

the Aliveness

Serving Our HIV/AIDS Community Since 1985

May/June 2008

Vol. 18, Issue 2

Spring Fever!

DINING OUT FOR LIFE —

Last month's Dining Out for Life was a fabulous success! A heart-felt **THANK YOU** goes to our 133 participating restaurants, 15 sponsors, over 300 ambassadors and event volunteers, and the thousands of diners who showed their support! This year, our goal is \$115,000 (14% of our annual budget!), so check our website for an update of the total amount raised.

HIV CASES INCREASE IN MN —

Last month, the Minnesota Department of Health reported an increase of new cases of HIV/AIDS in our state. Last year, 325 new cases of HIV infection were reported. This reflects a steady increase over the past few years and is the highest number reported since the mid-1990s.

KARE 11 meteorologist Sven Sundgaard thanks diners at Cupcake in Minneapolis ▼



The number of new cases among young men (aged 13 to 24) has doubled since 2001. Generally speaking, a new person tests HIV-positive every 27 hours in Minnesota, and there are 5,950 individuals aware of their HIV status. (For additional information about these statistics, see page 4 of this newsletter.)

Last year, one in four Minnesotans living with HIV/AIDS used Aliveness Project services, and we served 9% more people than the previous year. Last year, 240 new members were referred to us by HIV testing sites, clinics and other programs—representing 74% of new cases.

To me, all of this attests to the need for a place like The Aliveness Project. This is the only community center in the upper Midwest for people living with HIV/AIDS. Newly-diagnosed individuals come here and meet members like themselves who live with this disease in positive ways.

I am grateful that The Aliveness Project is a place where "community" is not just a concept, but a day-to-day reality for both the newly-diagnosed and our long-time members!

ANNUAL MEETING —

The Annual Meeting for The Aliveness Project is scheduled for Thursday, May 29 at 6:30 p.m. At this meeting, we will

volunteer spotlight

Hooray for the many amazing Aliveness Project volunteers who braved the cold on March 6 to enjoy our Volunteer Recognition Movie Night hosted at The Heights Theatre in Columbia Heights!



Volunteer Recognition Movie Night
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elect new members of the Membership Advisory Committee and Board of Directors. In addition, I will present our 2007 annual report.

Joe Larson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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In Living Memory

Damon N. <i>departed this life</i> February 7, 2008	Kirk D. <i>departed this life</i> March 9, 2008	Curtis H. <i>departed this life</i> March 15, 2008	Lisa H. <i>departed this life</i> March 21, 2008	Joshua H. <i>departed this life</i> April 2, 2008
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▲ On April 16 the Open World Russian Delegation, a group of Russian health care providers, visited The Aliveness Project. Olga and Elena (above) helped in the kitchen by chopping vegetables for lunch.

2008 Annual Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 29 at 6:30 PM
 The Aliveness Project,
 upper-level room

The Aliveness Project is run by our members and for our members. This meeting will include the following:

- Joe Larson, Executive Director, will present the 2007 Annual Report.
- Nomination and election of Aliveness members to the Membership Advisory Committee (MAC).
- Nomination and election of candidates to the Board of Directors. (Positions are open to members and non-members.)

The Aliveness Project is for *all of us*, so if you can, please show up and let us know what's on your mind.

The mission of The Aliveness Project is to encourage self-empowerment and provide direct services to individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

The Aliveline

is published bimonthly by The Aliveness Project

Submissions should be sent to:

The Aliveline

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 Minneapolis, MN 55407

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 www.aliveness.org

The Aliveline is a bi-monthly publication of The Aliveness Project, Inc. The Aliveness Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, founded in 1985 as a membership organization for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. This newsletter may report on experimental and other therapies; however, The Aliveness Project does not recommend any particular therapy. Please consult with your medical provider before trying any new treatment. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributing authors and are not necessarily those of The Aliveness Project.

Back in the Saddle

Terry Sainio is "back in saddle" for his fourth Red Ribbon Ride! Long-time members of Team Aliveness, Terry and his wife, Bonnie, have been participating in the Ride since 2004. Terry rides and Bonnie is a member of the crew. These two define dynamic duo! Interesting fact: Terry's nickname is "Wolf" because he has based much of his riding technique on the fact that wolves, while on the hunt, can run for five to seven days without stopping at speeds up to 35 miles per hour. Pretty inspiring stuff!

Here are some more insights from Team Aliveness' own Wolf-man:

Q: How many years have you been doing the Ride?

A: This will be my fourth.

Q: Why do you do it?

A: I've biked all my life. Biking has always been spiritual for me, and it was a way I could give back to The Aliveness Project, plus I love to help people train.

Q: What kind of bike are you riding?

A: 20" BMX racer that's been customized for fast downhill riding and also long distance riding. I've clocked 47 miles per hour coming down Ramsey Hill in St. Paul; the wind was just right that day.

Q: What segment of the Ride do you enjoy most?

A: The beginning of Day Two, coming out of Lake City. There's some really great downhills that follow the river.

Q: What advice would you give new riders?

A: My all-around best advice is not to look too far ahead--it's not how many miles you can do, it's the amount of time you put in on the saddle. Try to bike every day, starting now.

Q: What's your favorite memory from all of your Red Ribbon Rides?

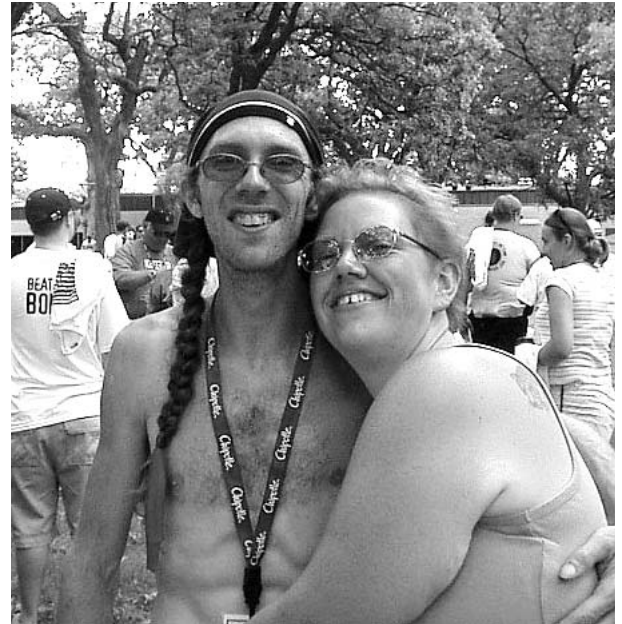
A: That's a tough one. There are so many. Closing ceremony last year was really memorable, but in general, just watching other people come in--people you've helped train--seeing the triumph in their faces. I know the power and emotion of that moment, so that's the most rewarding part.

Q: What one thing can you not live without on the Ride?

A: My bike.

Q: Besides your bike?

A: My wife, Bonnie. Without her, I would never have made it.



Terry and Bonnie Sainio are having an All-you-can-eat Spaghetti Lunch and Silent Auction on May 31, 2008 from 11am to 2pm at St. Paul United Church of Christ, 900 Summit Avenue, St. Paul. All profits benefit the Red Ribbon Ride, and are tax deductible. Tickets are available at the door or in advance by calling Bonnie Sainio at 651-285-4661.

Ride FAQ:

www.redribbonride.org

Ride or Crew for Team Aliveness

Captain Sean Divine
612-822-7946, ext. 210
kitchen@aliveness.org

The sixth annual Red Ribbon Ride will take place July 17-20, 2008. The Red Ribbon Ride is a four-day, nearly 300-mile bike ride through southern Minnesota that benefits seven Minnesota-based AIDS service organizations, including The Aliveness Project.

Last year, 300 riders participated, including nine from Team Aliveness. If you are interested in riding or crewing on **TEAM ALIVENESS** in 2008, please contact captain Sean Divine at 612-822-7946 ext. 210 or kitchen@aliveness.org.



Red Ribbon Ride Dance & Fundraiser

June 6

9pm-Close

Innuendo Night Club, 213 E. 4th Street, St. Paul

Meet Red Ribbon riders, party, and dance!

Contact the Red Ribbon Ride office at 612-822-2110 for more information.



HIV Epidemic in Minnesota

2007 SUMMARY REPORT

In 2007, 325 new cases of HIV infection were reported in Minnesota. This continues a slow, yet steady, growth of newly reported HIV infections. This number of newly reported cases within one year has not been seen since the MID-1990s. Absent comprehensive HIV education for all Minnesotans on an ongoing basis, this is to be expected as more individuals in Minnesota live longer and healthier lives with HIV due to medical advances. Absent a vaccine, Minnesota will continue to see rising infection rates.

UNREPORTED INFECTIONS. Experts estimate approximately 2,500 Minnesotans are believed to be living with HIV disease but do not know they are infected.

ONE NEW INFECTION REPORTED NEARLY EVERY DAY. A new case of HIV disease is reported in Minnesota every 27 hours.

STEADILY INCREASING NUMBER LIVING WITH HIV DISEASE. As of December 31, 2007, 5,950 people are known to be living with HIV disease in Minnesota. This represents nearly 30% more individuals living with HIV in 2007 than in 2002. It is an increase of 81% since 1997, the year in which HAART (highly active anti-retroviral therapies) were introduced that dramatically lowered the death rate.

CUMULATIVE CASES. To date, 8,504 cases of HIV disease have been reported in Minnesota since 1982. Of those, 2,912, or 34% of these people have died.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION. In 2007, 38% of the newly reported cases of HIV resided in Minneapolis, 13% in Saint Paul, 37% in Twin Cities' suburbs, and 12% in Greater Minnesota. There has been a steady increase in reported Twin Cities' suburban cases over the past five years.

IMPACT OF INJECTING DRUG USE. Minnesota continues to see great success in preventing new infections linked to injecting drug use. Only 16 (5% of total) new cases diagnosed last year indicated injecting drug use as the only risk factor.

MINNESOTA GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN STILL LARGEST GROUP IMPACTED BY HIV. 77% of Minnesota's living cases of HIV are male. Of that total, 72% have contracted this virus solely through male-to-male sex or through male-to-male sex and injecting drug use (dual risk). Of male cases reported in 2007, 63% were similarly infected.

DISTURBING INCREASE IN YOUNG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN. There has been a steady increase in new cases occurring within the population of young gay and bisexual men (under the age of 24) since 2001. Of newly reported cases of HIV in 2007, 15% occurred in young men ages 13 – 24. In 2005 – 2007, virtually all of these cases (98%) are estimated to have male-to-male sex as their risk. Of the 18 newly reported male cases of any age who report male-to-male sex and injecting drug use as a risk factor, 5 (28%) are under the age of 24. This may be due to the continuing problem of injecting meth. use within this community.

GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN OF COLOR CASES DISPROPORTIONATE.

Looking at 2005 – 2007, 96% of newly diagnosed Caucasian men, 76% of African American men and 90% of newly diagnosed Latino men reported male-to-male sex (including male-to-male sex and injecting drug use) as a risk factor.

BIRTHRATE TO HIV+ WOMEN INCREASING. While the number of infants born to mothers who have tested HIV-positive continues to increase rapidly, the rate of transmission of HIV to the infants remains at 1%. Many women only learn through prenatal screening that they are HIV+. In 2007 14% of women newly-diagnosed learned their status due to these tests.

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND AFRICAN BORN. 22% of new cases (71) of adult and adolescent HIV disease in

Minnesota are among African Americans, who represent just over 4% of the State's population. The increase is in male cases, largely amongst African American men who report male-to-male sex as a risk factor. New cases of HIV in the African-born community saw an increase in 2007 (48 cases in '07 vs. 36 cases in '06.) However, the overall number of new cases has been quite stable over the past seven years.

HISPANIC CASES REMAIN LEVEL.

During 2007 the number of new cases reported within the Hispanic community remained relatively level to 2006, which was a record high.

NEW INFECTIONS AMONG WOMEN OF COLOR STILL DISPROPORTIONATE.

74% of new HIV cases among females occurred in women of color. This concerning trend has continued for a number of years. Of that group, 32% of these women are African born and an additional 23% are African American. 10% are Latina and 7% Native American.

PREVALENCE DATA INDICATE A "GRAYING EPIDEMIC" OF THOSE LIVING WITH HIV.

As the number of Minnesotans continues to grow due to declining death rates resulting from improved medications, the number of HIV+ individuals over the age of 50 is increasing rapidly. Of the 5,950 reported to be living with HIV 45% are over the age of 45. This compares to only 31% in this age range just five years ago (2002). These data point to a need to understand the impact this has on medical treatment, prevention and support services.

Data from the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota AIDS Project, April 2008.

The Aliveness Project is the only community center for individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota. Each year, one in four Minnesotans living with HIV/AIDS use our services.

The Aliveness Project
730 East 38th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-824-LIFE www.aliveness.org



Volunteer Recognition Movie Night

On March 6 the Heights Theatre in Columbia Heights provided the perfect setting for an evening of fun and celebration for Aliveness Project volunteers.

The Aliveness Project screened the Christopher Guest film *Best in Show* and toasted volunteers with awards for such tongue-in-cheek categories as "Most Nimble Fingers on a Keyboard", "Best at Avoiding Paper Cuts", and "Best Supporting Volunteer with Healing Hands".

Look for "Movie Night" to become an annual tradition. Our collective thanks go out to the over 1,000 volunteers who contributed over 30,000 hours of service to The Aliveness Project in 2007! Bravo!



We are so lucky to live in a country of such abundant food supply, and yet every day many people go to bed hungry. The Aliveness Project's food shelf helps so many individuals and their families meet their nutritional needs. Many times, our members have to choose between paying for utilities and food; or they have to choose between paying for rent or a mortgage and food; or even sometimes they have to choose between paying for medical bills and food. The two full bags of food that each member can receive each month helps extend their budget.

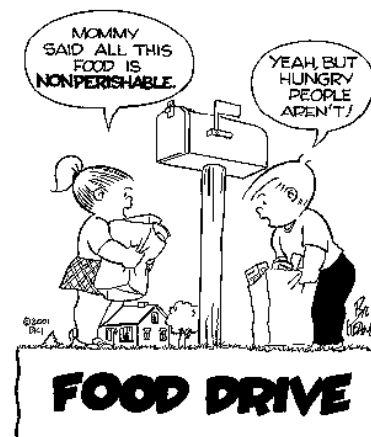
We are always needing to re-stock the shelves and keep our inventory full enough to meet this need. Here is where you can help! Several times a year we have food drives at The Wedge in south Minneapolis. The Wedge allows us to set up a food donation table at their front entrance and ask people to donate food and give them a suggested shopping list. But it can not be done without you!

Your willingness to donate just a few hours of your time helping with the drive will bring in thousands of pounds of food to our shelves. The food that is donated from The Wedge is very healthy and very often organic and full of the important nutrients that are needed to keep immune systems healthy.

Food Shelf Feeds the Need

We want you to help by accepting the bags of food that people give to us after they are done shopping, and to thank them. It is as simple as that, and you will be doing two things: Satisfying the need for our members to get the nutrition they need to stay healthy, and getting that feeling of satisfaction that only helping with this food drive can bring.

Call Monica at 612-822-7946, ext. 206 if you want to help with our next food drive! Information can also be found at www.aliveness.org. It is fun and easy way to make a difference!



© Bill Keane, Family Circus

Dining Out for Life 2008



**15 Sponsors
133 Restaurants
300+ Volunteers**



Thanks, Donors!

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* Denotes **Friends of Aliveness Program** donors, who pledge monthly



THANKS

**to everyone who made financial
& in-kind gifts between
February 16 & April 22**

Congratulations

Kaylee Unverzagt, reigning Miss Minnesota and 2008 Dining Out for Life celebrity, placed in the top 15 at the Miss USA pageant on April 11 in Las Vegas. Congratulations, Kaylee!

BINGO

The Charitable Gaming Program (License #04988) now offers Bingo at The Minneapolis Eagle Thursdays, 8 PM to MIDNIGHT including potential prizes up to \$1,000!

May/June 2008

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La Belle Vie Lounge
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Lone Spur Grill & Bar
Mairin's Table
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Mavericks Real Roast Beef
May Day Café

Maynard's Restaurant
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Solera
Spill The Wine

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Trattoria da Vinci
Trotter's Café
Victor's 1959 Café
View Restaurant & Lounge
Vina Restaurant
W.A. Frost
Woolley's
Y'All Come Back Saloon
Yum!



THANKS to these fine restaurants for participating in Dining Out For Life 2008!