

The Aids Project Newsletter

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or
775-1267

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EDITORIAL

This month's editorial is reprinted with permission from the Gay Mens Health Crisis (GMHC) of New York.

PROFILE: LESTER ABRAMS,
PWA TELEPHONE-SUPPORT TEAM
by Nona Cleland

Once a month a unique group of volunteers meets around a big table at a restaurant on West 23rd Street to eat a GMHC-sponsored dinner and to discuss their work. This group is special, according to Les Abrams, the staff member who heads it, partly because no other group in the world performs the service it does. All 15 or so members of the Persons With AIDS Phone Support Team are GMHC clients -- persons with AIDS themselves -- who actively reach out to other GMHC clients on a one-to-one basis.

"That's the beauty of the thing," says Abrams. "It's people with AIDS calling other people with AIDS." They offer the support and understanding that only another person with AIDS can give.

"They can say, 'I've been there,' or 'Yes, that sort of thing happened to me, and here's how I handled it,'" he says.

There's a great deal of satisfaction in work because you're constantly helping people, Abrams notes. "You take someone who is frightened, who is apprehensive, and you offer reassurance."

The calls go out to about 20% of GMHCs clients, frequently the homebound, those who lack care partners, or others who have requested it during intake interviews. New clients who have had interviews but who have not yet been assigned buddies or crisis intervention workers are also frequently targeted for calls. And in that interval between diagnosis and the start of services, support can be especially welcome.

Volunteers train for the PWA phone team by listening in as more experienced team members make calls. The calls generally begin simply, with volunteers asking clients how they're doing.

If the person called is doing well, the volunteer may describe upcoming social events or offer free theater tickets available through GMHC. If the person has a problem, the volunteer is often able to give direction to a source for the help needed.

In one recent call, a volunteer learned that a client qualified for food stamps, but because of swollen feet, couldn't get to the office to apply for them.

"I translated that into, 'Can someone from the Financial Office get down to the food stamp office on his behalf?'" says Abrams, who reviews volunteer notes on phone calls to see if any further help is needed. In this case, it was arranged that someone from the Financial Office would represent the client at the food stamp office.

PWA Phone-Support Team calls may also result in a client being connected with a GMHC buddy or crisis intervention worker. Referrals are also made to outside agencies who can offer help.

Lately, drug therapies have been a popular topic of the phone conversations. Team members keep up-to-date by discussing and exchanging information on new treatments among themselves to be sure they can answer client questions.

The Phone Team emphasizes politeness and sensitivity. Callers learn when to ask if they have called at a bad time and to find a better time to call back. They learn how to be sensitive to the person who doesn't want to talk at all, says Abrams, and how to disengage if the call isn't going well. Of course, following standard GMHC confidentiality procedure, the calling organization is not identified until the caller is sure that the client is on the line.

Clients appreciate the calls. "By the end of the conversation, they've usually thanked you for the call and for letting them know we're still there for them," says Abrams. Sometimes calls are so successful they recruit new members for the Phone Team.

But it's not clear whether it's the called or the caller who gets the most out of the program, says Abrams.

"It's a valuable service to offer to the clients," he says. But the volunteers get the satisfaction of providing that useful and constructive service.

It's not so much the volunteers' feedback that lets him know they are benefitting. It is that they keep showing up for their shifts, says Abrams. Some even come in after working full-time jobs.

"Any volunteer who comes in in the evening is dedicated," he says. "But a volunteer who is a client, who has AIDS, who manages to get through a full day's work and still comes in here and makes phone calls must really be getting something out of it or he wouldn't be doing it."

Abrams himself says "I love the bunch of people I'm working with. They're quick and cooperative. They're here because they want to be here, because they want to contribute. That sets a tone. It's a very friendly cooperative place."

In fact, the warm atmosphere and the pleasure of hanging out with other members of the team is part of the draw of being a volunteer, admits Abrams. "It's always a party back there," he says of the Phone Team.

Abrams was also a volunteer before joining the GMHC staff. He surprised himself by accepting the job, he says. A retired New York State Department of Labor official, he had vowed he "would never work again." But he had only been retired two weeks before, moved by the deaths of friends from AIDS, he found himself working 3 and 4 full days a week at GMHC. Finally he decided to formalize his relationship and accept his present job. Now he says "it certainly beats playing golf in Florida for the rest of my life." He adds that after heading an unemployment insurance office for 10 years, being able to offer services is a nice change from "having my face pounded about something someone didn't get."

There are, of course, aspects of his job which he finds difficult. "How do you deal with it?" he asks rhetorically. "Young people ought not to die. On the phone you offer an expression of sympathy. There's a lot of hugging around here. There's a lot of crying around here. Then you pick up and go on because there are a lot of people who need services."

MEDICAL UPDATE

Reprinted with permission from the Gay Mens Health Crisis (GMHC) of New York.

DEXTRAN SULFATE

by Paul Corser and N. Patrick Hennessey, M.D.

Dextran Sodium Sulfate, used in Japan for nearly 30 years as an anticoagulant (blood thinning agent) and for treatment in arteriosclerosis, is now being studied in the U.S. and Canada as an antiviral agent against HIV. The drug has shown substantial activity against HIV in the laboratory by several researchers. Dextran Sulfate is thought to work by altering the composition of the envelope which surrounds the virus, rendering it unable to infect body cells.

Dextran Sulfate is taken by mouth at a dose of 2.7 to 3.0 grams per day. One study has shown that the combination of Dextran Sulfate with AZT may enhance the activity of both drugs. It is thought that

Dextran Sulfate does not cross the blood brain barrier, a necessary property for an antiviral drug, but this potential problem could be circumvented by combination with another antiviral drug, such as AZT, which does cross the blood-brain barrier.

Side effects of this drug are few. At the doses listed there is not significant thinning of the blood, though anyone taking the drug would be monitored closely for any sign of this anticoagulant effect. Some patients in preliminary trials have reported a decreased appetite while taking the drug.

Preliminary trials with this drug are now underway at several centers in the U.S., Canada and Japan. Larger trials are planned for several centers in the U.S.

in the near future. These trials are not expected to be placebo-controlled. Polydex Pharmaceuticals has applied for the Canadian patent on Dextran Sulfate and hopes to gain approval for distributing the drug on a compassionate clearance basis within the next several months. The drug is currently available in Japan without a prescription.

Dextran Sulfate appears to hold promise, either primarily or adjunctively, as an antiviral agent against HIV. Anyone considering the use of Dextran Sulfate, as with any other drug, should consult with their physician about its use and the need for close monitoring while

VITAMINS	WHY IT'S NEEDED	WHERE IT'S FOUND
A (Retinol)	Necessary to new cell growth. Helps fight infection. Essential for healthy skin, good blood, strong bones and teeth, kidneys, bladder, lungs, and membranes. Seems to help delay senility and extend longevity.	Fish liver oils, dairy products, carrots, cantaloupe, peaches, squash, tomatoes, and all green and yellow fruits, vegetables.
B-1 (Thiamine)	Necessary for proper metabolism of sugar and starch to provide energy. Maintains a healthy nervous system and mental attitude. Stress increases the need for B-1 and all B-6 vitamins.	Brewer's yeast, wheat germ, blackstrap molasses, bran, whole brown rice, meats, and soybeans.
B-2 (Riboflavin)	Important to good muscle tone. Involved in metabolism of protein, fats, and carbohydrates. Necessary for excellent vision, skin, nails, and hair.	Brewer's yeast and organ meats, such as liver, tongue.
B-3 (Niacin)	A B-vitamin. Involved in proper activity of the nervous system. Needed for healthy skin and digestive system.	Lean meats, poultry, fish, peanuts, Brewer's yeast, wheat germ, and dessicated liver.
B-5 (Pantothenic Acid)	Another B-vitamin. Helps form certain hormones and antibodies. Aids resistance to stress. Plays an essential role in energy, metabolism. Needed for maintenance of healthy digestive tract, skin, nerves, and glands.	Organ meats, Brewer's yeast, egg yolk, whole grain cereal.
B-6 (Pyridoxine)	Essential for utilization of proteins and fats. Needed for production of red blood cells and antibodies which fight disease. Helps in normal function of nervous system.	Meats, whole grain products, Brewer's yeast, bananas, green leafy vegetables, wheat germ, and pecans.
B-12 (Cyanocobalamin)	Powerful blood building factor. Key nutrient for new growth. Important factor in maintaining health of nervous system, including brain cells.	Liver, kidney, muscle meats, fish, and dairy products.
B-Complex	B-complex is all the B-vitamins together. Important for normal functioning of nervous system. Acts to provide energy. Keeps the digestive system working.	Brewer's yeast, liver or whole grain cereal.
Biotin	Performs several functions in metabolism of fats and production of energy. Helps synthesize amino and fatty acids and form RNA and DNA.	Brewer's yeast, liver, kidney, unpolished rice, soy flour, soybeans, egg yolk.
C (Ascorbic Acid, Calcium Ascorbate)	Vital to collagen formation. Fights toxic effects of smoke and pollution. Helps in healing, in production of red blood cells, preventing hemorrhaging, in fighting bacterial infections, and regulating cholesterol.	Fresh fruits (especially citrus), vegetables, and green peppers.

VITAMINS	WHY IT'S NEEDED	WHERE IT'S FOUND
Choline	Aids in nerve transmission and utilization of fat. Helps prevent fat deposits in liver and and degenerative changes in kidneys and bladder.	Lecithin, egg yolk, liver, Brewer's yeast, and wheat germ.
D (Calciferol)	Necessary to calcium and phosphorous utilization. Promotes strong bones and teeth, prevents rickets, works to maintain good health and vitality. Protects against muscle weakness. Helps regulate the heart (through calcium absorption).	Egg yolk, fish, fish liver oil.
E (Tocopherol)	An antioxidant that prevents premature reaction of oxygen in the body, prevents breakdown of many substances in the body. Essential to the use of oxygen by muscles. Prolongs life of red blood cells. Protects lungs, inhibits blood clots from forming.	Most vegetable oils, wheat germ, soybean oil, safflower oil, all seeds, eggs, leafy vegetables, beef liver, meat, milk, nuts (raw), molasses, peanuts, legumes (soybeans, peas, beans), unrefined cereal products.
Folic Acid	This B-vitamin helps synthesize nucleoproteins such as RNA and DNA. Necessary for red blood cell production, growth, and reproduction.	Brewer's yeast, liver, and green leafy vegetables.
Inositol	Involved in the metabolism of fats. Aids in brain cell nutrition. Vital for hair growth.	Unprocessed whole grains, citrus fruits, Brewer's yeast, and liver.
PABA	Part of the B-complex. Aids in the utilization of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. Necessary for formation of blood cells (especially red). Vital for hair pigmentation.	Liver, yeast, wheat germ, and molasses.
P (Bioflavonoids, Rutin, Hesperidin)	Part of the C-complex. Helps protect strength of vitamin C and believed to work with vitamin C.	Buckwheat and fruits, such as lemons, grapes, plums, grapefruit, and cherries.

HUGGING IS HEALTHY: IT HELPS THE BODY'S IMMUNITY SYSTEM, IT KEEPS YOU HEALTHIER, IT CURES DEPRESSION, IT REDUCES STRESS, IT INDUCES SLEEP, IT'S INVIGORATING, IT'S REJUVENATING, IT HAS NO UNPLEASANT SIDE EFFECTS, AND HUGGING IS NOTHING LESS THAN A MIRACLE DRUG.

HUGGING IS ALL NATURAL: IT IS ORGANIC, NATURALLY SWEET, NO PESTICIDES, NO PRESERVATIVES, NO ARTIFICIAL INGREDIENTS AND 100 PERCENT WHOLESOME.



MINERALS	WHY IT'S NEEDED	WHERE IT'S FOUND
Calcium	Builds strong bones and teeth. It helps to calm nerves and aids in insomnia. Helps in normalizing blood clotting and is essential for rhythmic heart action.	Milk and milk products such as yogurt and cheese. Whole grains and unrefined cereals, green vegetables, and bone meal with Vitamin D.
Chromium	Helps in carbohydrate utilization involved in metabolism of glucose (for energy) and the synthesis of fatty acids and cholesterol.	Unsaturated fats (such as corn oil), meats, clams Brewer's yeast, liver and whole grain cereal.
Copper	Assists in the formation of hemoglobin and red blood cells. Necessary for proper bone formation and production of RNA.	Liver, whole grain products, almonds, green leafy vegetables, and most seafoods.
Iron	Necessary for production of hemoglobin, builds up blood quality, and increases resistance to stress and disease.	Liver, lean meats, eggs, whole grain breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables, and Brewer's yeast.
Magnesium	Key substance in proper functioning of nerves and muscles and healthy maintenance of bones.	Nuts, whole grain foods, dry beans and peas, dark green vegetables and soy products.
Manganese	Needed for protein, carbohydrate, fat production. Necessary for normal skeletal development. Helps maintain sex hormone production and nourishes the nerves and brain.	Egg yolks, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, whole wheat grain cereals and flour, dried peas and beans, Brewer's yeast and bone meal with Vitamin D
Phosphorous	Essential for utilization of carbohydrate, fats, proteins; for growth maintenance, repair of cells, and energy production; for skeletal growth, tooth development, kidney functioning and transference of nerve impulses.	Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, whole grains, seeds, and nuts.
Potassium	Essential for muscles, nerves and heart. Aids in proper maintenance of mineral balance of blood. Aids in keeping healthy. Works with sodium to regulate the body's water balance.	Vegetables (especially green leafy), oranges, whole grains, sunflower seeds, potatoes (especially peels), and bananas.
Selenium	Along with Vitamin E, it works in some of its metabolic processes and aids in normal body growth and fertility.	Bran and germs of cereal, broccoli, onions, tomatoes, and tuna.
Zinc	Necessary for healing and development of new cells. Aids enzymes in digestion and metabolism. Important to general growth, reproductive organs and normal functioning of prostate gland.	Brewer's yeast, bone meal, beans, nuts, seeds, wheat germ, fish, and meat (especially liver).

CONDOMS ARE EFFECTIVE!

R. Ann Schwab

We had come home,
 We drank scotch in the parlor
 And tea in the dining room
 And never spoke
 Of acquired immune deficiency syndrome.
 He praised my pretty face
 And complained of the pace
 He could no longer keep
 As he leaned on his cane.
 We discussed a walk up the hill
 The lighthouse a short distance away
 Created a will
 To test the limits of skill
 Diminished with advancing disease
 Of which we did not speak.
 The attempt it seemed
 Was too ambitious
 Easier to talk of precocious cure
 Herculean effort requiring miracles
 Large scale prevention
 Than each demure
 Attempt at resolution.
 We took a straighter walk instead
 With frequent stops and pauses
 And were content
 Though no applause
 Aided our efforts.

MISC.

Consumers Reports is looking for volunteers to participate in a condom survey. They will send a questionnaire which will necessarily include some "highly personal" responses. All responses will remain anonymous. If interested, write and say that you would like to participate in the CU Survey on condoms as outlined in the January 1988 edition of Consumer Reports. Send request to: Consumers Union, Survey Research, P.O.Box 3334, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10551.

LET'S HUG

THERE'S A HUG TO SAY
 I LOVE YOU
 AND A HUG TO SAY GOODBYE
 THERE'S A HUG TO SAY
 HOW ARE YOU
 AND A HUG TO SAY, WE TRIED
 THERE'S A HUG TO BOND
 A FRIENDSHIP
 AND A HUG WHEN THE DAY
 IS THROUGH
 BUT THE HUG I LOVE
 IN ALL THE WORLD IS
 THE HUG I GET FROM
 YOU!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Cartoon by Michael Willhoite
 from his book of cartoons
 "Now For My Next Trick" -
 Available from Alyson Publications,
 Inc. - 40 Plympton Street - Boston,
 Mass. 02118



SAFER SEX

CAN BE SENSUOUS!



AIDS EDUCATION FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

The Bureau of State Employee Health, under the Department of Administration, is currently addressing the need for accurate and up-to-date information about AIDS for all 13,000 employees. The responsibility of the Bureau of State Employee Health is to address employee issues concerning AIDS in the workplace. State workers have a wide range of occupations and worksettings. The identification of occupations that might have concerns about AIDS include, but are not limited to consideration of a list of occupational groups listed in the recent Background and Policy AIDS In Maine report signed by Governor McKernan.

The Bureau of State Employee Health is responding in two ways to requests for AIDS education and follow-up information. One, is by responding to requests from various bureaus and agencies for educational sessions. These sessions include general information on AIDS, as well as address issues and concerns specific to each worksite. The presentation and question and answer period usually lasts 2 hours and employees are given administrative leave to attend. Use of the video An Epidemic of Fear - AIDS in the Workplace 1987 update has been well received by employees as part of the program.

The Bureau has also developed a Train the Trainers program for AIDS. This is an indepth training and certification program for employees who are interested in giving basic AIDS education sessions to other State employees. To date, 35 people have been trained statewide to assist in meeting AIDS requests. Increased availability of trainers will help to reach many employees who are not centrally located. Through the Bureau of State Employee Health and the Office On AIDS in DHS we feel confident that both current AIDS information, as well as a variety of resources locally, statewide and nationally are available for all interested employees. Our goal is to increase AIDS awareness and education to dispel fear and misunderstanding in the workplace.

For more information, please contact:

Lisa Peacock
Public Health Educator III
Bureau of State Employee Health
289-4517

SUBSCRIBE

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO THE AIDS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

THIS NEWSLETTER RELIES TOTALLY ON SUBSCRIPTIONS TO EXIST. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THOSE WHO HAVE SUBSCRIBED, AND TO THOSE WHO HAVE NOT, PLEASE DO SO NOW. \$10.00 COVERS ONE YEAR (12 ISSUES). PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO "THE AIDS PROJECT". THANK YOU.

NAME _____

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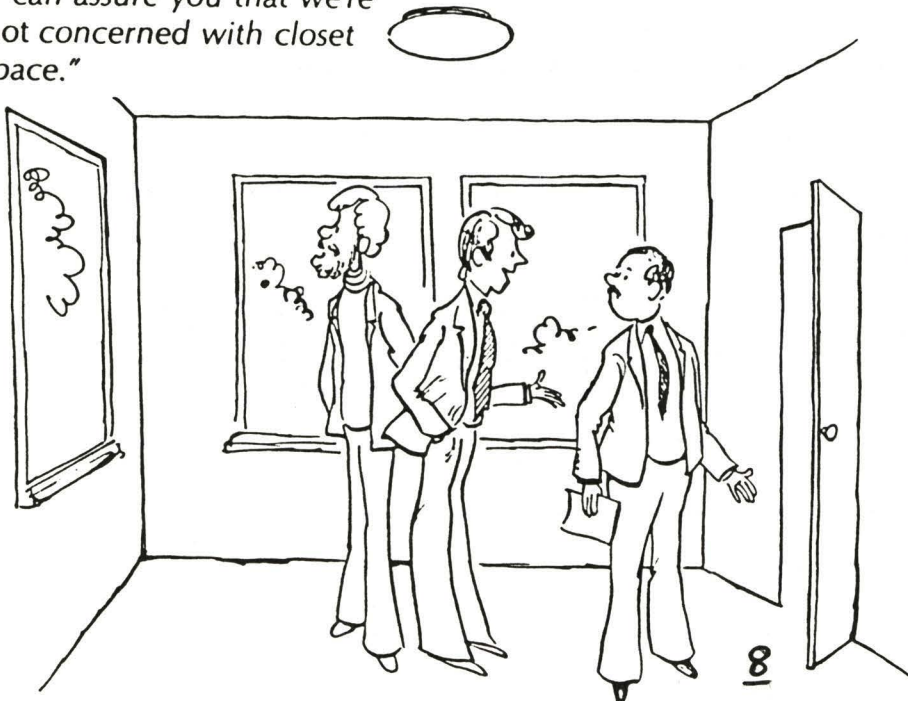
CALENDAR

- JUN.11-12-Aids Film Project at The Movies - 10 Exchange St. - Portland - Sat. eve 9pm - Sun. mat. 3pm - This special event, with only two screenings, consists of five separate films, ranging from a near-feature-length documentary on theater director Chuck Solomon to a five-minute comic, MTV-style piece on safe sex. A film on the unveiling on the Names Project Quilt, another on the work of organized support systems, and a rap musical drama on drug use complete the program. Running time is 122 minutes. DON'T MISS IT...
- JUN12-16-Fourth International Conference On AIDS - Stockholm, Sweden. Contact Stockholm Convention Bureau, P.O. Box 6911, S-10239 Stockholm Sweden.
- JUN. 18 -DON'T FORGET the national tour of The Names Project Quilt at the Park Plaza Castle and Exposition Center in Boston from 6am to 11pm
- JUN. 18 -During the display of The Names Project Quilt, there will be a vigil to recognize all PWA's who have died while waiting for treatment in Boston hospitals, and for PWA's who have died while waiting for drug protocols to be approved. Contact ACT UP of Boston at 617-49ACTUP for further details.
- JUN20-26-The Second International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference and AIDS Forum - Boston. Contact NLGHF/AAPHR Programming Committee, P.O. Box 65472, Washington, D.C. 20035, or call Michael Weeks 202-797-3708 or Greg Thomas 202-994-4285.
- JUN. 23 -COMMUNITY AIDS EDUCATION IN MAINE - Local Networks - Statewide Presence - Augusta Civic Center - 9am to 4pm - A conference sponsored by the Maine Dept. of Human Services Office On Aids - Registration deadline is June 13th - There is no fee for this conference - call 289-3747 for more information.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Cartoon by Michael Willhoite
from his book of cartoons
"Now For My Next Trick" -
Available from Alyson Publications,
Inc. - 40 Plympton Street - Boston,
Mass. 02118

"I can assure you that we're
not concerned with closet
space."



LET'S HUG

THERE'S A HUG TO SAY
I LOVE YOU
AND A HUG TO SAY GOODBYE
THERE'S A HUG TO SAY
HOW ARE YOU
AND A HUG TO SAY, WE TRIED
THERE'S A HUG TO BOND
A FRIENDSHIP
AND A HUG WHEN THE DAY
IS THROUGH
BUT THE HUG I LOVE
IN ALL THE WORLD IS
THE HUG I GET FROM
YOU!

*Anyone who is sexually
active needs to
practice safe sex.*

ONGOING CALENDAR

The PWA Coalition of Maine will meet the first and third Monday of every month at 1:00pm at 25 Parris Street, Portland. Call 775-1259 for further information.

Every Tuesday from 10:30am to 12noon at The Aids Project - 48 Deering Street Portland - there is a group meeting for all PWA's, PWArc, caregivers, and family members, to share your thoughts and feelings relative to AIDS. The meeting is conducted by Jacob Watson, M.A. Jacob is a psychotherapist specializing in loss and transition and is a staff member of the Elizabeth Kubler-Ross Center.

Every Tuesday evening 7:00pm to 8:30pm at 29 Cushman St. - Portland - there is a group meeting for all lovers, caregivers, friends, and family members only. The meeting will be conducted by Brooke Alexander, an Episcopal priest and pastoral counselor. Call Brooke at 772-1678 for further details.

ACT UP - Boston. 30,000 plus are dead from AIDS - haven't you been silent long enough? Join ACT UP - Aids Coalition To Unleash Power - United in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis. Meetings every Tuesday at 7:30pm in Boston. Call 617-49ACTUP.

On the first Tuesday of every month at The Aids Project - 48 Deering ST., Portland - there is an A-Line Staff Meeting at 6:00pm.

Support Group for Parents of Adult Gay Children will meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Please call 774-HELP for time and place.

DEAN (Downeast AIDS Network) educational and business meeting the 2nd Tuesday of every month at Ellsworth City Hall Council Chambers at 7:30pm. DEAN now has a newsletter and a support group for PWA's, HIV+, family members, and lovers. Call Tracy or Lynnsey at 326-8546 for more information.

Support Group for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays will meet the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Pilgrim House - 9 Cleaveland St. - Brunswick, Me. - call 729-9843 for further information.

There is a new AIDS support group forming in the Lewiston area for PWA's, lovers, friends, and family members. It will meet on Thursday afternoons at Clover Hospice in Auburn, beginning April 21st. Call Evelyn Piper-Keene at 783-9095 for information.

There is now an AIDS support group in the Bangor area meeting every Thursday evening. Anyone interested in the group should call 469-7343 or write EMAN P.O.Box 2038, Bangor, Maine 04401.

There is a new support group for people who are HIV+. It meets Thursday evenings from 5:30pm - 7:00pm at The Aids Project. The facilitator is Jacob Watson. No advance contact needs to be made to attend this group.

Every Friday evening 6:00pm to 7:30pm at The Aids Project - 48 Deering St. - Portland - there is a support group meeting for PWA's and PWArc ONLY. Call 774-6877 for further information.

WHEN YOU SEE SOMEONE WITHOUT A SMILE,
GIVE THEM ONE OF YOURS.....



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