

Dear Members and Friends,

The programs have kicked off with a with a bang and it's great to see so many people coming along! I cannot believe we are already in March!

We have been very busy (as always) "walking our talk": developing more community programs, lobbying, talking to services, providing advice and support to individuals, organisations and government.

We have also received some fantastic good news! From the next Financial Year, we will receive substantially more support over the following three years from the ACT Government. This means that for the first time, AGA will be in a resourced position to really grow and sustain our organisation. With this extra funding the Board has agreed to increase the staffing at AGA which will in turn increase our community engagement capacity, training & education capacity and our marketing, fundraising and administration capacity. We will also be looking at a positive community campaign, traineeships and many other exciting initiatives!

This adds to the ACT government's multi-year funding commitment to forming and maintaining an independent "Safe Schools" program in the coming three years. We really are fortunate to have such a progressive and supportive government.

Many members have asked me what is going on regarding AGA's current premises. We are currently looking for new premises to move into as AGA is outgrowing our current location. We also do need to move on as our lease is on a fairly short-term basis. I fully anticipate that we can stay in our current "little house" until we are in a position to move to somewhere suitable, however, if any members have any leads or see any possibilities for us to "live" please let me know!

Tania Phillips
Executive Director

AGA HAPPENINGS



March 2017

Busy Bees

Gosh, it's been a while since our last Happenings newsletter! That's because we've been so busy here at AGA House! While I wasn't able to make it to Christmas lunch, I hear that we had a full house and everyone had a great time.

Since then, I've been busy getting our new calendar ready to go. If you haven't seen it yet, please make sure you take a moment to have a look. We have a number of new regular, monthly groups. Adding to our line-up of Community Dinner, Youth Group and Families' Dinner, we now also have a walking group, writing group and discussion night every month. It's also great to see some members volunteering to run events, including the Girls' Night and Boys' Afternoon as well as some art workshops that will be happening during drop-in. I'm really excited about these new programs, and it has been great to hear some excitement from you too!

Late last year, and then again in February, we held an Open Day at AGA House. I wanted to mention this because it was great meetings so many new faces in our ever growing membership! We had such a mix of people who came to these Open Days, ranging from a couple of new families to new individual members. Of particular note, we also had great attendance to our information sessions for other services. This was a great thing for AGA, because we were able to give other services a quick run-down of some of the issues faced by our community and form new connections to break down some of these barriers. It's fantastic to see a growing interest in AGA's work.

As some of you may know, I have decided to go back to university this year. While that means I won't be around AGA quite as much, I will still be here for our programs and you can still contact me via email if you need me.

I hope to see you over the next couple of months at all our programs,

**Majka McLean-Engstrom – Community Engagement
Coordinator**



What's Been On at AGA

The past couple of months have seen some great programs run out of AGA House, but what I've enjoyed the most are the conversations we've had at drop-in, Community Dinners and Families' Dinners. I always enjoy hearing the stories of people in our community, and it has been great to be able to get to know you a little better. Over the past months, I've learnt about various animals (though my favourite is still the bombardier beetle), nail painting, arts and crafts, aged care and languages, to name only a few topics.

Contact Us

A Gender Agenda

67 Ebdon Street, Ainslie, ACT, 2602

PO Box 4010, Ainslie, ACT, 2602

(02) 6162 1924

support@genderrights.org.au

www.genderrights.org.au

Coming Up at AGA

The new calendar is up and running! In particular, I wanted to draw attention to our monthly discussion nights. Our first discussion was all about sexuality and the ways it can interlink with gender. It was great to see people actively engaged in the discussion facilitated by Lexxie and Rodney. In all our discussion nights, we will be working to make sure that the space is safe for everyone to participate in discussion as much or as little as they like. I hope to see you at these nights in the future. Below is a table of our other upcoming events, so take a look! If you would like to go to the Girls' Night Out, you will need to RSVP.

Date	Event
Tues 21 Mar, 2:00pm-4:00pm	Harmony Day. Meeting at the National Museum, join us for a tour to learn about multiculturalism in Australia, after the tour we'll have a cuppa at the café.
Fri 24 Mar, 5:00pm-6:30pm	Writing group. Come and join our monthly writing group. No experience required, just a willingness to learn. This group is professional facilitated by a local writer.
Sat 25 Mar, 6:00pm-9:00pm	Community Dinner. Meet up with friends as we share a meal at AGA House. Dinner provided.
Fri 31 Mar, 6:00pm-8:00pm	Girls' Night Out. Meet at Dickson Asian Noodle house for dinner with other women in our community. RSVP is required.
Sat 1 Apr, 6:30pm-10:30pm	NewCTN. Share dressing tips and ideas about gender. BYO dinner.
Tues 4 Apr, 5:30pm-7:30pm	Families' Dinner. Meet up with other parents of transgender, intersex and gender diverse people. Kids welcome. Dinner provided.

We had our first monthly walking group a couple of weeks ago: it was great to have such lovely weather. We went for a wander on Mount Ainslie, and caught some Pokemon while we were at it!

The walking group meets at AGA House at 4:00pm, leaving shortly after, on the first Friday of the month and we aim to get back to AGA House around 5:00pm.

Introducing Artemis

Tim and his partner Cloud have welcomed their baby into the world! Artemis ← was born on Thursday the 23rd of February. We would like to say a huge congratulations to Tim and Cloud: we hope you're finding time to sleep!

Ash meeting a not so native creature during our walk!

Tim and Artemis having a snuggle! →



AGA in the Wider Community

UN Youth Gender Summit

On the 8th of March, Majka spoke as part of a panel at the UN Youth ACT Gender Summit. It was great to be able to talk to over 130 young people about some of the issues that impact our community and to answer their questions.

Youth Mental Health Out Reach Program

Majka has been working with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to make their new mental health outreach service more accessible and sensitive to our community.

Women's Centre for Health Matters (WCHM): AGA met with WCHM to discuss collaboration around inclusive research on Family and Intimate Partner Violence.

ACT Department of Justice: Safety Hub Design: The ACT Government is developing an Intimate Partner and Family Violence Safety Hub. AGA attended the initial design consultation to ensure that any design was inclusive and responsive to our communities' particular needs. AGA will continue to be involved.

Karralika Drug & Alcohol Service: AGA will be working with Karralika over the next year to develop a possibly MoU to provide training, education and policy advice to the organisation. We are also discussing how Karralika might also provide support to our members.

ACT LGBTIQ Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC): AGA will be working collaboratively with the MAC on areas such as ACT Intersex policy and Trans and Gender Diverse Pathways Development for GPs.

Way Back Suicide Support Launch: Beyond Blue & Woden Community Services:

AGA attended the launch of this new service that provides intensive support to people after a suicide attempt. AGA has also been to a meeting of the stakeholder advisory committee for this service. If you would like to contact this service for support, please call: 1800 929 222

LGBTI Health Alliance Consultation: Developing an LGBTIQ Disability Strategy for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)

If you are an LGBTIQ person with a disability or the partner or carer for an LGBTIQ person with a disability, the LGBTI Health Alliance wants to hear from you! The Health Alliance is working with the NDIA to develop a LGBTIQ strategy. You can get involved by visiting the LGBTI Health Alliance website: <http://lgbtihealth.org.au/disabilitystrategy/>

MARDI GRAS FILM FESTIVAL HEADS TO CANBERRA 7-9 APRIL

Queer Screen's Mardi Gras Film Festival is excited to be returning to the capital to bring you the best of LGBTIQ* films. From **7-9 April**, we'll be screening five films at the National Film and Sound Archive.

In *Real Boy*, be invited into the world of Bennett, a teenage boy experiencing the challenges of adolescence while transitioning, and the way this impacts his relationship with his mother and friends. Check out the trailer [here](#).

Our program also includes Irish drama *A Date for Mad Mary* that will make you laugh out loud and beautiful German film *Center of My World*. Don't miss *Out of Iraq*, the incredible true story of two Iraqi soldiers who became refugees for their love, and *Political Animals* which explores the story of four pioneering lesbian politicians and their battles to enact anti-discrimination laws in the US.

Check out the full program and grab your tickets here: <http://tix.queerscreen.org.au/browse.asp?g=Program&o=Canberra>

