



For Immediate Release
June 25, 2006

Pride Week 2006
"FEARLESS" Heroes Around the World at the Front of the
March – We March for those who can't
&
"FEARLESS" Heroes on Pride Toronto Float – A Tribute to
HomeGrown Heroes and Pioneers
Sunday June 25th 2:00pm

This year's Pride Week theme of Fearless is visibly present at the beginning and the end of the parade. In conjunction with the Canadian Grand Marshalls and Honoured Groups, the 2006 Pride Parade will also be led, for the first time, by Pride Toronto's International Grand Marshall, Bill Schriller. Along with members of our community, Bill will lead the Parade by "Marching for those who can't", by walking with a Rainbow Flag and the flags of six countries worldwide that have recently experienced state-sanctioned violence against our sister communities. Says Executive Director Fatima Amarshi, "There are many parts of the world that have yet to gain the right to celebrate our lives as LGBTTIQ2S peoples, as we can in Toronto. We are fortunate to live in a country that for the most part, recognizes us as equal citizens. What better tribute can we pay to the brave pioneers in other parts of the world who are still fighting for their basic human rights and dignity? They are truly fearless and we stand beside them, in tribute to and in support of, their fearlessness."

The parade ends with a Pride Toronto float that features the Toronto skyline and honours the fearless "Superheros" of our LGBTTIQ2S community right here at home. Says Executive Director Fatima Amarshi, "There is a whole new generation of queer people who are the beneficiaries of the brave and fearless work that the pioneers in our own community have been pursuing for so long. It is because of many of them that we can celebrate our lives, our culture, our history and our rights with the joy and jubilation you now routinely see at Toronto's Pride Parade. This is a tribute to their fearlessness, their vision and their continuing commitment to keep fighting the good fight, until each and every member of our community is recognized as and can truly live as, equal citizens of this city and this country".

Pride Toronto 65 Wellesley Street East, Suite 501
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Some of the "Heroes" Appearing on Pride Toronto Float include:

Douglas Elliot

Counsel for MCC Toronto and counsel in several landmark same-sex rights cases, including M v H and the current CPP Pension Benefits case (Hislop), as well as a number of key AIDS and Hep C class actions.

Frank Addario

Frank Addario is a leading member of the criminal law Bar in Ontario, counsel in the lesbian bathhouse case, Little Sister's Bookstore case and the Glad Day Bookshop raids and others. .

Harvey Hamburg and Paul Sabin

Harvey - lawyer/activist, founder of TAG (Toronto Area Gays) and 923-GAYS community calendar line.

Joanna Radbord

Joanna worked extensively on M. v. H., the first successful challenge to the heterosexuals-only definition of spouse before the Supreme Court of Canada. She was co-counsel for the intervener Women's Legal Education and Action Fund at the Supreme Court in the spousal support variation case Boston v. Boston. Along with Martha McCarthy, Joanna is currently counsel to the eight Ontario same-sex couples seeking the freedom to choose civil marriage.

Joanne Cohen & Lisa Wilson

Representing the pioneering interventions of the COALITION OF CANADIAN LIBERAL RABBIS FOR SAME-SEX MARRIAGE, as well as BRUCE E. WALKER LAW OFFICE, a long-time supporter of same-sex marriage rights and GLBT issues of interest in the Church/Wellesley Village.

Kevin Bourrassa & Joe Varnell

One of the first same sex couple to marry at MCC Toronto.

Marilyn Byers

Former president of *Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays* P-FLAG. In November 2005, Marilyn was instrumental in procuring a Government Grant for PFLAG Canada – York Region. This Grant of \$45,000.00 will be used for Billboard signs with the message "Being Gay or Lesbian is not a crime, Bashing is" and a support group for Lesbian & Gay Victims of crime.

Martha McCarthy

Martha was counsel for M. in M. v. H. which after eight years and a decision from the Supreme Court of Canada resulted in widespread

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amendments to include gays and lesbians as spouses in both federal and provincial legislation. In 2000, she commenced the equal marriage case Halpern, which resulted in the first decision in the country and internationally calling for immediate same-sex marriage, effective June 10, 2003

Martine Stonehouse

Representing the trans community, the bisexual community, the intersex community and the autistic community, Martine launched the landmark case with the Ontario Human Rights Commission against the Ontario Ministry of Health for the delisting of Sex Reassignment Surgery in October 1999. Joined by 3 other complainants, Martine continues to advocate for the relisting of surgery for all Trans people and is still awaiting a final decision by the tribunal. Currently, Martine continues her advocacy as the Trans representative for the Canadian and Ontario Union of Public Employees' Pink Triangle Committees and also sits on Egale Canada's Trans Issues Committee and on the Rainbow Health Network's Trans Health Lobby Group.

Michelle DuBarry

After a decade with the Great Imposters, it was onto a troupe called Les Girls, which kept DuBarry busy until she became involved with the Imperial Court of Toronto near the end of the 80's. Elected Empress VI in '92

Mike Bouzane

Founding director of Rainbow Voices of Toronto.

Mike Stark & Michael Leshner

The Michaels" were granted a marriage licence and tied the knot in a Toronto ceremony June 2003 after Ontario's highest court upheld a lower court decision to legally allow same-sex marriages.

Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo

Advocate for same-sex marriage rights, anti poverty work and faith interfaith issues Host of U of T's Radios's "Radical Reverend" show.

Rupert Raj

Rupert is one of the founders of Fact Canada, a pioneering foundation for the advancement of Canadian Transsexuals launched in 1978, as well as Metamorphosis, a support group for female to male transsexuals in Toronto in the early 1980's. From 1971 to 1990, Rupert provided peer education, counselling, support and advocacy for the transsexual/transvestite and medical /psychological communities across Canada and in the USA. In 1999, he came back as a mental health practitioner-in-training. Rupert has been working at Sherbourne Health

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Centre since November 2002 as a psychotherapist in the LGBTT Program.

Susan Gapka

Susan Gapka is completing her final year of study in Specialized Honours in Public Policy and Administration in the Department of Political Science at York University. Susan transitioned on September 28, 1999 to fulfil her lifelong dream of living as a woman while enrolled at George Brown College and working as a student placement at Councillor Olivia Chow's office at Toronto City Hall. Since then Ms. Gapka served on the City of Toronto's LGBT Issues Committee, Toronto Police Services' LGBTT Community Advisory Committee, and the Board of Egale Canada where she founded it's Trans Issues Committee. In December 2004 Susan Gapka was awarded the City's of Toronto's Pride Award in recognition for her work empowering transsexual and transgender communities.

Tim McCaskell

TIM McCaskell is a veteran of equity activism in his home city of Toronto. A writer, educator, and activist, he served in the Toronto District School Board's Equity Department as Student Programme Worker from 1983 to 2001, where he was instrumental in developing, co-ordinating, and facilitating anti-racist and equity programming for Toronto area schools and their constituents. He is a founding member of AIDS Action Now!

John Campey

John is Executive Director of the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto. Prior to his appointment, he taught immigrant children in inner-city Toronto schools for six years. He served two terms as Downtown Trustee on the Toronto Board of Education, focusing on issues of exclusion such as poverty, racism, language, and homophobia.

Michelle Douglas

After graduating from Carleton University in 1985, Douglas joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1986, and was soon promoted to the Special Investigations Unit. In 1989, however, she came under investigation and was fired because she is a lesbian.

Douglas subsequently launched a court challenge. In October, 1992, just before Douglas's legal challenge went to trial, the Canadian military abandoned its policy banning gays and lesbians.



Douglas is currently the president of the Foundation for Equal Families. Her partner is Canadian writer and activist Irshad Manji."

About Pride Toronto

Pride Toronto (www.pridetoronto.com) is the not-for-profit organization that hosts Pride Week, an annual festival held during the last week of June in downtown Toronto. Pride Week is Canada's largest celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and two-spirited people, and is one of the leading cultural events of its kind in the world.

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