scented masque with a cooling peppermint treatment.



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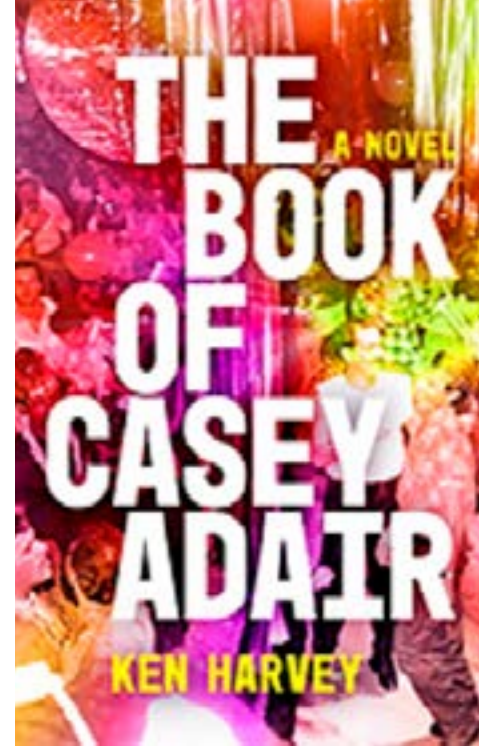


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**Saturday, February 16, 1985
11:00 p.m.**

I'm in Toronto. Being with Grace has reminded me of our time together over Christmas, which then got me thinking about Geoffrey. I woke up around four this morning and did something that wasn't terribly smart. I called him from Poppy's phone, knowing she'd see the number from England on her next bill.

Geoffrey didn't answer. I got dressed and walked right to Steamworks, open all night. Without thinking I paid for a room and towel. I took off my clothes and went to the Jacuzzi where some men were soaking and others groping each other. I slid into the steaming water slowly. A blond bearish guy inched his way over to me, rubbing his hip against mine, then running his foot up and down my shin. I wanted him in the worst way. All I had to do

was look at him and I knew we'd be in the tiny room I'd rented. Even a sigh would have given him the signal. And yet I didn't do anything. I started thinking about Geoffrey. I shimmied away from the man and left the Jacuzzi.

Poppy was sitting on the sofa in her bathrobe when I returned. She was drinking wine and reading a novel.

"Welcome back. I thought we were all in for the night." Her eyes were still glued to the book.

"I thought so, too," I said. "I couldn't sleep."

She shut her book. I think she smelled the chlorine on me because she said, "The bathhouse raids have stopped. At least you don't have to worry about that."

I told her the truth: I'd gone to the bathhouse because I hadn't had sex in the longest time, but that once I was there, I started thinking about someone else, and found it impossible have sex with a stranger. She went to the kitchen and poured another glass of wine and handed it to me. When she sat on the sofa again, she crossed her legs, deliberately revealing her thigh.

Fuck. Did she think that she was the person who kept me from having sex in the bathhouse? How stupid could I be? But her flirtation was strangely seducing. Maybe I was just horny and the possibility of a release with someone I knew so well seemed appealing. Or maybe I wanted to prove once and for all that I'd made the right decision moving to Boston.

Watch the book [trailer](#). Available from [University of Wisconsin Press](#)



Ken Harvey is also the author of the memoir *A Passionate Engagement*, and short story collection *If You Were with Me Everything Would Be All Right*, which won the Violet Quill Award for Best Gay Fiction of the Year.



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The [Quebec Gay Archives](#) were founded in 1983 with the mandate to acquire, conserve and preserve any handwritten, printed, visual or audio material which testify to the history of the LGBTQ+ communities of Quebec. The organization's Coordinator, **Pierre Pilotte**, provides more details on the essence and importance of this organization.

Founded by **Ross Higgins** and **Jacques Prince**, the pair envisioned an organization that would document the historical contributions that the LGBTQ+ community has done, which at the time wasn't being preserved within any other provincial organizations. Today, the goals include updating their collections on all aspects of gender and sexuality, and promoting research on sexual and gender minorities as well as the recognition of their rich contributions to Quebec history.

Pilotte states, "Our proudest achievements are our collaborations with researchers and interns, who find creative ways to make our collections shine." He indicated a few projects that they have partnered with recently, including *Les AGQ au Cinéma du Parc*, an event marking the organization's 35th anniversary with an exhibit, film screening, and conference. They also worked with two well-known Quebec activists to present two documentaries, and launched an online exhibit, *Walls Have Ears*, combining queer

geography and oral history. A full list of collaborative projects can be found here.

Pilotte also shared, "In addition to collaborating with researchers, we are also proud to be recognized as a guardian of community memory. On April 18, 2018 co-founders Prince and Higgins, were invited to testify before a committee of the Canadian Senate in Ottawa. Their testimony was heard as part of a parliamentary bill to establish a procedure for expunging certain historically unjust convictions relating to consensual sexual activity between persons of the same sex in the mid/late 20th century."

He continued, "We are actively trying to process more fonds that document the most marginalized in our communities, and we would happily assist any researchers who would like to shed light on those communities as well. We encourage any LGBTQ2S+ person to visit our organization and share their knowledge and documentation with us, because every story is important."

As with most non-profit organizations, the majority of their funding comes from donors and government subsidies. Pilotte indicated that they also shattered a record amount of donations on their most recent fundraising campaign.

In closing, Pilotte states, "We are currently working on a Quebec-France exchange between queer artists, which is exciting, as it gives us an opportunity to collaborate with global LGBTQ2S+ communities and create stronger links of solidarity worldwide. We hope to continue developing international partnerships to strengthen solidarity with LGBTQ2S+ communities across the world and then shed a light on our histories."

Pierre Pilotte is the Coordinator at the Quebec Gay Archives, where he researches funding opportunities and develops promotional activities and communications strategies.



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As businesses, venues, and organizations continue to reopen, we are slowly starting to see live events return as well. We have started to once again include more live event listing as part of our Events directory in theBUZZ, and are hoping to start listing some here in PinkPlayMags again in the very new future.

Please continue to monitor government updates for the most current advice, and visit venue and business websites for the most current entertainment listings.



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I readily admit that I'm the last person to talk about Health. I haven't had a regular GP for decades. The last time I had any extended healthcare was that time I fell off my bicycle and broke my arm 20+ years ago. I'm a cigarette smoker with unhealthy eating habits whose sleep schedule is a roller coaster.

I fully acknowledge that attending to one's physical and mental health SHOULD be a priority in every adult's life. So why is my opening statement true?

Call it arrested development or burying my head in the sand, but I still subscribe to my adolescent belief in my own indestructibility. I rarely get sick... not much more than the common cold for most of my adult life.

I'll be 65 years old this year, so the topic of health has moved up in my awareness. This is the year that I finally establish an ongoing relationship with a General Practitioner. At a minimum, I'd like to establish a baseline for my physical health with a

thorough physical examination and a full panel of blood work so I know what I've got to work with.

Although I'll probably never sign up for a gym membership (did that once... paid for a year and went to the gym twice!), I do intend to get into the habit of taking long walks to keep my metabolism moving.

I'll probably never quit smoking either, but I have been successful in reducing my cigarette consumption substantially in the past year. That feels good.

Perhaps that's the biggest incentive/motivator for paying more attention to my health. There's a certain satisfaction in acting out adult behaviours and attending to one's well-being. Here's to 2022 being my personal pivot toward self-care.

Mychol Scully is Senior Art Director for INspired Media publications PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ, The Local Biz Magazine, and The Pink Pages Directory. Mychol is available for thoughtful conversation or lascivious teasing any time at mychol@mychol.com.



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Spring Horoscopes

APRIL 2022 to JUNE 2022

by Julie Antoinette

Aries (March 21 – April 20)

'Tis the season of your birth, Aries! Life is composed of a complexity of cycles. Your birthday, in conjunction with springtime, signals the passing of old energy and the inviting of the new. Notice the areas of your life that have had recent closure, and those that are about to be birthed. Infuse your highest intentions and wishes into this process for best results.

Taurus (April 21 – May 21)

If there is a need for forgiveness in any area of your life, the planets are behind you to help put this behind you. You are not advised to carry this heavy feeling into your next phase. Forgiveness is really to "give forth". Simply, it is to let go. Release yourself from this burden. Give yourself this gift.

Gemini (May 22 – June 21)

Do you remember moments in the past where you were overcome with intense laughter? That feeling of intermittent-ecstatic-loss-of-command-over-many-of-your-voluntary-functions kind of intense laughter? It's been a while since you've felt that kind of reckless abandon. Ring that funny friend or watch a comedy show, buckle up and settle in. Laughter is the best medicine.

Cancer (June 22 – July 22)

You are in the midst of adjusting to something new. Whether it be a home, a car, a new child or family member, job, relationship, something new has come to you. Be mindful that any stress you may be experiencing is merely related to an adjustment period. The planets say embrace this new appearance with all your might. You're about to level-up.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Don't be alarmed by the present change in your energy levels. Although you have always been up to any task and ready to handle any situation, lately, you've felt too exhausted to engage as you normally do. We all have energy ebbs and flows. Take a moment, slow down, rest and recharge. You'll be leagues further if you do.

Virgo (August 23 – September 23)

You're ready to re-invent yourself, Virgo. Every time you look in the mirror, something urges you to work a little more with what you have. This will give you the gentle push toward inspiration for re-invention. Start with a haircut. Consider a wardrobe renewal. Hire a consultant if you're really serious. Time to meet the new you.

Libra (September 24 – October 23)

Lately you've been drawn to romantic comedies and love stories and you don't know why. This is not your usual go-to for entertainment. Perhaps your heart is tugging at you to re-evaluate and re-address your current love and relationships sector. Ask yourself those difficult questions to arrive at your solutions for a better and more fulfilling love relationship. Life is really all about our relationships. And you, Libra, hold the balance of exchanges in your energy. Take it to higher levels.

Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

You find yourself in a situation that is difficult to bear. From whichever angle you apply your risk assessment thinking, you imagine only countless barriers and limitations and loads of unpleasant consequences. Think about how this kind of thinking serves you. Are you secretly served by your stalemated position vs. actually moving forward? Are you part of the problem or part of the solution? A little self-honesty will clarify and release you from this tempting downward spiral.

Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21)

There's only one thing that spring means to you this year and that is cleaning. You have caught a bout of the Declutter Bug. Every room, corner, container and drawer have been searched and processed and you feel incredibly lighter. But you don't feel done yet. Perhaps you could re-direct your scrubbing inward. There are many ways to cleanse and detox the body. Do some research and get cleansing!

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

There is someone in your life who preserves the nostalgia of a simpler time. You love being in the presence of this person because of the feeling they bring of being transported into another world. Think about the reasons for your attraction to this feeling. What are the qualities you are attracted to? Is your life calling you to simplify? Are you drawn back to different values? A different pace? The answer awaits your questioning.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 19)

Are you having that experience where you repeatedly see number patterns everywhere? What can this mean? One way to approach this is to be aware of your thoughts at the time of the numbers appearing. The universe has many ways of summoning our attention to self examine and recalibrate if necessary. This begins in our thoughts.

Pisces (February 20 – March 20)

You've struggled with how to manage the parts of your personality you're the least proud of. Never be ashamed of your perceived flaws or vulnerabilities. When you own them and display them as badges before others, no one can use them against you. Because now you do not hold them against you. Integrate, not separate.

Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. She seeks to relay intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes.



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