



# AIDS Community Resources

A Multicultural AIDS Service Agency

*Celebrating 24 Years of a Community Responding to AIDS*

SERVING CAYUGA, HERKIMER, JEFFERSON, LEWIS, MADISON, ONEIDA, ONONDAGA, OSWEGO, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTIES

March 2007



# Viewpoint

by Michael Crinnin

OK! My recent month-long sabbatical... What can I say...? A great opportunity that my closest friends continue to give me a hard time about... Jealousy can be very touching...

It was a wonderful gift - courtesy of the Community Foundation of CNY/The John Marcellus Fund. Every year they award two not-for-profit Executive Directors the opportunity for respite, rest, and research. This was my lucky year...

The overall experience is clearly structured by the Foundation. In a nutshell: Week 1, 'wind down'; Week 2, off to a retreat center somewhere in NYS; Week 3, a research week anywhere in the US; Week 4, pull your research together. All expenses are covered for week 3, and a further cash grant is awarded to cover the other 3 weeks.... Like I said, lucky guy!

My research proposal involved visiting programs in NYC that provide services to gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered/questioning (GLBTQ) youth. ACR is currently in the process of opening a center and adding services to the support groups we already provide for at risk GLBTQ youth. I wanted to learn from already existing

long established programs: saw no need to recreate the wheel and wanted the support and guidance of experts in the field.

For the record, the folks I met in NYC bent over backwards to be helpful - spontaneously generous and genuine. I was mightily impressed with the work they did, especially with the serious challenges and volume of runaway/homeless GLBTQ kids they provide services to. There wasn't one agency I visited that I wouldn't give money to - a pretty good self monitoring sign...!

I figure Community Foundation has learned a lot about the challenges and responses of those who win these awards - and accordingly tweaked the structure of the experience to its maximum effectiveness. The wisdom of the configuration only became clear to me once I was in the midst of it. Truth is I was still planning week #3 during week #1 and #2: never finding the time until I was away from the workplace... My assistant here joked with me (I think it was a joke...?) as I made yet one more 'to do' phone call during those weeks away, "And I thought I was going to have a sabbatical while you were gone!"

*Continued on page 3*

## AIDS COMMUNITY RESOURCES

is a not-for-profit, community-based organization, supported by both public and private funds, bringing information and education, direct services, referrals, and advocacy to everyone in our nine-county region who needs help with HIV/AIDS

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Executive Director

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Vice-Chairperson

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**Newsletter Editor:**  
Jean Kessner

# STARBUCKS “SNEAK PEAK”



*February 9, 2007: DJ Dianne Chase from Z93, Karl Kidder Starbucks Manager, and Steve Cardona of AIDS Community Resources enjoy the “Sneak Peak”.*

Starbucks Coffee opened its first-ever North Country cafe at 1242 Arsenal Street in Watertown with a fundraiser to benefit AIDS Community Resources. The Seattle-based coffee company has a reputation as a responsible and generous corporate citizen that supports AIDS, Arts, and Children’s Literacy. Starbucks is a long time supporter of AIDS Community Resources in the Mohawk Valley and Central New York through its employee “matching gifts” program.

## LIKE LANCE ARMSTRONG SAID “IT’S NOT ABOUT THE BIKE”.

Why ride your bike for seven days in a row? I think I get asked that question more than any other. Then it’s followed by “I couldn’t even ride my bike a mile!!!”

The Empire State AIDS Ride in August will be my eighth bicycle ride for AIDS. Various events in my life have influenced this journey towards my interest in taking these “bicycle treks”; my obligatory “parenting” role as the second oldest of ten kids (missing out on much of my adolescence), my interest in fitness, running road races, quitting smoking after a 12 year addiction...All of these events were steps toward building my confidence, self-esteem and independence. They also took me back to the heart (and joy) of who I was.

*“Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, either way you are right.”*

The Empire State AIDS Ride is something to do again and again because of the people, the relationships and the mentality - you always gain in some way: perspective, relationships, physical health, and empowerment to live strong. Not having to cook, having your every

need met (food, water, bed), and being able to escape to this simpler life – with nothing to worry about except riding and staying healthy. The ride is small in comparison to other rides I’ve done with 1,500 to 3,000 cyclists. With ESAR, you can actually know everyone’s name by the end of the week. Each year feels more and more like a homecoming.



You can do this ride; it’s a matter of what you are telling yourself. I like this quote “Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, either way you are right.” We are here to help you in any way needed; buying a new bike, upgrading an old one, fundraising ideas, changing a tire or working your way

towards fitness in small, manageable increments. If you have never ridden your bicycle for a whole day, you can do it by applying the main philosophy of any recovery program, one day at a time and one step at a time. It’s all about setting the goal and making a plan, a step-by-step plan. We’ll help! Call Carrie or myself at (315) 475-2430. Make a resolution to not procrastinate in life any more and Just Do It.

*Mary Doody, Captain  
ACR Spokes*

*Continued from page 1*

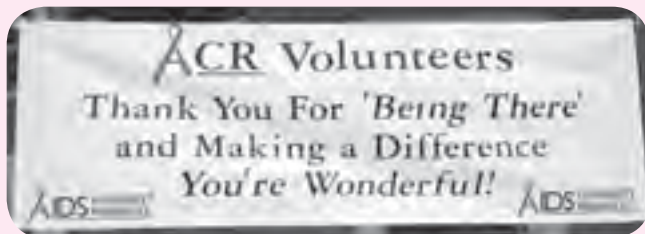
By the time week three did arrive I was finally ready to focus – loose ends of work and personal life pretty much tied up and a week at a retreat center under my belt (lot of reading, silence, long nature walks and 8 hours of sleep a night - with a nap or two thrown in for good measure).

As I began to meet with the various NYC programs it dawned on me that, 'back at the ranch', I never have the luxury to focus solely on any one aspect of our program/agency for more than a few minutes: endless interruptions, competing priorities, phones, unexpected visits, deadlines etc. "Proficiency in multi-tasking" comes with the territory and might as well be listed as the primary job qualification for any ED of a human service agency.

It was extraordinary to have 5 full days to focus on nothing but our new and growing youth initiative: its possibilities, available resources, the expanding network of support with each succeeding visit... It was a genuinely satisfying - 'the pearl' of the whole sabbatical experience – the proof of a program well thought out. Let me plug and offer high praise to the Community Foundation.

I scratch the surface here and could go on at length about the pleasure, power, and synchronicity of those weeks. For now though my goal is to acknowledge this gift and the 'after the fact' recognition of my need for it (easy to ignore) .... The Community Foundation of CNY took a chance on me and took a stand for the needs of GLBTQ youth. Lucky guy. Lucky community.

*Michael V.*



Mary Doody and the staff at ACR showed their appreciation to agency volunteers at a luncheon at Outback Steakhouse on January 30th. These unsung heroes who put mailings together month after month, make the food pantry run smoothly, perform office duties (like making copies, entering data and shredding confidential material), set up meeting rooms, assemble safe sex kits, or perform general office maintenance and repairs, are among our most treasured community resource. After being treated to a tasty buffet; they were celebrated for their service with certificates of appreciation, t-shirts and personal photos.



*Kelly and Sarah*



*Wil and Priscilla*



*Fred and Lori*

# HEART TO HEART



## Heart to ♥ Heart

The most players ever – 172 players in ten divisions – dazzled the courts in the 8th Annual Heart to Heart Tennis event the weekend of February 10th.

“This event is the biggest tournament in Central New York for adults. No tournament even comes close to the Heart to Heart in players, fun, enthusiasm, and numbers who return year after year,” said tournament director Chris Galle.

Galle’s favorite is the Novice Division, where first-time participants arrive ready to learn and have fun. Novice players do not need a pre-arranged partner - all they need to do is arrive dressed to play. Tennis-n-Gear provides racquets, balls and instruction on the court.

“Tennis is a great sport,” said Galle. “It’s competitive, the one on one, the thrill of you against me, so give me your best shot.”



*Chris Galle-Tournament Director*

Heart to Heart raised more than \$4,500. 100% of the money raised stays in Central New York. The proceeds help support AIDS Community Resources’ Teen AIDS Task Force and the Youth Safety Project in area schools.

# CNY's B



**Novice Division** front row from left: Dan Mantooth, Ross Tawil, Griffin Watson, and Shannon Fitch. Back row from left: Jerry Carter and Mary Carter, teammates; Sue Moran and Jay Caiella, finalists; instructor Steve Pekich; Tim Louer and Casey Louer, champions; Claudia Tawil and Nicolette Hamilton.



**2.5 Division:** Finalists Brian Louer and Meghan Carowski, and champions Peg Webster and Joe Dwyer.



**4.0 Division:** Champions Ken Nieva and Lesley Grants, and finalists Rae Littlewood and Jeong Oh.



**4.5 Division:** Champions Susan Murtaugh and [Name obscured]



# Biggest Tennis Event



**14 and Under Division:** Champions Jordan Niver-Johnson and Caili Nizamis.



**16 and Under Division:** Champions Tommy Hamm and Mikaelie Fletcher, and finalists Matt Kavanaugh and Danielle Connor.



**18 and Under Division** Champions Ashleigh Caruso and Mike Muraco.

**D'S M.**

*Thank you to our "sponsors"*

**HEAD**



**3.0 Division:** Finalists Bill and Mary Kay Silky, and champions Hijoung Yu and Josh Shear.



**3.5 Division:** Champions Joe Manneria and Alex Visgaitis, and finalists Brianna and Brian Pollard.



**Open Division:** Champions Kathleen and Chris Keevil, and finalists Jordy Vail and Jordy Asher.



**Open Division:** Champions Raphael Almeida and Yvonne Roth, and finalists Christine Douglas and Naveen Singh.



**Best Costume!** Catherine Corsitto (shirt designer) and her father Domenick.

# 2006 HOLIDAY ANGELS

**Our February newsletter contained an incomplete list of our Holiday Angels. This entire list of Holiday Angels is printed here with warm thanks for your support and generosity.**

Jackie Adamo  
Albany District "YAMS"  
Missionary Society  
Marcia Alcuri  
Altmar-Parish-Williamstown  
High School TATF  
Tom Angiolillo  
Auburn High School TATF  
The Balles Family  
The Beluso Family  
Pat Barber  
Jeff Barnard  
Anita Bertrand  
Beta Sigma Phi (Lambda  
Master Chapter)  
Blessed Sacrament Church  
St. Mary's Mount Carmel  
Carolyn Bourgeois  
Mary Bronner  
Bill & Donna Brown  
Sedona Brown  
Susan Brown  
Pat Campbell  
Theresa Campese  
Canton High School TATF  
Tessa Careaga, Lynn & Jim  
Fitzpatrick  
Chittenango Central School  
TATF  
Jeff Church & David  
Haggerty  
Colleen Clancy  
Clifton-Fine High School  
TATF  
Colton-Pierrepont High  
School TATF  
Becky Corbin  
Corcoran High School TATF  
Mary Cornelius & Sally  
McSween  
Rachael Davidson  
Jim & Terry Deegan  
Jessica Demaintenon  
Mary DeStefano  
Vivian Derrickson &  
Deborah Hardy  
DeSanctis/Murphy Family

Mary Doody  
Double Tree Hotel Syracuse  
Lucinda Drescher  
Mike Ducharme & Ray Kyle  
John O. Dunlap  
Edward Smith Elementary  
School Principal & Vice  
Principal  
Emmanuel Congregational  
Church  
Family of Janet Ours  
Family of Mark Mullin  
Dr. Frederick Farrar  
Susan D. Filippone  
Carolyn Fitzgerald  
Jim Fitzgerald & Jaimy  
George  
Marge Foody  
David & Sophie Friedman &  
Kathy Miller  
Clifford Ganey  
W.S. Girvin III  
Donald & Joan Gloo  
Daryl Gonchoroff  
Bryony Grealish  
Ben & Jake Greenfeld  
Galen & Michelle Haab  
Lisa Harder  
The Hartford  
Janice Harvey  
Huntington Family Centers  
Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Church  
Indian River TATF and  
Drama Club  
Jefferson Elementary School  
Jamesville-DeWitt High  
School TATF  
Jaworski Family  
Mary Ellen Kalahar  
Mark Kavouksorian  
Karen Keast  
Jo Kennedy  
Shirley & Mike Kennedy  
Jean Kessner  
Richard King  
Judy Klein

Katrina Knox  
Carrie Large  
Linda LeBlanc  
Will Lenton & Chris  
Shepherd  
Allison Lewis  
LGBTQ Youth Center @ ACR  
Barbara Lindsey  
Little Falls Central School  
TATF  
Liverpool Central School  
District - District Office  
Liverpool High School GSA  
Bill Louer & Wil Murtaugh  
Zonnia Lucas  
Beth Machan  
Marhamati Family  
Sarah McCargar  
Laurie Meyers  
Michael A. Maroun  
Elementary School  
Reading T.A.s  
Michael A. Maroun  
Elementary School Staff  
Mohawk Reformed Church  
Kelly Morehouse  
Donna Morgan  
Tracy Murphy  
Murray/Miladin Family  
Moors Myers  
Cindy Needham, Craig  
Schaub, & Elise Schaub  
Kathryn A. Nickerson  
John, Patty & Delaney Nolan  
Nottingham High School  
Leadership Class  
Pat Okoniewski  
Old Navy - Carousel  
Old Navy - DeWitt  
Ontario Credit Corp.  
Oriskany High School TATF  
Oswego Health Center  
Charles Pannaci  
PCI Paper Conversions, Inc.  
Wendell & Maryann Pfohl  
and Family  
Dale Pierce

Dana Pierce  
Ellen Pierno  
Pitcher Hill Community  
Church  
Susan Podd  
Diane Price  
Dolores M. Prue  
Michele Reaves  
Robtron, Inc.  
Elaine B. Rubenau  
The Schmidt Family  
Donna Seeber  
Paul Sexton  
Renny & Sophie Simone  
Roger & Sue Smith  
Social Security  
Administration of Oswego  
County  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
St. Mary's Church  
St. Paul's Baptist Church  
Starbucks Fayetteville  
Stewart Family  
The SU LGBT Resource  
Center Staff  
Sunmount DDSO  
Carol Sweet  
Syracuse Gay & Lesbian  
Chorus  
Jamie Tiff  
Tabitha Towles  
Unitarian Universalist  
Church  
Thea van der Ven  
Heidi Venero  
Mary Walker  
Watertown Church of the  
Nazarene  
Westhill High School TATF  
Betty Williams  
Carol & John Wolkenstorfer  
Katherine Zappala  
Zion Lutheran Church  
Senior High Class  
The Zoo Crew

# LITERACY ENHANCES HEALTH

Because the ability to read and understand instructions is imperative when it comes to treating a complex disease like HIV/AIDS, AIDS Community Resources teamed with Literacy Volunteers of Greater Syracuse to present an eye-opening treatment adherence forum: "The State of Adult Literacy and its Affect on Health" by Marsha Tait, Senior Vice President of ProLiteracy Worldwide.

Marsha Tait revealed statistics (provided by the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, NAAL) that show 11 million American adults are non-literate in English; 30 million adults have below basic literacy skills; and 63 million American adults have only basic literacy skills.

"This data is sobering," said Michael Crinnin, Executive Director of AIDS Community Resources. "Our country clearly has a terrible problem and it is not being addressed from the top."

NAAL defines health literacy as the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health literacy information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

"Poor health literacy and poor health outcomes are linked," Marsha Tait told the audience made up largely of health care providers and HIV/AIDS case managers. "Americans with poor health literacy are more likely to be hospitalized, less likely to undergo standard medical screenings, have higher rates of disease, and are more likely to use emergency rooms for routine health care."

For HIV positive individuals, health literacy includes the ability to grasp instructions on prescription drug bottles, appointment slips, medical education brochures, doctors' directions and consent forms, and

the ability to make informed decisions about complex medical care. "The ability to stay informed, to read and understand dosage instructions, is the key to successful HIV treatment adherence," said Michael Crinnin. "Strict adherence to a medication regimen is the only way to keep HIV in check."

How does a provider know for sure that a patient fully understands instructions? More factors than just the inability to read and comprehend complicate provider-patient communications. Marsha Tait told the audience that patients might be in shock when they hear a diagnosis and tune out all information that comes afterwards.



February 28th, Sheraton Syracuse University: Michael Crinnin (left) with Donna Valerino, Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Syracuse, keynote speaker Marsha L. Tait, and ProLiteracy Worldwide President Robert Wedgeworth

They may be intimidated or feel vulnerable in the presence of a well-educated professional. Tait's message for treatment adherence providers was clear: meet clients one on one in a relaxed atmosphere. Listen to their concerns, answer their questions in plain language and never assume a non-medical person understands complex instructions.

## 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy Key Findings\*

- Older Americans aged 65+ had lower health literacy scores than other demographic groups
- Adults living in poverty had lower average health literacy scores than other adults
- Adults with Medicare and Medicaid or no health insurance had the lowest average health literacy scores
- Adults who self-reported poor health had lower health literacy scores
- A higher percent of adults with Below Basic or Basic literacy skills cited radio and television as their primary source of health information

\* Source: ProLiteracy Worldwide



**AIDS Community Resources**  
A Multicultural AIDS Service Agency

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Syracuse, New York 13204

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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(800) 475-2430  
-Or-  
[info@aidscommunityresources.com](mailto:info@aidscommunityresources.com)

-Or- mail  
in the back  
page of this  
newsletter to:

AIDS Community Resources  
627 West Genesee Street  
Syracuse, NY 13204

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**April 14, 2007**

**Bowl-a-thon at Bowl Mor Lanes** to benefit the LGBTQ Youth Center @ ACR. Call 475-2430 for information or to register.

**April 29, 2007**

**9<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Hike for Life** – a 5K fundraising walk and fun run at Hamilton College. [www.AIDSwalkcny.com](http://www.AIDSwalkcny.com)

**June 3, 2007**

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk/Run** – a 5K fundraising walk, 10K run at Beaver Lake Nature Center. [www.AIDSwalkcny.com](http://www.AIDSwalkcny.com)

**August 12-18, 2007**

**Empire State AIDS Ride 5** – 560-mile bicycle ride from niagara falls to new york city. Join the acr spokes team, call Carrie at 1-800-475-2430

### **PEER/VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION**

Orientation sessions for new peers and volunteers are held twice monthly in both Syracuse and Utica. In Syracuse, call 475-2430. To sign up in Utica, call 793-0661.

### **SUPPORT GROUPS**

#### **TREATMENT ADHERENCE**

Contact Karen Anne at 475-2430, Ext. 410

#### **SYRACUSE YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS:**

**LGBTQ** (ages 13-18): Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30  
**Transgender** (ages 14-24): 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays, 5:30 – 7:00  
**Steppin' Out** (ages 19-22): Thursdays, 7:00-9:00

For location and further information: [lgbtqyouthcenter@aidscommunityresources.com](mailto:lgbtqyouthcenter@aidscommunityresources.com)

#### **UTICA YOUTH GROUP:**

**Sundays from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.**

For locations and further information, contact Mary Doody at (800-475-2430).