

## KEEPING VIGILANT

Some 40 million people worldwide are now living with the AIDS virus, according to the UN 2005 AIDS Epidemic Update – that's an increase of almost 900,000 in the past year. The theme to this year's UNAIDS campaign will be accountability.

In Montreal this week a bevy of activities will be going on to commemorate **World AIDS Day** this Dec. 1. McGill University kicks off their weeklong campaign against global AIDS with discussions and information kiosks on campus. A keynote address by **Henk Rossouw**, a South African journalist and foreign correspondent, will take place on Dec. 1 followed by a **candlelight vigil**. For more info, call 704-3802.

Also at McGill this week, the **Players' Theatre** will put on *The Laramie Project*, a play dealing with the savage 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard. The Players will be donating \$1 from every ticket sale, as well as all profits to **AIDS Community Care Montreal**. Shows run Dec. 1-3 and Dec. 9 and 10. For more info, call 398-6813.

Apparently 50 per cent of Quebec teens believe there is a cure for AIDS, and Statistics Canada indicates that the incidence of sexually transmitted infections in youths aged 15 to 19 has almost doubled in recent years. **Head & Hands**, a youth service in NDG, believes the misconceptions come from recent cutbacks to sex education in Quebec. The group has teamed up with the **Farha Foundation** to develop a sex education program. To raise awareness about sex and World AIDS Day, they'll host **SEXMAS** – an event featuring live act Chariots Of Shame and Jesus & The Headliners. SEXMAS goes down at Discothèque Cleopatra (1230 St-Laurent Blvd.) on Sunday, Dec. 4. Cost is \$8 and doors open at 8 p.m.

Non-profit group **The Little Elves Foundation**, whose primary goal is to deliver comfort and support to lone or isolated people affected by HIV/AIDS, will also be hosting fundraising events in the hopes of reaching their goal of raising \$14,000 and distributing 2,000 gifts. The gifts will be going all over Canada to those in AIDS hospice or hospice-related situations, including 500 children. Those looking to support the Little Elves can purchase mix of sweet & spicy nuts and hot cider on weekends between 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at their kiosk at Jean-Talon Market. Volunteers are also needed to wrap gifts on Dec. 10 and 11. For more info, go to [www.littleelves.org/en/index.shtml](http://www.littleelves.org/en/index.shtml).

AMY GERMAN