



The  
**UPDATE**

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VERMONT PWA COALITION**  
P.O. Box 11, Montpelier, VT 05601  
1-800-698-8792(VT Only) 1-802-229-5754 Fax: 1-802-223-5188  
[www.vtpwac.org](http://www.vtpwac.org) [vtpwac@sover.net](mailto:vtpwac@sover.net)

THE HOUSE OF LEMAY  
PRESENTS

**THE WINTER IS A DRAG BALL XXI**

**HOLIDAY**

A BENEFIT FOR THE VERMONT PEOPLE WITH AIDS COALITION

**SATURDAY FEB. 13, 2016 8PM-2AM**  
**HIGHER GROUND, SOUTH BURLINGTON**  
Tickets Available at [www.ticketfly.com](http://www.ticketfly.com)



# THANK YOU, JONATHAN, FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HIV+ COMMUNITY OF VERMONT!

Notice to All VTPWA consumers,

As of 11/2/16 I will no longer be our Consumer Advocate. The work I've done and the peers I've had the good fortune to know, have always been my inspiration for staying alive, and you have all provided the hope I need in life.

It is time for me to step aside and let others have the same opportunity that was afforded me since I've been here. As I get older (who would've thought THAT could've happened 30 years ago), the landscape in HIV/AIDS work is changing and my skills are not as needed, as they once were. And, I'm not sure I can "fit" into this field in my current capacity.

That being said, The Vermont People with AIDS Coalition will still provide the voice and advocacy for all of us in Vermont with HIV and Viral Hepatitis. This agency is very dear to my heart, and will remain so. But life is a process of change and re-birth. So, I am moving on to do other things, but not without taking a piece of you with me.

My apologies are to you whom I wasn't able to help in getting your needs met. I have some scars from conflicts in which we didn't succeed in getting the desired results. But they were all issues worth pursuing. And to those peers I have had to be "frank" with, please know I meant well. I have not always been perfect.

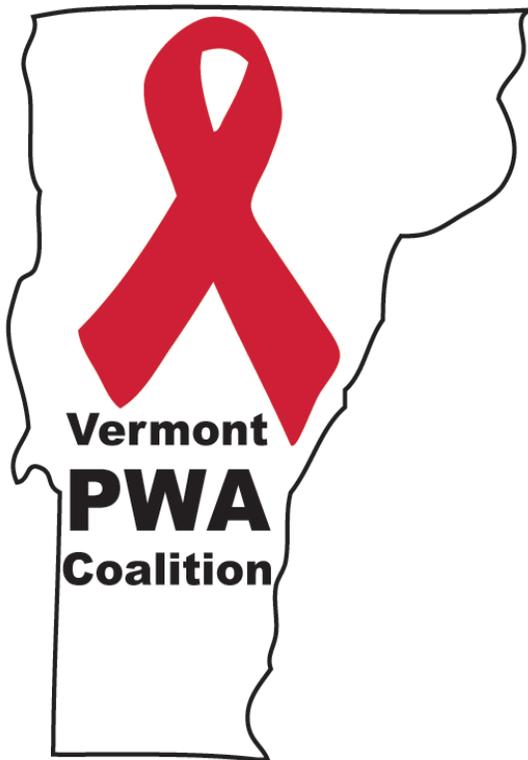
If I have helped anybody in any small way, it has been motivated, a little bit, by knowing that *all of us* benefit when one of us gets desirable outcomes.

In closing, let me assure you that all people with HIV and/or Viral Hepatitis and their families in Vermont will continue to be well served by the Vermont PWA Coalition.

It's Sincerely Has Been an Honor,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Heins", is written over the typed name below. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jonathan Heins, Consumer Advocate



The hiring process is underway to find an excellent candidate to join the Coalition as our new consumer advocate. Filling this position as soon as possible with the most qualified person we can find is a top priority right now.

In the meantime, we want to assure you that we are here to help you in any way we can even while this position is vacant. Please call the office at (802) 229-5754 or email [vtpwac@sover.net](mailto:vtpwac@sover.net) if you have any questions or needs. We will do our very best to assist you and support you in every way we can. Please note that the office hours are generally Tuesday through Thursday.

Our Annual Retreat is still scheduled for July 21-24 in Stowe. We will be mailing out applications in April in the next issue of *The Update*.

## ***THE NEW VTPWAC CONSUMER ADVOCATE COULD BE... YOU!!!***

The Vermont People with AIDS Coalition is looking for a Consumer Advocate to work 20 hours per week based in our Montpelier office serving the HIV/AIDS community throughout Vermont. Candidates must have good people skills, a valid driver's license, and reliable transportation. The ideal candidate will be energetic, self-motivated, and a team player. The position is now being expanded to include more outreach, fundraising, and work with our board of directors and executive director. Knowledge of HIV issues and Vermont HIV services is required.

People living with HIV or affected by HIV are strongly encouraged to apply, though all candidates are welcome and will be assessed equally. This position is funded by a state grant that is guaranteed through December 2016, with potential to be extended if the grant is renewed.

To apply, send a letter and resume to [vtpwac@sover.net](mailto:vtpwac@sover.net) or P.O. Box 11, Montpelier, VT, 05602.

## GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD!

*The board members of the Coalition wish everyone a Happy New Year as we dig into the planning of the 2016 Annual Retreat. Mark your calendars:  
**The retreat is July 21-24 this year.***

As many of you know, we have had several months of changes here in Montpelier. Shortly after the retreat, the board pulled together a hiring committee for the **new Executive Director**. We were thrilled to choose Amy Tatko for that position. Amy has worked tirelessly to learn the ins and outs of the position and our sometimes unusual ways of dealing with issues. Here at the Coalition we take pride in our mission of taking care of each and every one within our community.

In January we received **Jonathan Heins' resignation**. Over the years Jonathan played an important role at the retreat and did a fantastic job working with clients. He was much loved and admired by the community. We will miss him and send him off with well wishes to begin the next chapter of his life.

The board has again established a hiring committee to search for a **new Consumer Advocate**. We are now accepting resumes for this position (see the ad on page 3). Anyone interested should make yourself known. HIV+ individuals are strongly encouraged to apply, although we will consider all candidates equally.

During the fall we had a few successful fundraisers and hosted **World AIDS Day** events in Montpelier and Swanton. Most recently we were given the opportunity to run the coat checks at two **Winter Rendezvous** events in Stowe. It was great to partner with Michael Wilson again this year. Michael has generously donated two tickets for the big shows to the Coalition for the past two years. Thank you, Michael!

### **The Vermont People With AIDS Coalition 2015-2016 Board of Directors**

**Co-Chairs:** Mike Clark & Kris Daignault  
**Vice Chair:** Spencer Fenn  
**Treasurer:** David Myette  
**Secretary:** Sam Sanders

**Board Members:**

Victoria Baptiste, Concepcion Cruz, Mary Dolan,  
Chris Fletcher

*Note: Not all Board members have provided permission to be listed, or do not wish to be listed.*

**Consumer Advocate:**

TBA

**Executive Director/Program Administrator:**

Amy Tatko

**If you would like to join in our efforts, please contact Executive Director Amy Tatko for information on how to get involved or visit us at:**

[www.vtpwac.org](http://www.vtpwac.org)

**(802) 229-5754**

The **“Winter is a Drag Ball”** is coming up **on February 13**, held at Higher Ground and produced by The House of LeMay. We expect another blow-out year and ask that you, our community, come support this event. These fundraisers help the Coalition tremendously and give us more opportunities for better programming and events at the retreat.

The **Retreat Committee** has been working on the program for the 2016 retreat. With our new executive director and new board members, there is some new energy and ideas. We are brainstorming to bring in fresh new offerings while retaining what we all love about the retreat. Excitement is building as we begin to form the theme and overall experience that we want to create. Applications are expected to go out in April, and we encourage you to get them back to us in a timely manner to secure your spots.

All my best,  
Kris Daignault  
Co-Chair of the PWAC Board