



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

November 2007



Viewpoint

by Michael Crinnin

Our 25th Anniversary as an agency is coming up in 2008. We will be acknowledging the milestone in various ways throughout the year. Thanks to Jean Kessner, our creative and tireless Community/Public Relations Director, we are well on our way towards planning events and developing materials, including, but not limited to, 7 new Public Service Announcements, a 25 year booklet, a calendar, breakfast symposiums, a dinner, and various regional conferences.

It is the production of a calendar I'd like to spend a few moments reflecting on. One of the staff admired this year's, Make a Wish, calendar, and made the suggestion to Jean that we might want to do something similar. Jean loved the concept and ran with it – and I do mean 'ran'! She threw herself into this project with a marathoner's discipline – heading towards the finish line with what I think is an amazing 'win'.

I take no credit. To be truthful I was neither here nor there about the idea, and I seriously wondered if we would be able to pull it off - on multiple levels. Besides the considerable cost involved, I questioned whether or not we would be able to find 12 HIV positive individuals (Jean's insistence) who would be willing to be so public with their health status. Jean was undeterred as she set out to find a representative sample of individuals living with HIV/AIDS in our Central, Northern, and Mohawk Valley Regions.

It was not a flat road – a lot of uphill dialogue, first with other staff members and then, in turn, with possible 'models' for each month. Many of those to whom Jean was introduced loved the idea but demurred from participation. This was not unexpected, but more often than not surprising to Jean, the reason had more to do with family members/loved ones than the individual living with HIV/AIDS: stigma by association. They feared for their children, parents, siblings, partners... I get this.

Over time, however, 12 people emerged who were willing to be photographed with a bit of their story going public. Jean commandeered another staff person, Paul Riccardi (our resident artist/jack of all trades), to take the photographs (born perfectionist – pictures are wonderful). Together they traveled throughout our nine county region getting to know (in what turned out to be a very intimate way), the stories and lifestyles of a dozen individuals determined to live openly with their HIV status.

Clearly, Jean and Paul could speak more eloquently than I'm able about the whole experience, but they have left me to 'report'. Paul, usually a man of few words, shared at a recent staff meeting how surprised he was to find himself drawn into the lives of those he was photographing: "I thought I'd just be snapping pictures, you know, in the background... Instead I found it was impossible not to be engaged. I was genuinely moved by the struggles and successes

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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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Newsletter Editor:
Jean Kessner

The Calendar Girl

Margaret is one of 12 HIV positive people to be featured in AIDS Community Resources' 2008 Calendar. She is the mother of six and the grandmother of eight. She was diagnosed with HIV in 1993. She writes poetry.



THEY LEFT

*Where did Dick go,
where's Sally and Jane?
They left when you called their
name.*

*Why did they leave,
why did they go so fast?
Their bodies didn't survive
the nuclear blast.*

*What bomb went off,
when did it explode?
The virus took them,
that's what I was told.*

*Are you gonna leave,
or plan on staying around?
It's widely spread
to everyone's town.*

*There's ways to prevent
it from coming your way
Practice safer methods with
whom you choose to play.*

*It's shaped like a cone
Goes around like a dome
Can't leave it at home
Have it ready when you roam.*

*Have you guessed what it is?
We forget it sometimes
But it makes your life safer
As well as mine.*

SPREAD THE WORD

*Spread the word around school
Unprotected sex just ain't cool.*

*Spread the word around the world
Everyone's boys might be
everyone's girls.*

*Spread the word around your town
Others may look very uppity,
they are the downs.*

*Spread the word and don't tell no lie
One's who's laughing heartily,
get louder when it's time to cry.*

If you would like to have a 2008 Calendar, please call 1.800.475.2430 or email us at events@aidscommunityresources.com.

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of everyone I met..." Jean was her usual effusive self – thrilled by the significance of individual with HIV sharing deeply and speaking on their own behalf: "This project has been so exciting! Local role models are emerging, and I believe their impact will be dramatic!"

We are experiencing an ever so gradual but growing trend: the 'coming out', not of people dying with AIDS, but of people living fully and unashamedly with HIV/AIDS. Always there is power when an individual speaks on their own behalf - tells their own story. This is how prejudice begins to wither and die. No one can argue with the story of my/your life. Voices can rise up against my beliefs and ideas, but they can't tell me that my story/the history of my struggles and the overcoming of them is 'wrong'. Once I hear your story you become real. No longer are you a label or a disease or a victim: you're like me, trying to do the best you can to live a meaningful life in the short time allotted to us all. So clearly do I see how we're all in this together.

So, come Dec. 1st, World AIDS Day, ACR will present, not only its first calendar in 25 years, but the stories and photos of 12 community members – their gift to the larger community, and a powerful message of hope and support to those who still live in the shadows. Hope you get a chance to see it, you won't be unaffected.

PS: I think we got a sponsor to cover production costs!



Sharing Their Love with ACR

Gina and Rob Scammell thrilled us when they made AIDS Community Resources a beneficiary at their wedding. Gina is with MAC Cosmetics, internationally known for its philanthropy in support of AIDS causes. Instead of giving wedding guests traditional favors, Gina calculated what she would have spent - \$800 – and donated it to AIDS Community Resources. Both MAC Cosmetics and Macy's matched their gift, transforming their kindness to \$2,400. Triple blessings!

Gina and Rob – October 13, 2007

Thank you for sharing our wedding day. In lieu of favors, we have made a donation in your honor, to AIDS Community Resources.

The finest gift helps others live longer and healthier lives.



Rob, Gina and Gabrielle Scammell presenting a check to Carrie Large of AIDS Community Resources' Development Department.

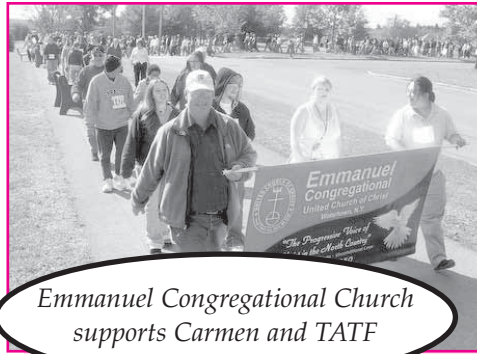
North Country "FROST"

The crowd, the weather, the fundraising – everything about the 8th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk, presented by Empower Federal Credit Union, broke records on Sunday, October 14, at the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park in Watertown. The preliminary total raised - \$38,372 - was a 65% increase over last year.

"More than 300 walkers, can you believe it! The weather was sunny and comfortable. We never expected to raise so much money!" said AIDS Community Resources' Director of Special Projects, Wil Murtaugh.

The biggest fundraiser by far was longtime AIDS Community Resources' supporter Carmen Sweet of Lowville, who teamed with 50 members of Emmanuel Congregational Church Lowville to raise \$8200. "Carmen has worked tirelessly to raise money to help youth in the North Country learn about how to stay safe from HIV," said Murtaugh.

All of the money donated in the First Frost AIDS Walk supports emergency client services and HIV/AIDS Youth Prevention programs like the Teen AIDS Task Force (TATF) in Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, and St. Lawrence counties. TATF is the only school-based HIV prevention education program in New York State. TATF works with schools and community groups to prevent infections of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in youth.



Emmanuel Congregational Church supports Carmen and TATF



The biggest team



Froggy 97 knows how to entertain



Most creative team "Wrap it up!"



The Starbucks Gang



Carmen Sweet Registering



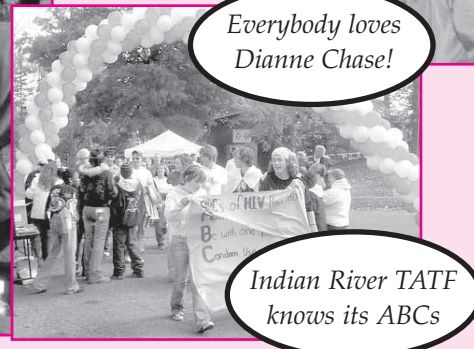
The start of the record breaking walk



Everybody loves Dianne Chase!



"What better job for a brave pirate than to try to stamp out an evil disease?"



Indian River TATF knows its ABCs

"Smashes All Records! AIDS COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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Thank You!

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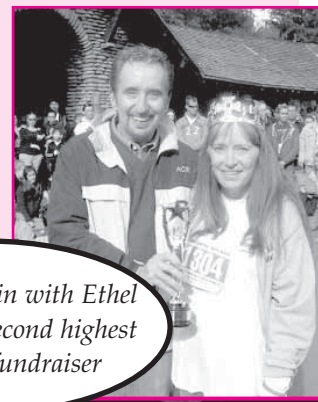
- Z93
 Froggy 97
 790 WTNY
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 WNER 1410



TATF's Cari Knight with Bob Vest who had the best poker hand



Walkers play poker for prizes. Take a card!



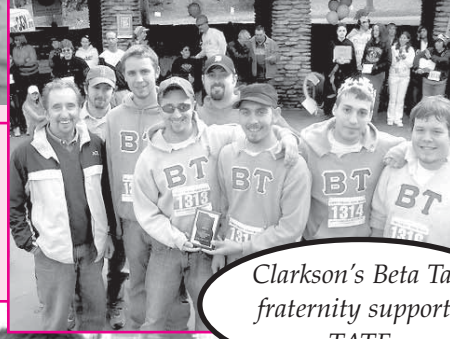
Michael Crinnin with Ethel Soukey – the second highest individual fundraiser



Hitchin' a Ride



Zoo ferret greets walkers



Clarkson's Beta Tau fraternity supports TATF



Kristie Fuller putting makeup on her student

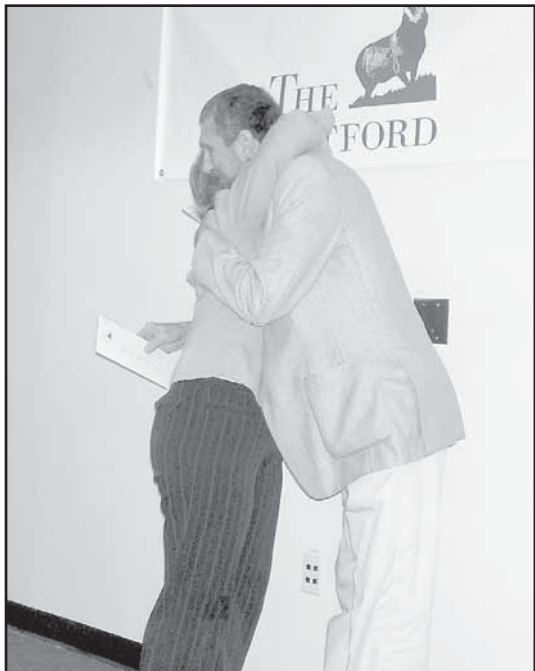


Clifton-Fine raises the most money - AGAIN!

ACR: A Good Investment

As one of the largest insurance and investment companies in the United States, The Hartford ranks #88 on the 2005 Fortune 100 list. The investment Giant ranks #1 with AIDS Community Resources, as ACR received a \$1,000 grant from Hartford Financial Services Group October 19th at its Syracuse office. ACR will use the money to promote HIV/AIDS prevention programs

“Hartford has thousands of employees and billions in investments,” said ACR Deputy Executive Director Rick Priebe. “That it recognizes quality in our prevention programs is a compliment to the fine work of our HIV prevention programs.”



Lori Fricano of Hartford Financial Services hugs Deputy Executive Director Rick Priebe after presenting a \$1,000 check to AIDS Community Resources.

The Trail Blazer

We who work with Bob Forbes at AIDS Community Resources know how much effort he puts into his job. As an HIV Prevention Specialist who works primarily with MSM (men who have sex with men), Bob is out at all hours spreading the word about safer sex. He schedules special events throughout our service area. He facilitates an ongoing support group for African American MSM. The FACES program recognized Bob's hard work by presenting him with its Trail Blazer Award “for his tireless efforts in the LGBT community.” Thank you, Bob, for your dedication and diligence.



Bob with his Trailblazer plaque.



Bob with members of his support group.

A Time to Remember

A Mohawk Valley good time... a good cause

The 8th annual 'A Time to Remember,' a cocktail reception benefiting AIDS Community Resources, held September 19th, 2007 at Fountain Elms Terrace at Munson-Williams-Proctor-Arts Institute in Utica, was lavish and fun, with a jazz trio, excellent hors d'oeuvres, and a silent art auction. The cause it supports is deadly serious.

"AIDS is one of the most depressing issues in our lifetime," said Stephen Merren of Nexstar Broadcasting and honorary chair of 'A Time to Remember.' "This is a disease that knows no social or economic boundaries and young adults today need to be informed before they become sexually active so they understand the risks before they have unprotected sex."

Over the years, many Mohawk Valley community leaders have served on the 'A Time to Remember' committee. This year, Stephen Merren was joined by Johanna Albrecht, Jim Brock, Mary Gearhart, Wayne Helser, John Leech, Patrick O'Connor and Christine DeSanctis.

Stephen Merren has long been involved in public service in the Mohawk Valley. "Once I became aware of the significant work AIDS Community Resources does in the Mohawk Valley for both prevention and treatment of AIDS," he said "I felt there needed to be a broader recognition of the work this organization does. We are working to utilize our over the air stations and internet to help get the ACR story out there."



Proud grandmother Johanna Albrecht (left) with her grandson Harrison Angelini (front), winner of a free dinner



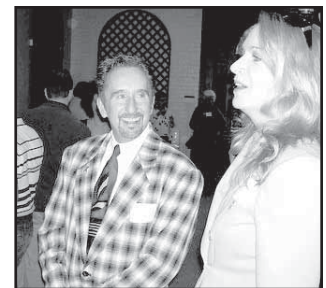
Peter and Jeri Cayan



Utica Mayor Tim Julian with John Brown



Stephen and Judy Merren with Father John Rose



Michael with Karen Teachout of United Way

In the 26 years since the first AIDS cases were discovered, 172,377 New Yorkers have been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and more than 100,000 of them have died. AIDS is preventable and AIDS Community Resources is the leading authority in the Mohawk Valley for AIDS prevention education. "A Time to Remember" underwrites AIDS Community Resources' youth HIV prevention and education programs.



ACR offers its services to anyone without discrimination based on age, race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, political affiliation, marital status, handicapped status, or mode of transmission.



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ACR NEWSLETTER, CONTACT US AT:**

800.475.2430	Or: mail in the back page of this newsletter to:	AIDS Community Resources 627 West Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13204
Or: information@aidscommunityresources.com		

UPCOMING EVENTS

November-December 2007

Holiday Angel Collections

Call 1.800.475.2430 to sponsor.

December 1, 2007

World AIDS Day 6:15 p.m. vigil at St. Mary

Mt. Carmel Church in Utica.

Call 793-0661 for more information.

February 7, 2008

Black HIV Awareness Day

February 8-10, 2008

Heart to Heart Tennis Tournament

Call 1.800.475.2430 to register your team.

February 27, 2008

25 Years Breakfast Dr. Marjorie Hill, Speaker.

Call 1.800.475.2430 for more information.

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

SYRACUSE YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS:

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

For location and further information: 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.

TREATMENT ADHERENCE GROUPS:

Alternate Tuesdays in Utica; Alternate Wednesdays in Syracuse
800.475.2430