



25Years
AIDS Community Resources

Viewpoint By Michael Crinnin
 Executive Director



I like reading an actual newspaper and will probably never default to ‘net news’. I especially like settling in on vacation with a daily dose of the New York Times or The Boston Globe – always diverse with topics and areas covered – as well as with views. For the life of me, I can’t figure out why more people don’t appreciate the value of newsprint: a lap-top is not all that easy to handle in the bathroom...

Whatever, I do daily receive the New York Times on–line and, on my better days, scan the headlines pulling up what seems as if it might be pertinent. It’s not all that unusual for there to be some kind of AIDS-related article, and I often learn from within its pages of new research and/or statistics well before the Health Department notifies us... (Can you spell ‘bureaucracy’?). One day last week proved to be no exception, as I caught sight of the headline, “Trial For Vaccine against HIV Is Canceled”. I opened up the article.

The news was not good as I began to read, “Plans for a large human trial of a promising government-developed H.I.V. vaccine in the United States were cancelled Thursday because a top federal official said scientists realized that they did not know enough about how H.I.V. vaccines and the immune system interact”. The article went on about the setback of what had seemed so promising... It further reminded the reader that **24 years ago**, “...government health officials promised a marketed vaccine by 1987...” Twenty-one years past deadline, and counting...

I learned a long time ago not to underestimate this virus. With a planet of researchers working to prevent and cure this disease, HIV continues its

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Serving
 Cayuga,
 Herkimer,
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 Madison,
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 Onondaga,
 Oswego,
 St. Lawrence
 Counties

The state keeps cutting, but we have a job to do. On page 3, see how Central New York keeps investing in ACR!



AIDS COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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

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Q Center Murals... Communicating by Design

by Jessica Piper

Two murals adorn the walls of AIDS Community Resources' Q Center. The Sarah-designed original mural with its 'reach for the stars' message and Harvey Milk quote*, is joined by "All Equal under the Sun" - a new design from Brennen that depicts human struggle toward light and understanding.

A generous grant of \$1,200 from the Cultural Resources Council allowed Brennen's design to become a reality. When asked to describe the new mural, Q Center Director Elizabeth Payne said "I see hope." Dr. Payne said the mural reflects the ideal of all people moving together toward peace, harmony and social justice.

Kate Woodle, resident artist at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, led workshops, guided designers and painters. Thank you Kate!

Mark Wright of the Cultural Resources Council and Georgia Popoff with Partners for Arts Education, selected the final design. The project "...serves as a reminder...for all the young people who attend the Q Center that they are valuable and vital," said Popoff.

**"All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential." Harvey Milk*

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Newsletter Editor
Jean Kessner



"All Equal under the Sun" in progress, with supervision by Kate Woodle (center)

Brennen, the designer

Mark Wright, Kate Woodle and Georgia Popoff



Central New York over the **TOP** in 16th Annual AIDS Walk/Run support

In the 10 weeks since the AIDS Walk/Run at Beaver Lake Nature Center, contributions have continued to come to AIDS Community Resources (ACR). Funds raised now total a record shattering \$201,362.

"Undoubtedly, the news that the state is cutting AIDS funding for the first time ever brought the crisis home for a lot of people," said Wil Murtaugh, ACR's Director of Development.

Local fundraising helps make up for state and federal cuts. Unfortunately, ACR plans to expand youth HIV prevention and education programs that keep young people safe from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases are still on hold. "Instead of expanding as we hoped, we're maintaining services during this time of increased costs and government cuts," said Murtaugh.

Proceeds from the AIDS Walk/Run support the Teen AIDS Task Force program and the Q Center.

AIDS Community Resources wants to thank our sponsors for their invaluable assistance in presenting the AIDS Walk/Run: Empower Federal Credit Union, Data Key Communications, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Time Warner Cable, Panera Bread, National Grid, Wal-Mart, Constellation Energy, Gilead Sciences, Inc., Ikon, Kinney Drugs Foundation, Mountain Goat, Sam's Syracuse Home, Tibotec, Great Brewers and Outback Steakhouse in Clay.



July 19, 2008:

Development Director Wil Murtaugh announces the astounding \$201,362 fundraising total at the \$500 Club Party at Outback Steakhouse in Clay.

AIDS Walk/Run by the numbers:

Participants - up 33%

Money raised - up 29%

81 people raised \$500 or more

16 year total - \$1,307,412

Continued from page 1

steady march infecting and mutating and hiding and defying the best efforts directed against its destruction... To quote one more line from the article: "Scientists say that developing a vaccine against H.I.V. is one of the most difficult scientific endeavors in history because of the uncanny nature of the virus". Uncanny, indeed.

Despite the articles and campaigns and PSAs I'm not sure how to explain the general belief that has taken hold over the last few years, that HIV/AIDS is under control, other than, 'Out of sight out of mind'. Truth is, very few people disclose their HIV positive status and, while people continue to die, very few people die in the disfiguring ways of the past. Paradoxically, a disease that was once often seen but rarely talked about is now often comfortably talked about and rarely seen... Few want the very real hassles that come with identifying themselves as living with HIV/AIDS, and I don't blame them. Such 'invisibility' however doesn't help in curbing rising infection rates in this country.

So, I for one am grateful, in this case to the New York Times, for keeping AIDS – both globally and nationally as a regular part of its reporting beat. As I head out for vacation tomorrow, I look forward to my newsprint company, no matter what room I'm reading in...

Hope you're enjoying summer! Keep safe and keep informed...

STITCHING MEMORIES

Central New Yorkers create panels for AIDS Quilt

The tradition began in 1987 at the height of the epidemic, when the AIDS virus was claiming lives by the hundreds. Social stigma and medical fears often made the last days of those suffering lonely, painful and filled with dread. To draw attention to the tragedy, to comfort the living, to leave a lasting memorial for a life lost, lovers and friends started the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.

By 1993, Carol Warren brought the now national movement to Syracuse when, as a volunteer for AIDS Community Resources, she met others who had worked on the AIDS Quilt and wanted to make a local quilt panel. Over time she grew to prefer the stitching and camaraderie of the sewing sessions more than the office work she did at ACR. Now, every Monday evening for two hours, Carol volunteers for the AIDS cause by quilting its history in the basement of First Lutheran Church alongside co-quilters Michael Casler and James Otts.

Carol's team designs and stitches a 3 x 6 feet panel in memory of one who died of AIDS. Sometimes all they have to work with is the name of the person. "We find out about what kinds of things the person liked and then we weave that into the layout," said Warren. The Syracuse panels are designed almost exclusively by Michael Casler. "All you have to do is give Michael a small idea and he comes up with a wonderful design," said Warren.



Carol Warren at her sewing machine



James Otts specializes in hand stitching

Over the years Warren and a variety of volunteers have created 500 panels. Presently they are working on a 12 x 12 foot panel in honor of musicians. Liberace is there with a pink satin cape edged with fur. Sylvester is the star of a disco panel. James Otts of Syracuse, who earns his living as a waiter, lets his college degree in fashion come out and play while he works on the quilt. "I love to sew. I love to volunteer for the AIDS cause. This is very personal for me," Otts said.

Michael uses the "strange stuff" that people donate or find at garage sales to spark his muse. Carol never throws anything out because she never knows what Michael's going to come up with by design and sometimes by accident: the band of lace across the top of a panel with the disco theme? "That covers a glitter mistake," Casler said.



Michael Casler pauses mid-design



Liberace's satin cape



The complete AIDS Quilt exhibited for the last time in Washington, D.C. in 1996.

Casler enjoys the work but cares most about the quilt's opportunity to educate. "Youth today seem to think AIDS is like diabetes – you can take medicine and live a normal life. Well, we make a lot of panels. People who have AIDS die all the time." Michael thinks that the attitude of families has changed over time. "Families used to design things, be very involved. Now they are just as likely to deny that AIDS is a problem. There are no outward signs of this killer disease. The obituaries say people died of cancer or a heart attack, and no one knows." Except the quilters.

Now billed as the largest community arts project in the world, the national AIDS quilt has more than 91,000 names. As large as it is – it stretches more than 52 miles when panels are laid end to end – it still represents just 17.5% of all the AIDS deaths in the United States.

“ Youth today seem to think AIDS is like diabetes – you can take medicine and live a normal life. Well, we make a lot of panels. People who have AIDS die all the time. ”

In the North Country... TATF works with Binky Patrol

Binky Patrol is an organization that donates hand made blankets and afghans to those in need. All blankets go to children under the age of 18 who have experienced a traumatic or debilitating event. St. Lawrence County's 100 chapter members volunteer their time to create attractive blankets that are meant to be a physical source of comfort in a time when it is desperately needed. St. Lawrence County's Chapter has donated in the past to CAVA, Renewal House, Public Health, SLC Foster Care and victims of fire or illness.

The blankets received by Canton's TATF Chapter will be donated to the children of those living with HIV locally, and used to facilitate a learning experience between the TATF members and people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. For more information about TATF please contact 386.4493.



Canton, July 30, 2008: Canton TATF Chapter president Kate Brand accepted 40 blankets and 20 baby hats from Coleen Rose from the St. Lawrence County Chapter of Binky Patrol. Ms. Rose has been involved with Binky Patrol for 11 years and says they always need more members willing to donate their time and talents as well as donations of yarn and quilting supplies.

Weekend Warriors in the **FIGHT AGAINST HIV**

July 12, 2008, Ward Baking Park, Syracuse Westside:

HIV Prevention specialists from AIDS Community Resources offer HIV prevention supplies and testing at a summer health fair.

Key facts about HIV and Hispanics in 2006 from the Centers for Disease Control:

Hispanic/Latino males accounted for 18% of all males living with HIV/AIDS.

Hispanic/Latina females accounted for 15% of all females living with HIV/AIDS.

Hispanic/Latino children accounted for 19% of the 6,703 children who were living with HIV/AIDS and for whom diagnosis was made before they were 13 years of age. Injection drug use, STDs, poverty, and cultural beliefs are some of the HIV prevention challenges facing the Hispanic/Latino community.



In Central New York... two of ACR's best honored as COMMUNITY LEADERS

HIV Prevention Specialists Joanne Jimenez and Luz Carrasquillo will be featured in a display honoring Latino Leaders during October at Mundy Branch Library at 1204 Geddes Street in Syracuse. The two were recently awarded "Women's Leadership Development Certificates" from Community Advocates for Family Empowerment.

Joanne Jimenez was born in Jersey City, New Jersey and grew up in Syracuse where she graduated from Henninger High School. She went to college at Bryant & Stratton in Syracuse and Webster College in Florida where she made the Dean's list for a 4.0 GPA. She studied Administration and is a certified Medical Assistant. She is fully trained in HIV Counseling and Testing. "I feel that it is important for the Latino Community to learn more about HIV/AIDS because the rate of newly infected Latinos is rising. I would like to be part of the important effort to educate Latinos on the prevention methods of contracting HIV/AIDS and to stop the stigma associated with this deadly disease so more people get tested to see if they are infected. Only then will they stop spreading HIV.

"Our culture is beautiful. We have strong family ties and anyone that is introduced to the family is part of that family. Latinos are always there to help anyone at need. The language, music and food and the strong family ties make the Latino culture a model for all others."



Luz Maria Carrasquillo was born in Brooklyn, New York, and grew up in Syracuse. She graduated from Fowler High School and received her Medical Assistant certification from Bryant & Stratton College. She was awarded the "Women's Leadership Development Certificate" in July 2008 from Community Advocates for Family Empowerment. She has a ten-year-old daughter and 5-year-old twin boys. "My passion has always been to educate as much as possible on all kind of diseases that affect us Latinos. HIV/AIDS does not discriminate and the numbers are increasing in the Latino community.

"To be safe from diseases like HIV/AIDS, Latinas/Latinos need to break the habit of the same cycles repeating from their upbringing into their households such as sexual abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, alcohol and drugs. Unstable situations will lead to risky behavior in ourselves and our children of the future. Let's break those cycles. The most important piece of advice I would give to members of my community is that there is always a rainbow after the storm."



October is
Hispanic/
Latino
Heritage
Month

Latino Direction in CNY
OVERVIEW

Artist Statement: By Alejandro Betancourt

The Mundy Branch Library show is a documentary about today's Latino community in Syracuse, New York. It was created to show people the community that Latinos have created here and how it is a part of the history of this city. It features young Latinos who aspire to become like the leaders who have created the community here and work in it everyday.



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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Or mail in the back of this newsletter to:
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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 19, 2008
9th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk – a 5K fundraising walk at Thompson Park Zoo in Watertown. www.aidswalkcny.com

October 30, 2008
ACR 25th Anniversary event, 6:00 p.m. at Lake Shore Country Club. 1.800.475.2430

November - December, 2008
Holiday Angel Collections Call 1.800.475.2430 to sponsor

December 1, 2008
World AIDS Day

February 6 – 8, 2009
Heart to Heart Tennis Tournament
Call 1.800.475.2430 to register your team

February 7, 2009
Black HIV Awareness Day

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 p.m.
 TRANSGENDER [ages 14-24]: Wednesdays, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
 STEPPIN' OUT [ages 19-22]: Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
 For location and further information: qcenter@aidcommunityresources.com

UTICA YOUTH GROUP:
 Sundays from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
 For locations and further information, contact Mary Doody at 800.475.2430 or glbtqyouth@aidcommunityresources.com

TREATMENT ADHERENCE GROUPS:
 Alternate Tuesdays in Utica
 Alternate Wednesdays in Syracuse
 800.475.2430 for information