

ACLA Update November 1996

AIDS Coalition of Lewiston-Auburn
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In commemoration of the ninth annual observance of **World AIDS Day**, the AIDS Coalition of Lewiston-Auburn is sponsoring a candlelight vigil and procession on Sunday, December 1. The vigil will include several speakers who are dealing with the AIDS epidemic from different perspectives, including:

- Nancy Bullett of ACLA
- Ray Gagnon of Positively Alive!
- Johanna Nichols of the First Universalist Church

Entertainment will also be provided by local singer/songwriter Glenn Torrico.

The vigil will begin at 7pm at the Kennedy Park Gazebo and will be followed by a candlelight procession to St. Peter's school cafeteria where there will be a reception. ACLA will provide candles and red ribbons, but feel free to bring your own.



Nutritious Home-Made Food in Your Own Home!

We are starting a new food program called **The Freezer**. Churches are preparing frozen meals which will be stored at ACLA and made available to people with HIV/AIDS. Why don't you find out if *your* church is involved?



IS AIDS A GAY DISEASE?

The October 1996 Update elicited several responses expressing some very strong sentiments regarding **our work within the gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities of Androscoggin County**. Several people are concerned that the AIDS Coalition of Lewiston-Auburn focuses too much of its attention in these communities.

Our prevention programs target individuals who are at highest risk for HIV. The ACLA staff tailors programs to their needs. Because gay communities in the United States, and in Maine, have been and continue to be the most affected by the AIDS epidemic, reducing the number of infections within this community is very important.



ACLA's prevention and education programs take into account the fact that we cannot use the same message for all groups. After all, what is effective for gay men is not necessarily going to make the same impression on women or high school students. Our prevention education in the gay communities includes the traditional information sessions and distribution of literature and condoms, but also includes community building within gay communities. Some of the community building work includes sponsoring social events and workshops for gay and bisexual men. **Because community building creates social and support networks, individuals are more likely to take care of each other and themselves.** The willingness of local gay communities to address the AIDS epidemic and to work with ACLA has made the prevention education programs more effective.

We are currently working with other groups of people who, traditionally, have not considered themselves at risk for HIV infection. We are developing and extending our prevention programs to women, youth, young adults and the homeless. As different individuals and communities recognize that they are at risk, their input and feedback allow ACLA to design more effective prevention programs. However, reaching some segments of the population requires much groundwork due to the fact that they are unwilling to recognize that they are at risk for HIV.

The staff at ACLA believes in the work we perform for the greater Lewiston-Auburn area. More often than not, we receive positive feedback and praise for our work. As a result, we have faith that the community is also committed to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS by promoting social justice, correcting myths and misinformation about HIV/AIDS, and de-stigmatizing this disease.

My address has changed to:

Please take my name off ACLA's mailing list:

Please add this name to ACLA's mailing list:

☐ Enclosed please find my gift of \$_____ to further the work of the AIDS Coalition.

☐ Please send me a volunteer application:

Name _____
Address _____

Coming Soon

Great Sexpectations is a monthly social group for gay and bisexual men of all ages. Great Sexpectations supports local gay communities, promotes gay positive values in a homophobic/heterosexist society, and celebrates gay culture.



Beginning in January 1997, **Great Sexpectations** will launch a video series screening videos about the culture and the diversity of gay and bisexual men from the 1950s through the 1990s. **You'll laugh, you'll cry—there's something for everyone.**

A schedule of films and locations will be announced soon. Call Sean for more information.

Local Support

Go shop at **Bull Moose Music** this month. They are raffling off **OVER 100 CD'S** and the raffle proceeds go to us. Drawing will be December 1. Bull Moose is in the Lewiston Mall (the one with Sears and Ames).



Thanks to **Home Vision Video** on Center Street in Auburn for making ACLA the October recipient of "Home Vision Youth Charities" proceeds. Patronize the businesses that support us!

MSM Advisory Committee

will meet November 21, December 19, and January 16.

All meetings are from 6:30 to 8pm and take place at the ACLA office.

Case Management

The Portland-based AIDS Project will continue to provide case management services to people with HIV/AIDS in the Androscoggin and Oxford communities through September 30, 1997. **Our hope is that beginning in October 1997, local case management services will be provided by the AIDS Coalition of Lewiston-Auburn.** ACLA has been endorsed by The AIDS Project to do so, and we are working together for a smooth transition.

The ACLA office will be closed to the public from December 24-January 1. The office will reopen January 2.



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Sylvia