

Newsline

THE
**AIDS
PROJECT**



A Publication of The AIDS Project ■ 615 Congress Street ■ P.O. Box 5305 ■ Portland, ME 04101 Spring Edition

Art Auction Proves "Oscar of Maine's Charity Auctions"

Susan Tremblay, Development Office

The Tenth Annual *Spring for Life* Art Auction, TAP's most important fundraising effort of the year, was an overwhelming success. Indeed, *Spring for Life* has evolved as the "Oscar of Maine's charity auctions," per Maine Sunday Telegram columnist Natalie Brenner. More than 800 art enthusiasts and artists enjoyed a festive evening of elegant food, magnificent art work, and very spirited bidding, and nearly \$70,000 was raised to support TAP's critical work.

"It was a very special evening of support for TAP and people infected and affected by the AIDS pandemic," said Larry Bliss, Auction Chair. From the abundant food at the artists' reception to the use of large video screens to enlarge and enhance the images of art during the live auction...from the revitalized silent auction to the calendar project, where auction patrons were encouraged to select by ballot eleven pieces, along with the signature piece by Connie Hayes, to be featured in a 1997 *Spring for Life* calendar...from the one-of-a-kind, artist-created t-shirts which were sold by raffle and the live auction, to the decision to limit the number of pieces in the live auction (110 pieces versus 160 in years past) for the purposes of maintaining momentum and audience attention...a grand time was had by all!

This exciting auction, the largest and most successful in the state, could not happen without the
(continued on page 4 - ART)

Diligent Search for New Executive Director at TAP Going Well

JoAnne Peterson, Co-chair, Search Committee

By its very nature, a search for the best qualified person for an organization's most important position is daunting. It requires an understanding of the organization's operating needs, its vision for its future, its responsibility toward the community which supports its work, and the essential role of education at The AIDS Project if we are to win the struggle against this life-altering disease. We must have funds to support our work and, most importantly, we can never lose sight of our reason for being...to be of service to the men, women, and children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

In late fall, your seven-member search committee was formed with Steve Schuit and JoAnne Peterson as co-chairs. We welcomed board members Mike Martin, Michael Quint, and Pat Pinto, and staff members Susan Tremblay from the Development Office and Chris Monahan from Client Support Services.

We labored long and diligently and in March presented the staff and board with our unanimous recommendations. Then fate intervened. The selected candidate could not join us.

To be presented with this second challenge was a real disappointment to the committee, the board, and the staff. However, the committee is back at work. Our goal is to complete our task by the end of June. We are confident, with your help, we will succeed

(continued on page 4 - SEARCH)

Acting Executive Director

Paul C. Draper

Board of Directors

Leo J. LaPlante, CPA, President
Patricia M. Pinto, Vice President
Celeste R. Gosselin, Treasurer
Joel C. Martin, Esq., Secretary

Paul Albert
Charles Dwyer
Jerrold C. Edelberg, Ph.D.
Mark Loring
Judi Mansing
Michael Martin
Karla B. McGowan
Frances W. Peabody
Joanne Peterson
Michael W. Quint
Anne M. Romano
The Hon. Michael Saxl
Stephen Schuit
Alan B. Stearns, Esq.
Christopher Warner
Roberta M. Wright
Charles N. Wynott

Advisory Board

Bettsanne Holmes, Chair

Josiah K. Adams
Peter C. Barnard
Joan B. Burns
Sarah V. Campbell
Peter L. Chandler
Madeleine G. Corson
Maria P. Damarel
Josiah H. Drummond, Jr.
Alice Gemmer
Pamela W. Gleichman
Sandra Goolden
Jonathan W. Karol, D.O.
Robin D. Lambert
Pamela Knowles Lawrason, Esq.
George M. Lord
Mallory K. Marshall
Mary Jean Mork
Gwendolyn C. O'Guin, D.O.
Lois Reckett
Victoria A. Rochefort
Lynn E. Shaffer
Elizabeth O. Shorr
John H. Siegle, M.D.
Cynthia Sortwell, M.D.
Seth Sprague
James F. Tomney
Virginia W. Truesdale
Margaret Wiles
Jean T. Wilkinson
Margo Wintersteen
Roger F. Woodman
Francis R. Zilkha

What's It All About

Paul Draper

Acting Executive Director

It's not about condoms in schools. It's not about life-styles. It's not about "them" and "us". It's not about "If only X wouldn't do Y, then we wouldn't have to worry about Z..."

It's not about bottom lines, profit margins, political agendas or any of the other noises we make to excuse ourselves from having to confront HIV/AIDS and the behaviors which lead to its transmission and its ravaging results.

It's about a virus transmitted more or less easily according to the decisions we make about sexual behavior and the use of drugs and alcohol.

"It" is HIV/AIDS.

I came to work for The AIDS Project a little over two years ago. I believed I was a relatively open-minded, well informed individual. I thought I was ready for this work. Years in educational institutions had led me to believe I had seen a lot of life. The mix of teaching and school administration had lulled me into thinking I had pretty good insights about people and their plights.

All wrong.

My background had provided lots of experience. But it had not provided for a world which would blow apart stereotypes and expose me to the pain and inhuman treatment imposed on those living with HIV/AIDS by other people and institutions in our community. It had not prepared me for the political and power agendas which would be promoted in the name of AIDS, but which were really about personal fiefdoms.

This is not an indictment. Rather, it is a reflection of where we are approximately eleven years after we in Maine started dealing with HIV/AIDS as a health menace here, not someplace else. It is a reality check. All of us are living with HIV/AIDS. It's just that not all of us are infected. The quality of the care and prevention work we do does not show altruism above all. Like all human endeavor, it is affected by state and federal budgets, individual generosity, personal agendas, religious beliefs, political campaigns, and who is speaking to whom on any given day.

The fact of the virus remains. Ninety percent of those infected are or were in the work force. The fastest growing segments of the population being infected are women, children, and people of color. We expect that HIV/AIDS will be the second leading killer of women of all ages - ahead of cancer - by the year 2000. Finally, there is a 50/50 chance that the next wave of the epidemic will be the "heterosexual" pandemic spread by substrain E. This variation is common throughout Africa and Asia already, and we have begun to see it in the United States and Canada.

So that's what "It" is all about. It's about a disease that is theoretically 100% preventable, but which is spreading because when we educate, we aren't allowed to discuss and demonstrate condoms. The young people we educate know the facts, but they don't know how to negotiate personal issues, so they have unsafe sex. Others impair their judgment with alcohol and make unsafe decisions.

And still others say, "It's their problem, not mine."

In the end, "It" is all our problem; we all live with it. If we face HIV squarely and honestly, we can beat it back. If we use some agenda as an excuse for not dealing with HIV honestly, directly, and boldly in each of our own lives, our families, our businesses, and our communities, it will beat us back. ■

The *Newsline* is a publication of The AIDS Project, 615 Congress St., P.O. Box 5305, Portland, ME 04101, Telephone (207) 774-6877.

To share your comments or suggestions you may write or call The AIDS Project. The AIDS Project provides support services to people living with HIV/AIDS and prevention education in Cumberland, York, Oxford and Androscoggin counties. We actively work to promote diversity and nondiscrimination in particular to women, minorities, people with disabilities, people with HIV, and various sexual orientations. Finally, we embrace the diversity of community.



Layout and Design
by
Bald Man Publishing
© 1996

Prevention Education Update

John Holverson

Director of HIV Prevention Education

schools
Prevention education programs at The AIDS Project are mostly supported by grants for services from the State of Maine Office on STD/HIV which is part of the Bureau of Health in the Department of Health and Human Services. These grants, which are renewed annually, provide ongoing financial support for staff positions and programs in Community Education, Street Outreach, Counseling & Testing, the AIDS Information Hotline, Outreach to the Community of Color, Outreach to Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM) in Cumberland and York Counties, and seasonal MSM outreach on Ogunquit Beach.

Historically, TAP has maintained prevention programs in Community Education (not including public schools because of funding rules), Street Outreach, Counseling & Testing, and the Hotline. In recent years, because of long overdue shifts in funding priorities, newer grants now support ongoing prevention education with MSM and, as of 1996, Outreach in the Community of Color.

This expanded mix of prevention education programs better reflects the populations most affected by the HIV epidemic. In addition, this variety of programs forms the foundation for prevention education activities at TAP which increasingly reflect a behavioral change model. This model has four parts: the environment which forms us and in which decisions are made, information known, skills in place, and attitudes and beliefs which filter incoming information.

As prevention education moves beyond the information-only approach, each of these elements is being addressed by specific interventions which empower clients to make healthier self-care decisions. This deeper work is rooted in the examination of the psycho-social factors which determine how information is processed and integrated into behavior.

The prevention education department is working to deepen and to strengthen the programs it offers in the hope that behaviors which place our communities at risk can and will shift into healthier choices. Working together, this goal is possible.■

Support Services Update

Carol LeBlanc, LCSW

TAP Director of Support Services

Greetings! My name is Carol. I've recently joined TAP as the Director of Support Services. As you may know, the previous Director, Jane O'Rourke, left for the best of personal reasons - to join her fiancé in Rhode Island.

I hope to work closely with both staff and clients to assist in our continuing growth from a grass roots movement to a comprehensive social services agency. I am proud to be part of this important effort.

I'm looking forward to developing a more collaborative communication within the HIV/AIDS community and anticipate meeting the agency's friends around the office and at various functions.■

The AIDS Project

615 Congress Street

(Alternate Entrance: 142 High Street)

P.O. Box 5305

Portland, Maine 04101

Phone: 774-6877

Fax: 879-0761

AIDS Hotline: 775-1267 or 1-800-851-2437

E-mail: aidsproj@neis.net

Oxford/Androscoggin County Office

One Auburn Center

P.O. Box 14L

Auburn, ME 04210

Phone: 783-4301

Fax: 795-4084

York County Office

Suite 8

208 Lafayette Center

Kennebunk, ME 04043

Phone: 985-8199

Fax: 985-8199

Staff:

Steve Addario - Cumberland County Case Manager
Simon Bogan - Community of Color Outreach Worker
Diana Carrigan - Androscoggin/Oxford County Coordinator
Sequoia Dance - Street Outreach Worker
Paul Draper - Acting Executive Director/Director of Development
Douglas Eaton - Hotline/Counseling & Testing Coordinator
Tamara Harvey - Administrative Assistant
John Holverson - Director of HIV Prevention Education
Michael Kirk - Accounting Assistant
Paul Lavin - HAVEN Project Coordinator/Housing Coordinator
Randy May - Mental Health/Substance Abuse Case Manager
Chris Monahan - Cumberland County Case Manager
Carol LeBlanc - Director of Support Services
Getty Payson - York County Case Manager
Victor Rash - Community Educator
Steve Reeve - Staff Accountant
Jill Tacy - Administrative Assistant/Volunteers
Susan Tremblay - Associate Director of Development/Fundraising

(ART - continued from Page 1)

generous gifts of so many artists, collectors of art, volunteers, and businesses. To those who made *Spring for Life* possible, heartfelt thanks! Extra special thanks to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maine and Holiday Inn By The Bay.

If you were not able to attend the auction and would like to receive a copy of the '96 auction catalogue, please do not hesitate to call or write and we will happily oblige. Orders are still being taken for the maiden *Spring for Life* calendar, which will be available this fall. The '97 calendar will feature one work from each of the following twelve artists: Thomas Connolly, Sara Gray, Connie Hayes, Eric Hopkins, Sarah Knock, Michael Lewis, Sarah Elizabeth Look, Thomas Marino, Robert Eric Moore, Timothy Parks, Robert Shetterly, and Marnie Souza.

And mark your calendars now for *Spring for Life* '97, slated for Saturday, March 15, 1997 at the Holiday Inn By The Bay.

More details to follow! ■

**Cover art (upper right corner)
© David Cedrone**

(SEARCH - Continued from page 1)

a second time.

Please call the TAP office (774-6877) with your suggestions for resources which the committee may have overlooked. Tamara Harvey will forward your suggestions, or we can return your call. We will also welcome humorous stories appropriate to this situation! We will keep you informed. Thank you for your messages of support during the past few weeks. ■

Volunteers Needed

If you have some free time and are interested in helping us with anything from providing clients with transportation for doctor appointments to stuffing envelopes to answering the phone at our front desk, then please call Jill Tacy, Administrative Assistant at TAP, at (207) 774-6877.



**The AIDS Project
615 Congress Street
P.O. Box 5305
Portland, ME 04101**

Address Correction Requested

NON-PROFIT
ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit #1